



**CAMBRIDGESHIRE
& PETERBOROUGH**
COMBINED AUTHORITY

PAUL BRISTOW
MAYOR OF
CAMBRIDGESHIRE
& PETERBOROUGH

Place

State of the Region Q1 2026/27





State of the Region Overview

The Cambridgeshire and Peterborough State of the Region 2026 provides a comprehensive, evidence-based assessment of Cambridgeshire and Peterborough's current economic, social, and environmental landscape. By analysing the most up-to-date data and insights from across the region, this report serves as a resource and evidence base for stakeholders, policymakers, and community leaders to understand the area's opportunities, priorities, and pathways for growth and prosperity.

The comprehensive analysis was structured with more than 140 distinct indicators across eight key themes. The resulting holistic approach reflects stakeholders' commitment to capturing a detailed and nuanced picture of the Cambridgeshire and Peterborough region's current status and future prospects. The themes and data were selected and refined, through a process of continuous engagement with core stakeholders, ensuring they resonate with local priorities that leveraged relevant data sources.

An interactive publicly accessible data portal containing all the raw data, with interactive charts and maps can be opened from this website link [State of The Region Data Portal](#).

Date issued: **08/06/2026**

Document status: **Final Version**

Report prepared by: Policy, Insights and Performance

policy@cambridgeshirepeterborough-ca.gov.uk





Place

This chapter explores Cambridgeshire and Peterborough (C&P) through a place lens using the sub-themes of demographics, land use and housing. It identifies key trends in urbanisation and land use along with population changes.

The C&P region's population of over 930,000 people is concentrated in its two major cities and ten other Built-Up Areas with over 10,000 residents, with nearly 60% of the region's total population living in these settlements as of 2021¹. The Built-Up Areas of Peterborough and Cambridge together accounted for 38% of the total population (over 343,300 people), other Built-Up Areas with over 10,000 residents represented 21% of residents (over 189,500 people), and smaller settlements with populations of 10,000 or less collectively containing about 35% of the region's inhabitants (over 313,600 people). Only 5% of residents did not live in Built-Up Areas (under 48,000 people). The C&P population is currently forecast to grow by 17% between 2023 and 2041², adding over 155,000 people. The fastest growth is expected in South Cambridgeshire, at 30%. Demographically, 85% of C&P's population identified as White, though there are pockets of significant ethnic diversity, such as areas in Peterborough where 70% of residents identified as ethnic minorities³.

The region's land use is predominantly non-developed, with only 8% classified as developed⁴. Agriculture plays a crucial role, occupying 79% of the total land area, which is higher than the English average of 63%. Notably, C&P contains 19% of England's Grade 1 (excellent quality) agricultural land⁵, making it a regional asset. Of the non-agricultural land, a substantial portion is dedicated to residential gardens, particularly in Cambridge, where they accounted for 22% of all land within the city. Green Belt designations covered 8% of the C&P region, with South Cambridgeshire and Cambridge having 26% and 24% of their land under this protection, respectively⁶. Despite the region's rural spaces, only 6.4% of land is designated for nature conservation, comprising various protected areas such as Sites of Special Scientific Interest (SSSIs)⁷, Ramsar sites⁸, ancient woodland⁹, and nature reserves¹⁰.

House prices varied significantly across the region, though the majority of MSOAs had median house prices within the range of £251,600-£435,600¹¹. Higher prices were generally observed in the south and east of the region. In 2024-25, a total of 5,629 additions were made to the housing supply in C&P¹². This was up from the 4,696 additions in the previous year of 2023-24 and moreover, was the second highest number of additions since 2001-02.

¹ ONS 2023. Towns and cities, characteristics of built-up areas, England and Wales: Census 2021. [\[Link to source\]](#)

² Cambridgeshire County Council, 2025. Local Population and Dwelling Stock Estimates and Forecasts. [\[Link to source\]](#) & ONS, 2025. Subnational Population Projections: 2022-based. [\[Link to source\]](#)

³ ONS 2022. Usual Residents by Ethnic Group, 2021 Census. [\[Link to source\]](#)

⁴ DLUHC, 2022. Land Use in England 2022. [\[Link to source\]](#)

⁵ Natural England, 2019. Provisional Agricultural Land Classification. [\[Link to source\]](#)

⁶ MHCLG, 2025. Local authority Green Belt statistics for England: 2024 to 2025. [\[Link to source\]](#)

⁷ Natural England, 2026. Sites of Special Scientific Interest (England). [\[Link to source\]](#)

⁸ Natural England, 2026. Ramsar (England). [\[Link to source\]](#)

⁹ Natural England, 2026. Ancient Woodland (England). [\[Link to source\]](#)

¹⁰ Natural England, 2026. Local Nature Reserves (England). [\[Link to source\]](#) & Natural England, 2026. National Nature Reserves (England). [\[Link to source\]](#)

¹¹ ONS, 2025. Median house prices for administrative geographies. [\[Link to source\]](#)

¹² MHCLG, 2025. Live tables on housing supply: net additional dwellings. [\[Link to source\]](#)

Summary of key findings

Metric	Section	Findings
Population	1.1	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> The total population of C&P in mid-2024 was 934,000 people, 1.6% of the total population of England.
Population Forecast	1.2	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> C&P's population is currently forecast to grow by 17% between 2023 and 2041, an increase of over 155,000, with the fastest growth (30%) expected in South Cambridgeshire.
Key Settlements	1.3	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Peterborough and Cambridge combined account for more than 343,000 people – roughly 38% of C&P's population. Ten other larger Built-Up Areas with population of over 10,000 account for 21% of C&P's population (nearly 190,000 people) Many smaller settlements, with populations of ten thousand or less, collectively account for roughly 35% of the C&P region's population (314,000 people). Approx. 5% of the population (48,000 people) live in non-Built Up Areas.
Age	1.4	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> At an aggregate level, the population of the C&P region is largely split evenly between age groups and is consistent with the overall pattern observed across England.
Gender	1.5	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> The population in C&P is generally split 50:50 between male and female, in line with the distribution across England, which is 51:49 men to women.
Ethnicity	1.6	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> White ethnic groups comprise 85% of C&P's population. There are, however, clusters of ethnic diversity including an area of Peterborough and Millfield where 70% of the population identify as ethnic minorities.
Land Classifications	2.1	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> 66% of C&P's population lived in urban areas; 21% in larger rural areas; and 13% in smaller rural areas.
Developed & Non-developed Land	2.2	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> 8% of C&P's land is developed and 92% of land is non-developed. Agriculture plays a key land use role, accounting for 79% of total land use, compared to the UK average of 63%. Of non-agricultural land, a high share is represented by residential gardens (22% in Cambridge).
Agricultural Land Grades	2.3	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> C&P contains 19% of England's total Grade 1 (excellent quality) agricultural land, an important regional asset.
Green Belt	2.4	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> 8% of land across the C&P region is designated as Green Belt including 26% of the land in South Cambridgeshire and 24% of the land in Cambridge.
Brownfield Land	2.5	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> In total there are over 450 brownfield entries recorded on local authority Brownfield Land Registers in the C&P region.
Designated Sites	2.6	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Only 6.4% of land across the C&P region is designated for nature, consisting of SSSIs at 2.4%; Ramsar sites at 1.1%; ancient woodland at 0.8%; local nature reserves 0.1%; and national nature reserves at 0.4%.
Housing Prices	3.1	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> In the year ending March 2025, the median house price in C&P was £325,000. This compared to England's median house price of £300,000. The majority of MSOAs in C&P had median house prices within the range of £251,600-£435,600.





Housing Affordability	3.2	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Across C&P's local authority areas, the housing affordability ratio as of 2024 ranged between 6.6 and 10.9, that is, a ratio of house price to earnings of between six and eleven times. The most affordable housing was in Fenland (6.6), whilst the least affordable housing was in Cambridge (10.9). This compared to England's housing affordability ratio of 7.7.
Housing Affordability (Low Earners)	3.3	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> In every year between 2017 and 2024, Cambridge had the highest housing affordability ratio (least affordable housing) for low-income earners within the C&P region, though it fell to its lowest value of 11.66 in 2024. In comparison, England had a ratio of 6.77.
Private Rental Affordability	3.4	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Private rents in Cambridge represent the highest percentage of monthly salary within the region.
Housing Delivery	3.5	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> In 2024-25, a total of 5,629 additions were made to the housing supply in C&P. This was up from the 4,696 additions in the previous year of 2023-24 and moreover, was the second highest number of additions since 2001-02.
Affordable Housing Delivery	3.6	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> From 1991-92, an additional 35,760 affordable houses were added to the C&P region's housing stock as of 2024-25. During this period, the most affordable housing delivery was in Peterborough with 22.5% of C&P's total (8,040 additions), followed by Huntingdonshire with 7,486 additions, which was 20.9% of C&P's total.
Housing as Second Homes	3.7	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Overall, the percentage of second homes across the C&P region was 0.24%, which was lower than the national rate of 0.62%.
Rough Sleeping	3.8	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Overall, within C&P, the count of rough sleepers in 2024 of 62 was unchanged from the previous year. Cambridge had the highest number of rough sleepers at 26. Peterborough had the second highest count at 16, though a sizeable drop from the previous year's count for Peterborough of 24.



1 Demographics

1.1 Population

Population data provides an understanding of the population distribution across the entire C&P region. Population statistics analysed from the Office for National Statistics (ONS) mid-2024 population estimates that the total population of C&P in mid-2024 was 934,000 people, which was 1.6% of the total population of England¹³. Figure 1-1 plots the population estimates by C&P local authority area by year. It shows that Peterborough had the greatest population at 223,700, whilst Huntingdonshire had the second highest at 190,600. Fenland and East Cambridgeshire had the lowest populations in the C&P region, with a population of 104,900 and 92,900, respectively.

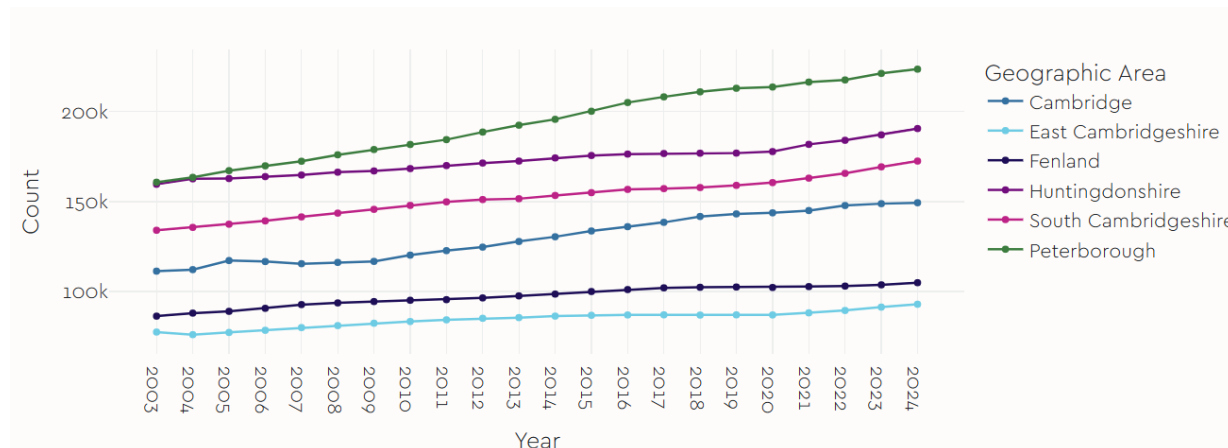


Figure 1-1: ONS Mid-year Population Estimates by Local Authority Area and Year

The chart also shows the high levels of population growth within the region over the previous twenty years. Population growth has been strong in all areas, and exceptional in some. Data from the 2021 Census¹⁴ showed population growth over the previous ten years was above the national average in all areas (9.2% across C&P compared to a national average of 6.6%). Both Cambridge and Peterborough were among the fastest growing local authority areas in England, with more than twice the average growth to 2021 (17.6% and 17.5%, respectively).

1.2 Population Forecast

Cambridgeshire County Council produces population forecasts which are updated annually¹⁵. The 2023-based population forecasts use Cambridgeshire County Council's mid-2023 population estimates as the starting point and forecast to mid-2041. Recent demographic trends are considered, and the population forecasts are also 'policy-led', so that they are consistent with planned levels of housebuilding as set out in current Local Plans. This means that the forecasts, at this stage, do not consider any proposed new housing developments or applications which may be under consideration in emerging Local Plans. While Section 1.1 presents the latest mid-2024 population estimates, population forecasts are compared against the ONS mid-2023 population estimates (same data release), which provide the baseline used in Cambridgeshire County Council's 2023-based population projections.

Growth rates represent percentage change between ONS mid-2023 population estimates and Cambridgeshire County Council's 2023-based population forecasts for 2041. Figure 1-2 charts

¹³ ONS, 2025. Estimates of the population for England and Wales. [\[Link to source\]](#)

¹⁴ Cambridgeshire County Council (2022), [\[Link to source\]](#)

¹⁵ Cambridgeshire County Council, 2025. Local Population and Dwelling Stock Estimates and Forecasts. [\[Link to source\]](#) & ONS, 2025. Subnational Population Projections: 2022-based. [\[Link to source\]](#)

the latest 2041 population forecasts alongside the 2023 ONS estimates. It is forecast that the population of C&P will have grown 17% from its 2023 value to 1,077,000 people by 2041, an increase of over 155,000 people. The fastest growth is forecast to be in South Cambridgeshire, which is projected to see growth of 30% (51,000 people) to overtake Huntingdonshire and become C&P's second most populous local authority area with 220,000 people. The smallest growth is currently forecast to be in Cambridge, at 12%. Although forecast to grow by 17%, East Cambridgeshire is anticipated to remain C&P's least populous local authority area.

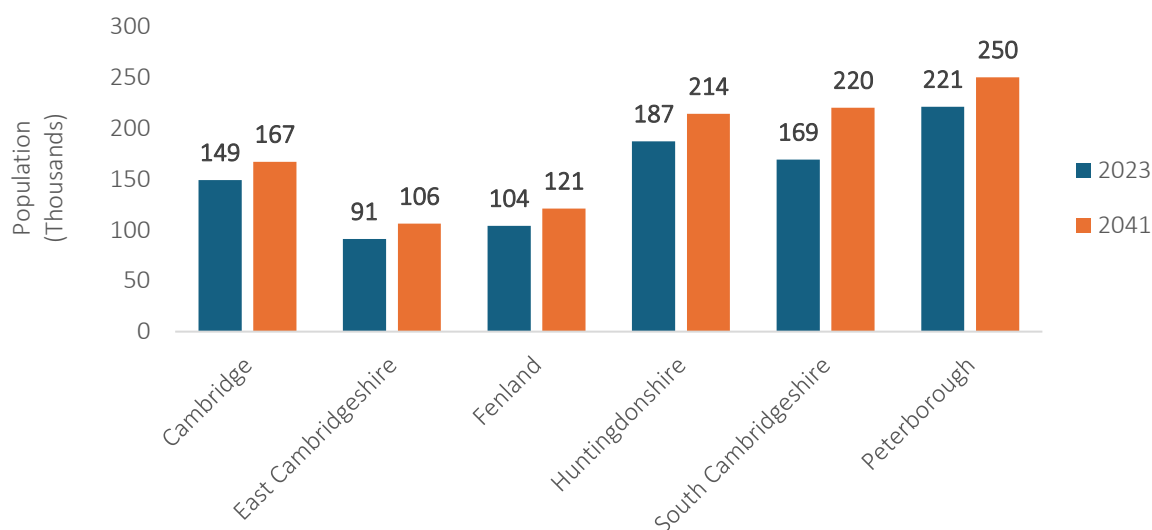


Figure 1-2: ONS 2023 Population Estimates and Cambridgeshire County Council's 2023-Based Population Forecast for 2041 (thousands) by Local Authority Area

1.3 Key Settlements

Analysis of the major settlements can help understand the spatial distribution of population and urban development within the C&P region. To support this, the ONS produced data on Built-Up Areas (BUAs) based on the 2021 Census population estimates¹⁶. BUAs were derived from a process that uses Ordnance Survey topographic data to recognise the boundaries of BUA development and identify individual BUA settlements, equating to cities, towns, and villages. The OS dataset divided the land area into 25m x 25m cells and identified BUAs based on the proportion of each cell that was classified as a Building, Road, Residential Garden, Made Surface, or built-up types of Land Use Site. Table 1-1 contains the 12 largest BUAs in the C&P region (all of the BUAs with populations over 10,000) and all BUAs are mapped at Figure 1-3.

Rank	BUA	Population	Percent of C&P Population
1	Peterborough	191,000	21%
2	Cambridge	153,000	17%
3	St Neots	33,000	4%
4	Wisbech	27,000	3%
5	Huntingdon	26,000	3%
6	March	21,000	2%
7	Ely	19,000	2%
8	St Ives	17,000	2%
9	Whittlesey	14,000	2%
10	Cambourne	11,000	1%

¹⁶ ONS 2023. Towns and cities, characteristics of built-up areas, England and Wales: Census 2021. [\[Link to source\]](#)

Rank	BUA	Population	Percent of C&P Population
11	Chatteris	11,000	1%
12	Soham	11,000	1%
	Other BUAs (under 10,000 population)	314,000	35%
	BUA Total	847,000	95%

Table 1-1: BUAs in the C&P Region with Population Estimate and Percentage of C&P Population, as at 2021 Census

94.6% of C&P's population lived in BUAs, slightly lower than the England average (94.9%) but slightly higher than the average for England excluding London (94.1%). The two major settlements within C&P are Peterborough and Cambridge. These cities were more than four times as populous as the next most populous settlement of St Neots, and together they contained over a third of a million people, which was 38% of C&P's total population. This is not an uncommon spatial distribution in mixed urban/rural regions as major urban centres tend to draw larger populations compared to smaller settlements over time, driven by factors such as employment opportunities and amenities/services.

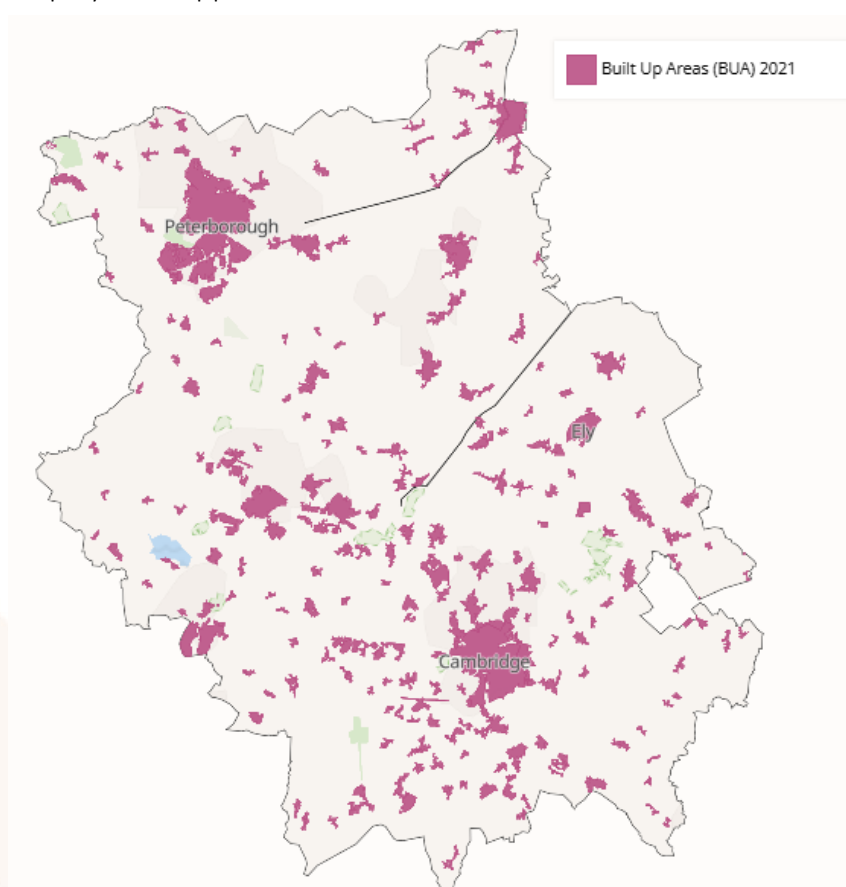


Figure 1-3: Built-Up Areas in the C&P Region in 2021

The remaining settlements were significantly smaller, with St Neots being the largest of these at 4%, and several others like Huntingdon, Wisbech, March, Ely, and St Ives each making up around only 2-3% of the entire population. Collectively, the top 12 largest BUAs comprised nearly 60% of the total population in the region. Many small settlements, with populations of ten thousand or less, collectively contained 35% of the C&P region's population, which was almost as much as Peterborough and Cambridge combined. There were also notable emerging settlements in South Cambridgeshire. For example, once completed, Northstowe and Waterbeach will each have populations of around 25,000 people.

1.4 Age

Understanding age-specific trends in the C&P region allows the output of insights into the demographic composition of the C&P region and each local authority area within. ONS population estimates data for mid-2024 provided estimates of the population by single-year age groups for each local authority area. The data for the single-year age groups was aggregated into five age categories as shown in [Figure 1-4](#) and [Table 1-2](#)¹⁷. The data presents the proportion of these age groups, as a percentage of the total population in the C&P region¹⁸.

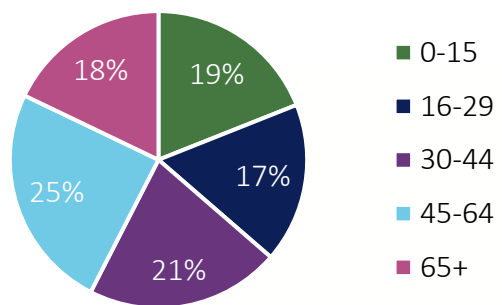


Figure 1-4: C&P Region by Age Group (%)

Ages	C&P (Number)	C&P (%)	England (%)
0-15	177,600	19%	18%
16-29	162,200	17%	17%
30-44	197,900	21%	21%
45-64	229,500	25%	25%
65+	166,900	18%	19%
Total	934,000	100%	100%

Table 1-2: Estimated Number and Proportion of Population by Age Group

The largest group, 45-64-year-olds, represented 25% of the population. This was followed by 30-44-year-olds, who accounted for 21% of the population. 0-15-year-olds accounted for 19% of the population, this was closely followed by the age group 65+ and those aged 15-29-years old which comprised 18% and 17% of the overall population respectively. The distribution of these age groups across the C&P region was varied. At the district level, Peterborough had the highest proportion of children aged 0-15 (22.9%) and Cambridge had the lowest level at 14.6%. Cambridge also had the lowest proportions of residents aged 45-64 and 65+ but the largest proportion of young people aged 16-29, linked to the large student population in the city. The highest proportion of people aged 65+ was in Fenland, where 23.4% were estimated to be in this age group, which is more than double the 11.6% estimated in Cambridge.

¹⁷ ONS, 2025. Estimates of the population for England and Wales. [\[Link to source\]](#)

¹⁸ Analysis using more granular age bands is available in the interactive data portal published at cpca.dashboards.cityscience.com.

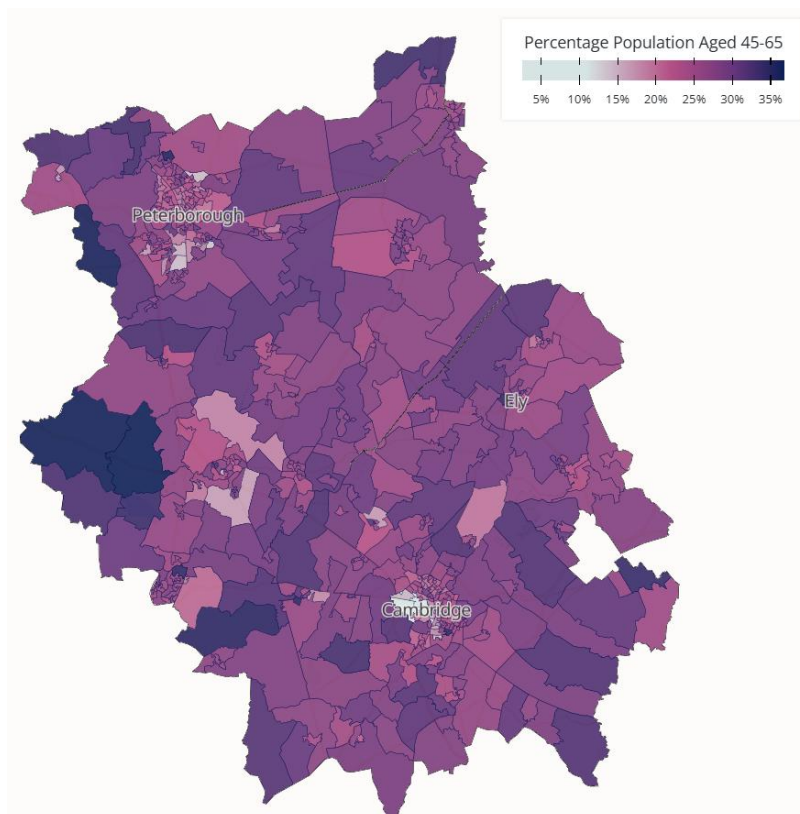


Figure 1-5: Percentage of Population Aged 45-64 by LSOA in 2024

Figure 1-5 maps the percentage of the population in the most populous age group within C&P (aged 45-64) by LSOA¹⁹. The areas with the highest proportion of residents aged 45-64 appear widely spread, particularly along the western border of the region, as well as pockets outside the large settlements. The areas with the lowest proportions of residents aged 45-64 years old were also varied across the region. In particular, the larger settlements including Peterborough, Cambridge had a lower proportion of residents in this age group.

Some LSOAs in the centre of Cambridge had over 80% of the population aged 16-29. The high proportion of 16–29-year-olds in Cambridge can be attributed to the presence of Anglia Ruskin University and the University of Cambridge. It is also interesting to note that in the centre of Cambridge, only 1-3% of the population was aged 0-15, likely also due to the high concentration of students living in the area rather than families.

1.5 Gender

Gender is another lens through which we can understand different demographics within the C&P region. Data collected in the 2021 Census²⁰ was aggregated at the local authority district level, to provide the proportion of the population identified as male and female in each area as contained in Table 1-3. Cambridge and Huntingdonshire had an even split, and the other local authority areas had 51% females and 49% males, which mirrored the distribution across England, overall.

¹⁹ ONS, 2026. Small area population estimates by single year of age (mid-2024). [\[Link to source\]](#)

²⁰ ONS, 2022. Sex, Census 2021. [\[Link to source\]](#)

Area	Females Population	Males Population
Peterborough	109,100 (51%)	106,600 (49%)
Cambridge	72,700 (50%)	73,000 (50%)
East Cambridgeshire	44,700 (51%)	43,100 (49%)
Fenland	52,300 (51%)	50,200 (49%)
Huntingdonshire	91,100 (50%)	89,700 (50%)
South Cambridgeshire	82,600 (51%)	79,600 (49%)

Table 1-3: Distribution of Males and Females by Local Authority Area in 2021

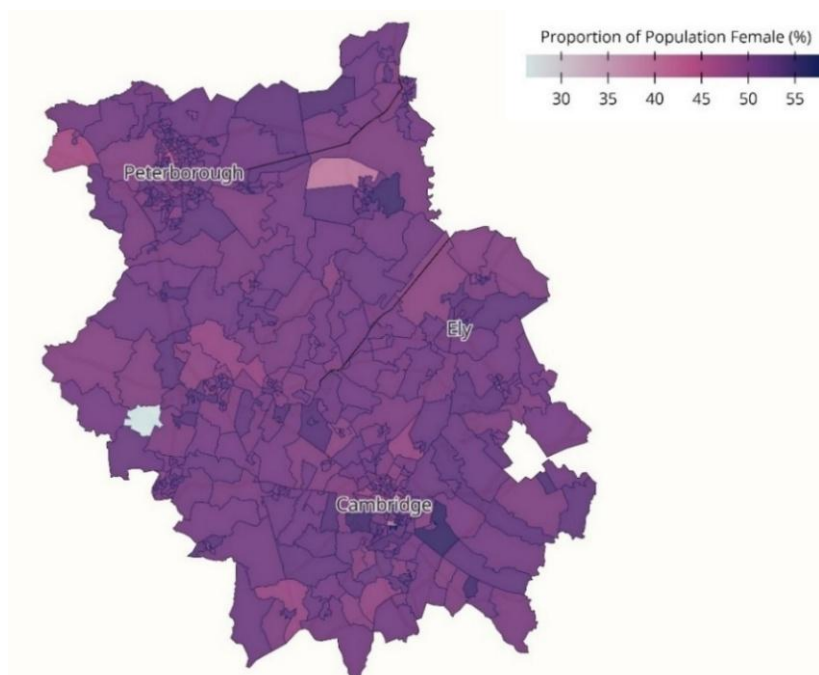


Figure 1-6: Female Population (%) by LSOA in 2021

Although equally split overall, gender was not spatially uniform. Figure 1-6 maps the proportion of the female population by LSOA. Key outliers included an LSOA in Huntingdonshire (which contains part of Grafham and West Perry) with only 26% females (likely due to the large number of males residing at the men's prison HMP Littlehey located in Perry), and an LSOA in central Cambridge (consisting mainly of student nursing and key worker housing for Addenbrooke's hospital) with 58% females.

1.6 Ethnicity

Data collected in the 2021 Census²¹ incorporated the self-reported ethnic identity of usual residents in each local authority area. Respondents had the choice of 19 ethnic subgroups, which were then aggregated into five overarching ethnic identities. With 764,000 individuals, the White ethnic population comprised 85% of C&P's population. This was above the England average, where 82% of the population identified as White.

Asian, Asian British or Asian Welsh ethnicities represented a significant minority as the second largest ethnic group at 6.9%. This was marginally lower than the national average, where Asian, Asian British or Asian Welsh ethnicities comprised 9% of England's total population. Collectively, Black, Black British, Black Welsh, Caribbean or African, mixed ethnic groups and other ethnic groups represented less than 7% of the region's population. This was notably

²¹ ONS 2022. Usual Residents by Ethnic Group, 2021 Census. [\[Link to source\]](#)

lower than the average for England, where these groups represented 9% of the total population.

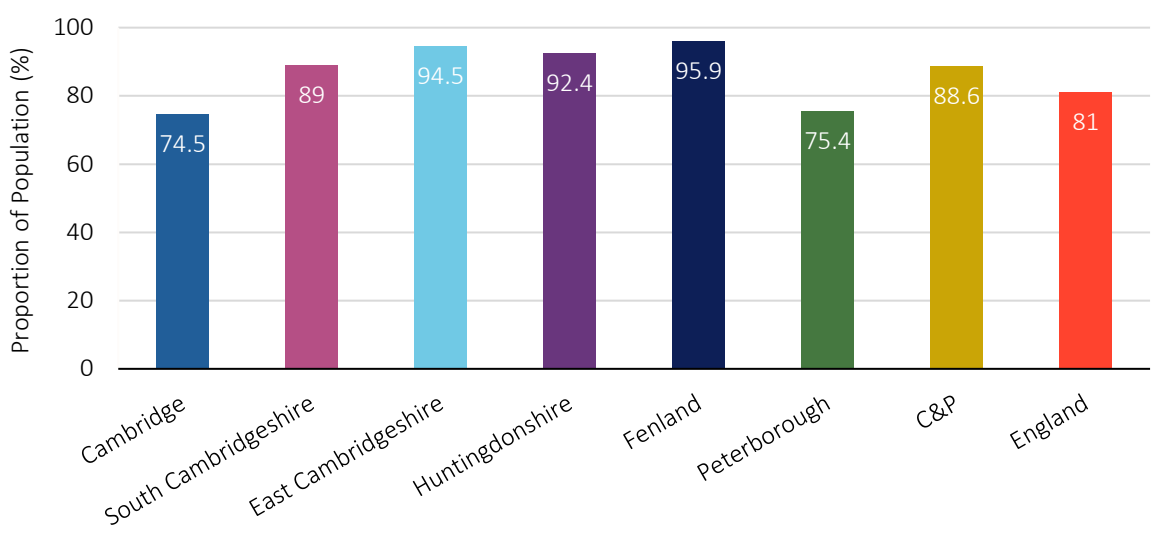


Figure 1-7: Proportion of the Population That Identified as White (%) by Local Authority Area in 2021

Figure 1-7: charts the proportion of the population that identified as White by local authority area in C&P. It shows that Fenland had the highest percentage of the population identifying as White at 95.9% whilst East Cambridgeshire had the second highest at 94.5%. Cambridge and Peterborough each had the lowest proportion of people identified as White, at around 75%.

Figure 1-8 maps the proportion of the population identified as an ethnic minority (excluding white minorities) by LSOA in the C&P region. A very low proportion of the population identified as an ethnic minority, with 28% of LSOA's having fewer than 5% of the population not identifying as White in 2021.

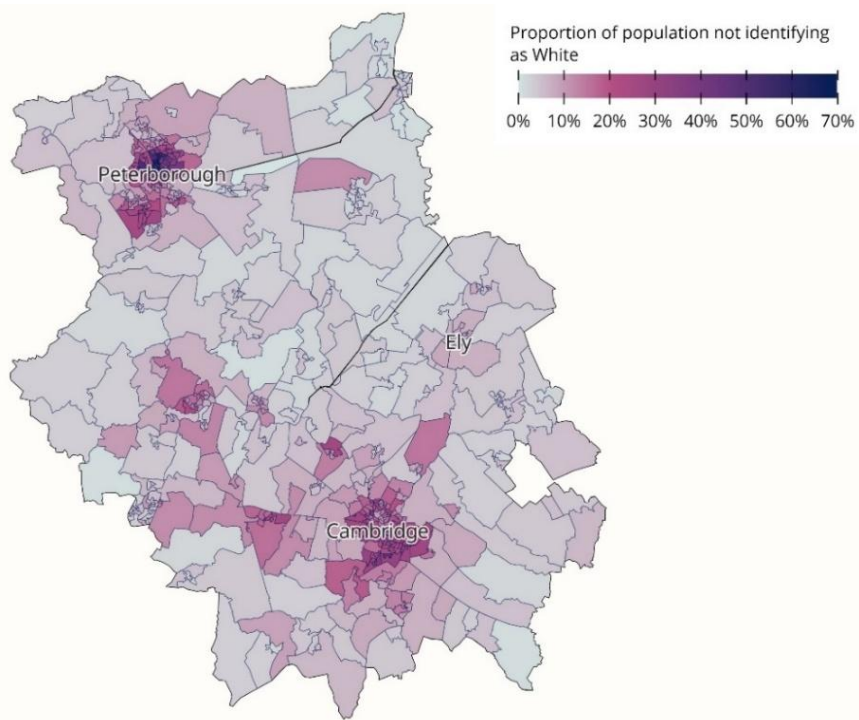


Figure 1-8: Proportion of the Population in the C&P Region That Did Not Identify as White (%) by LSOA in 2021

However, there were some exceptions, which included one area of Peterborough in Millfield where approximately 70% of the population identified as an ethnic minority. Within this LSOA, 91%



of the ethnic minority population identified as Asian, Asian British or Asian Welsh. Furthermore, three LSOAs in Cambridge had over 40% of people identified as ethnic minorities.

2 Land Use

2.1 Land Classifications

Land classifications can provide an understanding of broad land uses in the region. The Office for National Statistics’ Rural Urban Classification for England and Wales 2021 splits small geographic areas (Output Areas) into Rural and Urban classifications based on both the population size or density of settlements (high density of residential addresses or part of a Built-Up Area with a resident population of 10,000 or more) and their relative access to a major town or city (with at least 75,000 residents)²². Classifications at the higher LSOA level has been used to determine the proportion of residents in the region living in areas with each classification. Within the C&P region, the land use consists of all six classification types (see Figure 2-1 and Table 2-1):

- **Small rural:** Further from a major town or city
- **Small rural:** Nearer to a major town or city
- **Larger rural:** Further from a major town or city
- **Larger rural:** Nearer to a major town or city
- **Urban:** Further from a major town or city
- **Urban:** Nearer to a major town or city

The areas classified as ‘urban city and town’ are those that contain the major BUA’s, including Cambridge, Peterborough and Ely. The majority of the region (by overall area) is classified as rural.

However, of the total population in C&P at mid-2024, the majority (66%) lived in Urban areas²³. These are situated mainly in Peterborough and Cambridge.

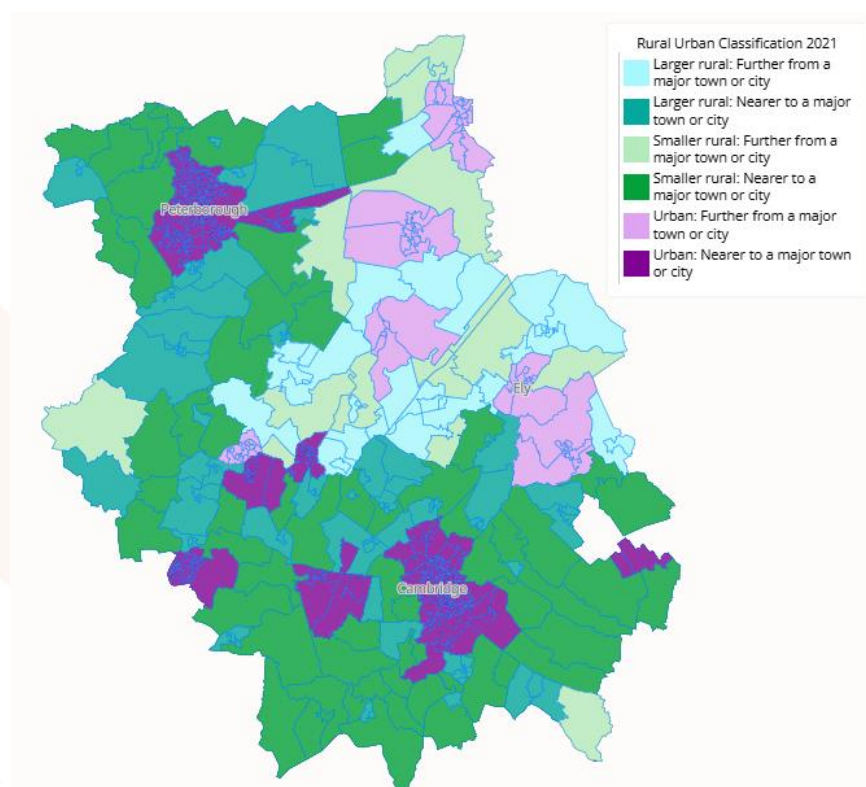


Figure 2-1: Rural Urban Classification by LSOA in 2021

²² ONS 2025, 2021 Rural Urban Classification. [\[Link to source\]](#)
²³ ONS 2025, Small area population estimates, mid-2024. [\[Link to source\]](#)

Other Urban City and Town settlements include St Neots, Huntingdon, Cambourne, Wisbech, March, Ely and St Ives. 21% of those living in urban areas live in places classified as further (more than 30 minutes drive) from a major town or city.

The second most populous type of settlements in the region are Larger Rural settlements, including areas such as Stretham, Littleport and Isleham. 72% of these areas are classified as nearer to a major town or city.

The third type of settlement is Smaller Rural. 83% of residents in Smaller Urban LSOAs are classified as living in LSOAs which are nearer to a major town or city.

Area	Smaller Rural: Further from a major town or city	Smaller Rural: Nearer to a major town or city	Larger Rural: Further from a major town or city	Larger Rural: Nearer to a major town or city	Urban: Further from a major town or city	Urban: Nearer to a major town or city
Cambridge	0%	0%	0%	0%	0%	100%
East Cambridgeshire	6%	16%	26%	11%	37%	3%
Fenland	6%	5%	9%	1%	64%	15%
Huntingdonshire	4%	12%	10%	26%	14%	34%
Peterborough	0%	5%	0%	6%	0%	89%
South Cambridgeshire	1%	29%	0%	37%	0%	33%
C&P Population	20,800	105,100	53,100	137,300	127,800	489,900
C&P %	2%	11%	6%	15%	14%	52%

Table 2-1: Mid-2024 Population by Rural Urban Classification of LSOAs by Local Authority Area

2.2 Developed & Non-Developed Land

There is a wealth of data on green spaces that can help us understand access to nature and environmental impacts within the C&P region. At the highest level, we start by investigating land categories from the Department of Levelling Up and Housing Communities (DLUHC), which classifies all land as developed or non-developed land²⁴. Within these categories, non-developed land can be understood as being green space and developed land being urban space; however, it is important to note that green space may not be public or accessible. This initial high-level analysis presents the proportion of land classified as developed, non-developed and agricultural. Overall, across the C&P region, 8% of land is developed and 92% of land is non-developed. This is similar to the average across England, as shown in Table 2-2.

Land Use Classification	C&P (%)	England (%)
Developed	8%	9%
Non-developed	92%	91%
Agricultural	79%	63%

²⁴ DLUHC, 2022. Land Use in England 2022. [\[Link to source\]](#)

Table 2-2: Percentage of Developed, Agricultural and Non-Developed

Figure 2-2 shows that the majority of the C&P region consists of non-developed land. The highest concentration of urban space covers the two main settlements, Peterborough and Cambridge. Other, smaller, pockets of urban areas cover the other main cities and towns in the region (e.g. Huntingdon, Ely, St Ives, Ramsey, March and Whittlesey).

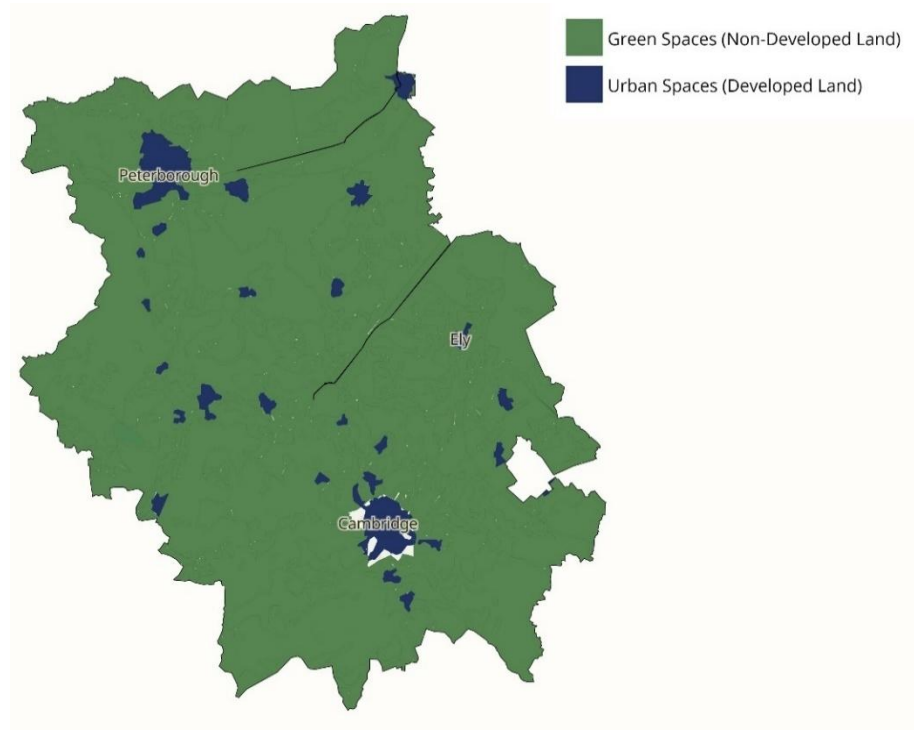


Figure 2-2: Developed and Non-Developed Land. Absent Data is Shown in White

Developed Land

Analysis of developed land data provides insights into urbanisation trends, land use patterns and infrastructure development. This section looks at developed land and the breakdown of this land into further sub-categories. The analysis uses statistics from the Department for Levelling Up, Housing and Communities for land use in England, published in 2022²⁵. This presents a summary showing how different land uses are distributed across England and classifies these into 28 categories split between developed and non-developed land use types. In particular, developed land is further subdivided into the following categories:

- Industry & Commerce
- Minerals & Landfill
- Transport & Utilities
- Community Service
- Residential
- Unknown Developed Use
- Defence

Table 2-3 shows the type of developed land broken down by each local authority in the C&P region.

Area	Community service	Industry & commerce	Minerals & landfill	Residential	Transport & utilities	Unknown Developed Use	Total Developed Land
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²⁵ DLUHC, 2022. Land Use in England 2022. [\[Link to source\]](#)

Cambridge	12%	1.5%	0%	7.9%	15.3%	6%	42.7%
East Cambridgeshire	0.3%	0.1%	0%	0.5%	3.5%	1.2%	5.6%
Fenland	0.3%	0.2%	0%	0.7%	3%	1.6%	5.9%
Huntingdonshire	0.4%	0.3%	0%	0.7%	4.1%	1.2%	6.7%
Peterborough	1%	0.7%	0.4%	1.7%	6.2%	3.1%	13.1%
South Cambridgeshire	0.4%	0.2%	0.1%	0.7%	4.4%	1.4%	7.2%

Table 2-3: Proportion of Total Land by Developed Land Use Type

Figure 2-3 presents OpenStreetMap (OSM) data on land use. The categories differ slightly from the Department for Levelling Up, Housing & Communities (DLUHC) data and exclude data on transport and utilities. Most of the developed land across the region is residential, followed by industrial and retail. While Cambridge and Peterborough are characterised by mixed use, land use is more diverse within Cambridge.

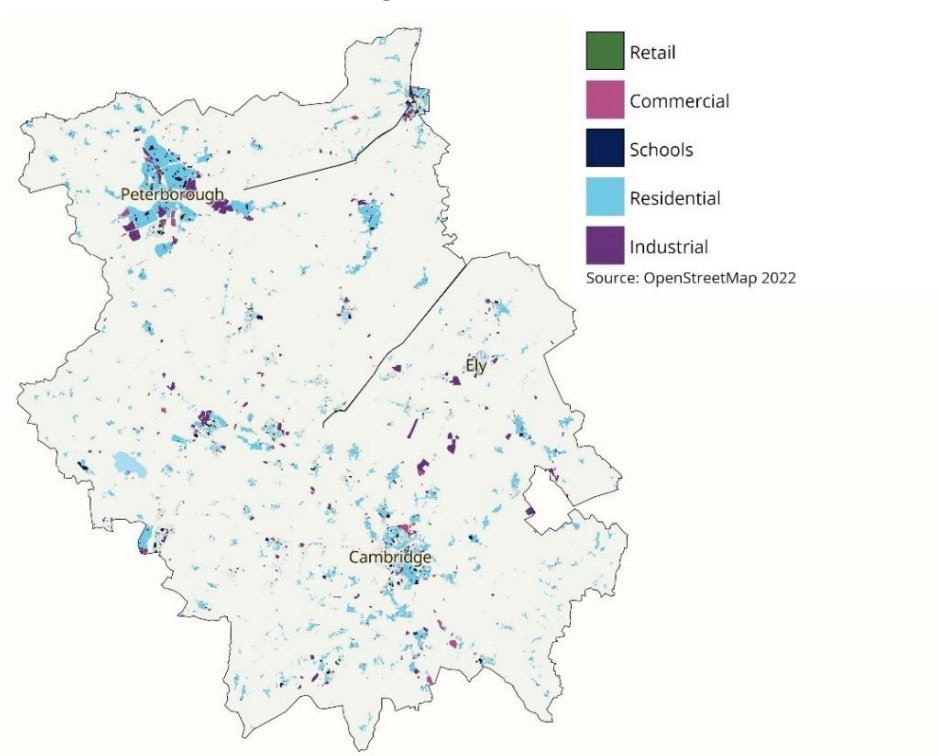


Figure 2-3: Land Use Breakdown of Developed Land

Non-Developed Land

Exploring data on non-developed land, including green spaces and agricultural land, offers valuable insights into ecological resilience, biodiversity conservation and planning. Non-developed land can be further broken down into seven subcategories of land use. Table 2-4 shows the breakdown of non-developed land uses by local authority area²⁶.

Area	Agriculture	Forest, Open Land & Water	Outdoor Recreation	Residential Gardens	Undeveloped Land	Vacant	Total Non-Developed Land
Cambridge	16.1%	5.2%	8%	22.1%	4.6%	1.3%	57.3%
East Cambridgeshire	84.1%	6.6%	0.6%	2.7%	0.3%	0.1%	94.4%

²⁶ DLUHC, 2022. Land Use in England 2022. [\[Link to source\]](#)

Fenland	85.2%	4.4%	0.7%	3.3%	0.5%	0.1%	94.2%
Huntingdonshire	79.6%	8.4%	1.3%	3%	0.6%	0.3%	93.2%
Peterborough	65.8%	10.2%	3.2%	5.6%	1.6%	0.6%	87.0%
South Cambridgeshire	79.6%	7.1%	1.4%	3.6%	0.6%	0.4%	92.7%

Table 2-4: Non-Developed Land by Land Classification

Agricultural land is a key proportion of the non-developed land across all local authority areas, with agricultural land accounting for 79% of total land use. Non-agricultural land uses make up a comparatively smaller proportion. Points to note include the high share (22%) of residential gardens and outdoor recreation space (8%) in Cambridge and the over 10% share of forest, open land and water in Peterborough.

The distribution of agricultural and non-agricultural land is shown in Figure 2-4²⁷. The coloured areas represent all non-developed land, divided into agricultural and non-agricultural land. In contrast, the blank areas indicate developed land in the region. Based on Table 2-4, Cambridge has the lowest proportion of non-developed land at 57%. This is significantly lower than the other authorities in the region with East Cambridgeshire, South Cambridgeshire, Fenland and Huntingdonshire having over 90% of land non-developed. East Cambridgeshire has the highest level of non-developed land at 94%.

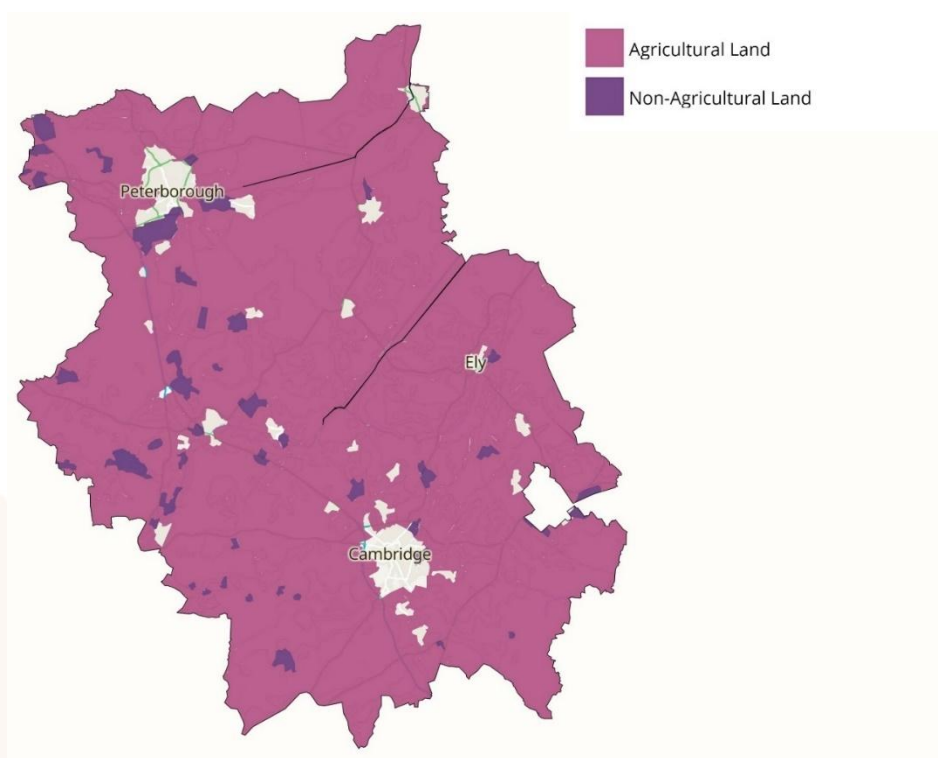


Figure 2-4: Distribution of Agricultural and Non-Agricultural Land Within the Non-Developed Category

2.3 Agricultural Land Grades

Agricultural land is graded using the Agricultural Land Classification system²⁸, which classifies land into five grades according to the extent to which physical or chemical characteristics impose long-term limitations on the agricultural use of a site for food production.

²⁷ Natural England, 2019. Provisional Agricultural Land Classification. [\[Link to source\]](#)

²⁸ Natural England, 2019. Provisional Agricultural Land Classification. [\[Link to source\]](#)



Grade 1: Represents excellent quality agricultural land with no or very minor limitations. A very wide range of agricultural and horticultural crops can be grown, commonly including fruits, salad crops and winter harvested vegetables. Yields are high and less variable than on land of lower quality.

Grade 2: Represents very good quality agricultural land with minor limitations that affect crop yield, cultivation or harvesting. A wide range of agricultural and horticultural crops can usually be grown. The level of yield is generally high but may be lower or more variable than Grade 1.

Grade 3: Represents good to moderate quality agricultural land and is further split into two sub-grades (3a and 3b). Both sub-grades support at least moderate yields of cereals and grasses. Grade 3a can support a wider range of crops and may also provide enhanced yields.

Grade 4 & Below: Grades 4 and 5, respectively, represent poor and very poor-quality agricultural land. These grades represent land with severe limitations or very severe limitations which significantly restrict the range of crops or level of yields.

79% of the region's land is classified as being agricultural, a significantly higher proportion of agricultural land than the average for England (63%). C&P contains 19% of England's Grade 1 (excellent quality) agricultural land.

Figure 2-5 maps the total area of land classified at each grade in the C&P region. The map shows that the quality of agricultural land is generally high, with the highest-grade land in the north-east segment of the region.

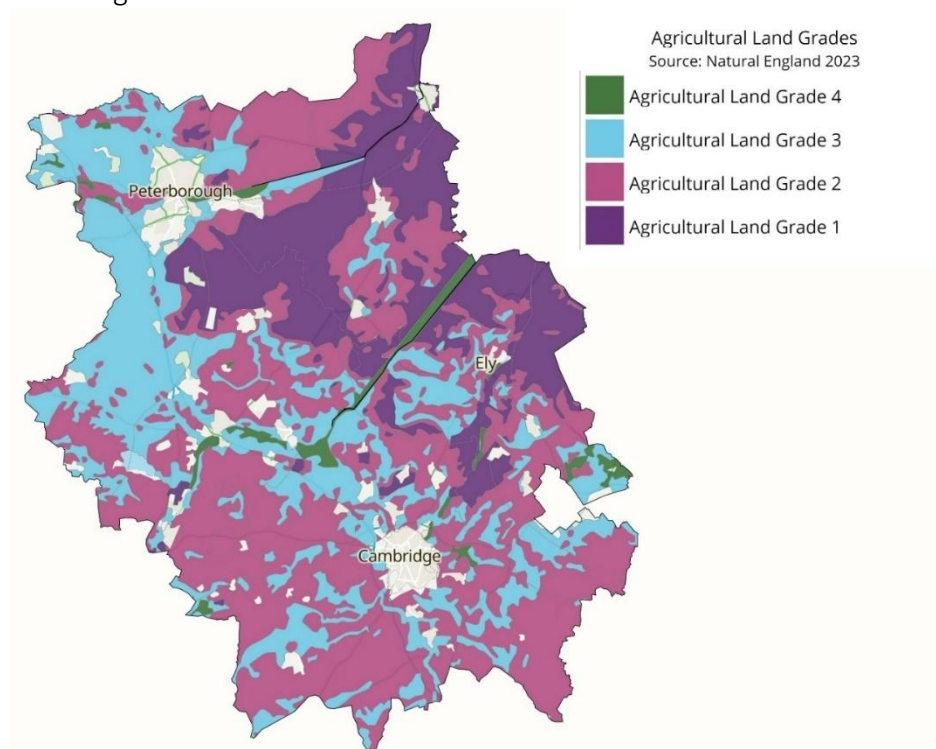


Figure 2-5: Agricultural Land Grades

While this data shows that the quality of agricultural land in the region is generally high across the region, there are concerns that lowland peatlands drained for agricultural use in England are fast degrading. A 2023 report²⁹ from the Lowland Agricultural Peat Task Force states that “When peatlands degrade, their soil is lost, the land subsides and the carbon they preserve is released

²⁹ DEFRA, 2023. Lowland Agricultural Peat Task Force Chair's report. [\[Link to source\]](#)



primarily as carbon dioxide to the atmosphere”, with this process being “bad both for farmers and the climate”.

2.4 Green Belt

The existence of a Green Belt in Cambridgeshire is key to preserving the region’s natural landscapes and preventing urban sprawl. A Green Belt refers to designated areas of open land around cities where development is restricted to maintain the countryside and provide open spaces for recreation, agriculture and wildlife habitats.

The Cambridge Green Belt, illustrated in [Figure 2-6](#), encompasses a total of 26,100 ha. The majority of this Green Belt is situated in South Cambridgeshire, covering 23,200 ha, with the remaining portions located in East Cambridgeshire (1,900 ha) and Cambridge (970 ha)³⁰.

As shown in [Figure 2-7](#), 8% of land across the C&P region is designated as Green Belt. This includes 26% of the land in South Cambridgeshire, 24% in Cambridge and 3% in East Cambridgeshire.

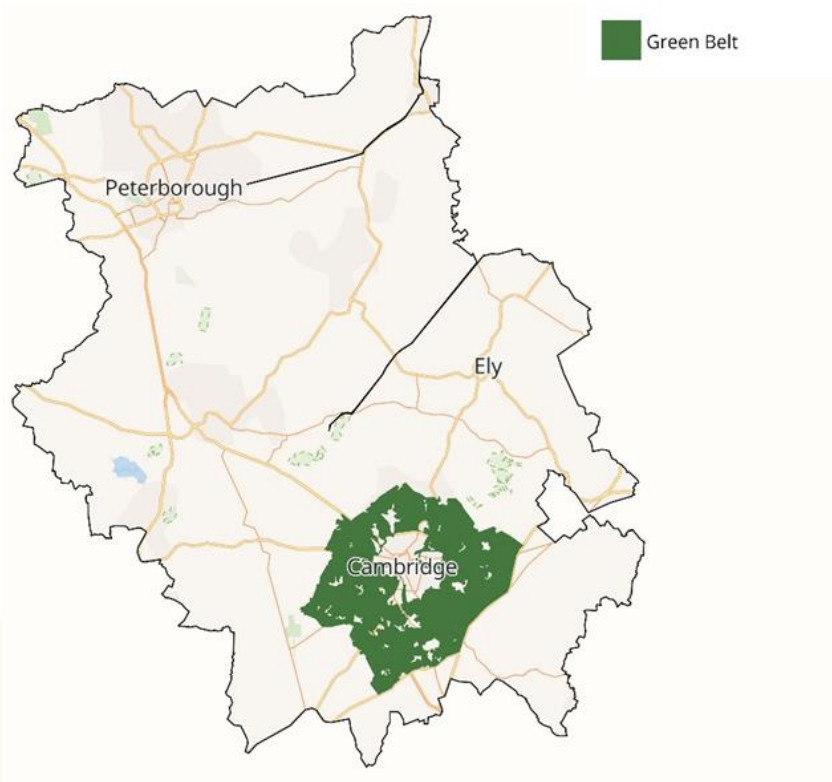


Figure 2-6: Cambridge Green Belt

³⁰ MHCLG, 2025. Local authority Green Belt statistics for England: 2024 to 2025. [\[Link to source\]](#)

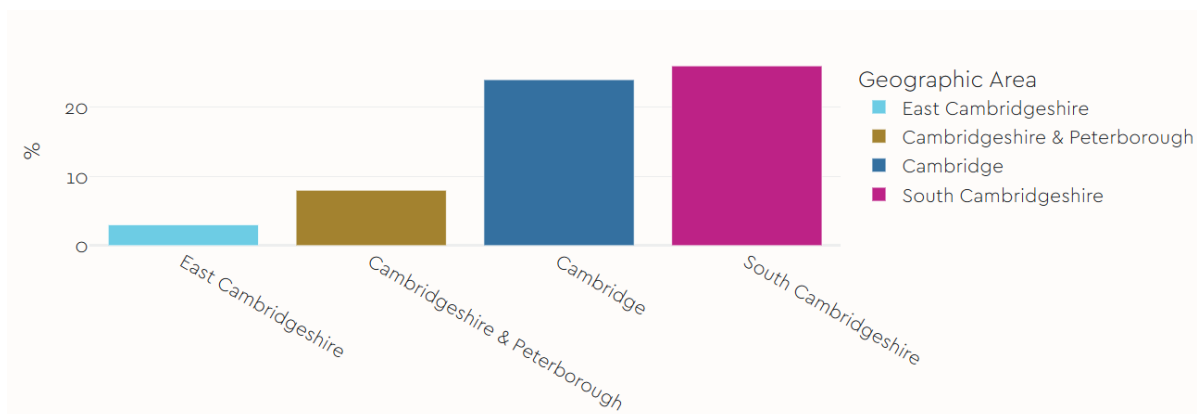


Figure 2-7: Proportion of Land as Green Belt (%)

A 2018 fact sheet³¹ from the Campaign to Protect Rural England (CPRE) stated that 82% of the Cambridge Green Belt land was in agricultural use and only 140ha was 'open access' land. While the CPRE's report was based on the Cambridge Green Belt prior to a small reduction in 2018/19, it is likely that a high proportion remains in agricultural use and a relatively small proportion would be 'open access' in 2026.

2.5 Brownfield Land

Brownfield land refers to previously developed or used land that may be vacant, derelict, or underused, and typically excludes land that remains in active use or has been restored to a natural state. Brownfield land can provide opportunities for residential or commercial development and, where brought forward, can support more sustainable patterns of growth by reducing development pressure on greenfield sites. This analysis draws on brownfield land recorded on Local Authority Brownfield Land Registers, as collated within the MHCLG brownfield land dataset³². These registers record land parcels or site components that have been identified by local planning authorities as suitable for development. They do not represent all brownfield land in each area, as smaller, fragmented, or unassessed brownfield sites are not included.

Importantly, a single development site may be represented by multiple register entries, for example where land is recorded or brought forward in phases, or where separate parts of a larger site are listed individually. As a result, counts presented here reflect the number of registered brownfield land entries, rather than the number of distinct development sites.

The data were mapped across the C&P region to calculate the total area and number of registered brownfield land entries within each local authority district. Figure 2-8 shows the count of registered brownfield land entries by local authority as of January 2026, summing to a total of 458 entries across the C&P region. South Cambridgeshire has the highest number of registered entries (121), followed by Cambridge (102), while Huntingdonshire has the lowest number of registered entries.

³¹ CPRE, 2018. Cambridge Green Belt Factsheet. [\[Link to source\]](#)

³² DLUHC, 2025. Brownfield Land. [\[Link to source\]](#)



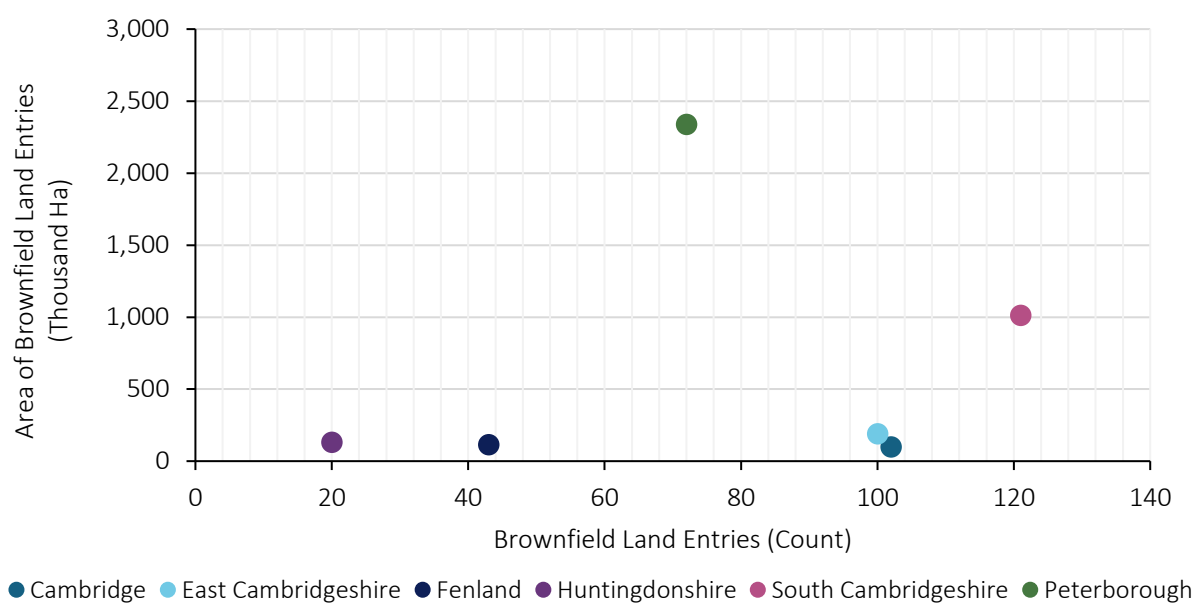


Figure 2-8: Count and Area of Brownfield Land Entries by Local Authority

Across the C&P region, there are approximately 3,900 hectares of registered brownfield land, the majority of which is located in Peterborough. Around 68% of registered entries are under 1 hectare in size, indicating that much of the region’s registered brownfield land consists of small sites. However, several large strategic brownfield locations account for a substantial proportion of total land area, including sites east of Hampton Vale (around 750 hectares), Hampton Leys (nearly 280 hectares), and the Waterbeach Barracks/Airfield site (over 265 hectares). Other large, registered brownfield areas include Bourn Airfield and Northstowe in South Cambridgeshire.

The spatial distribution of registered brownfield land entries across the region is shown in Figure 2-9, highlighting the spatial distribution of brownfield sites across C&P.



Figure 2-9: Location of Brownfield Sites as of January 2026



2.6 Designated Sites

Examining data on nature designations is essential for understanding the ecological significance and conservation status of natural areas within the C&P region. These designated sites encompass a range of sites that are legally protected due to their ecological importance and biodiversity value.

Nature designated sites, shown in [Figure 2-10](#), include

- Ancient Woodland³³
- Environmentally Sensitive Areas³⁴
- Local Nature Reserves³⁵
- National Nature Reserves³⁶
- Ramsar Sites³⁷
- Sites Special Scientific Interest (SSSIs)³⁸
- Special Areas of Conservation³⁹
- Special Protection Areas (SPAs)⁴⁰

Geospatial data presenting the area of each classified designated site was mapped onto the C&P region and its local authority district boundaries. From this, the total area of each designated site in each local authority district was calculated. This was divided by the total area of the respective local authority district to provide the proportion of land in each local authority district classified as a designated site. [Figure 2-11](#) shows the proportion of land assigned for each nature designation.

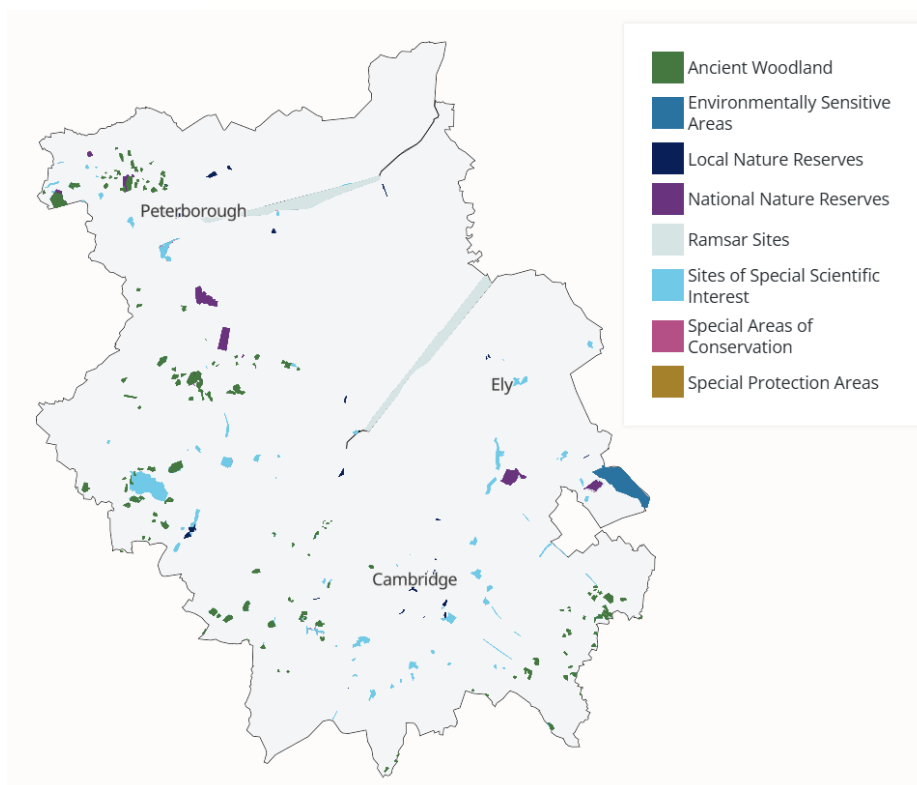


Figure 2-10: Nature Designated Sites as of January 2026

³³ Natural England, 2026. Ancient Woodland (England). [\[Link to source\]](#)

³⁴ Natural England, 2026. Environmentally Sensitive Areas (England). [\[Link to source\]](#)

³⁵ Natural England, 2026. Local Nature Reserves (England). [\[Link to source\]](#)

³⁶ Natural England, 2026. National Nature Reserves (England). [\[Link to source\]](#)

³⁷ Natural England, 2026. Ramsar (England). [\[Link to source\]](#)

³⁸ Natural England, 2026. Sites of Special Scientific Interest (England). [\[Link to source\]](#)

³⁹ Natural England, 2026. Special Areas of Conservation (England). [\[Link to source\]](#)

⁴⁰ Natural England, 2026. Special Protection Areas (England). [\[Link to source\]](#)



The C&P region has 6.4% of its area covered by designated sites. SSSIs are the designation with the greatest land cover in the region at 2.4%. However, this is still a very small area considering that the majority of land in C&P is non-developed (green space). The designation that covers the second largest area is the Ramsar sites, at 1.1% of the total area in the C&P region. It should be noted that there is overlap between designations, such as Ramsar, Special Areas of Conservation and SSSIs. Key SSSIs include:

Grafham Water: The 3rd largest reservoir in England and is an important SSSI.

Nene & Ouse Washes: Multiple nature designations, including as SPAs, Ramsar sites and SSSI.

Ancient woodland, which is an integral carbon sink that supports biodiversity, only accounts for 0.8% of total land. Furthermore, nature reserves account for a particularly small proportion of land - local nature reserves make up only 0.1% of land in the region, while national nature reserves represent 0.4% of land.

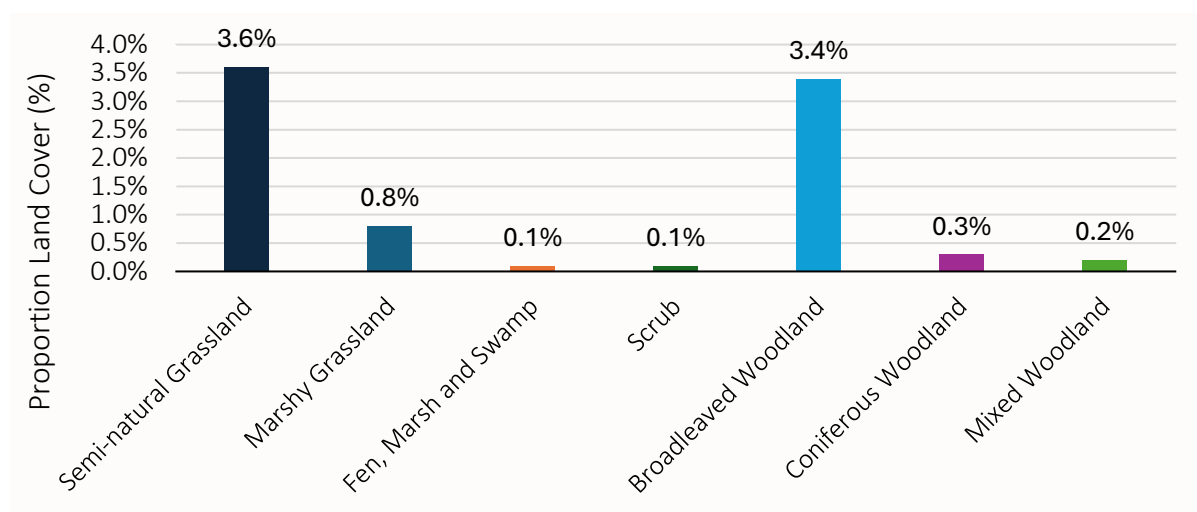


Figure 2-11: Proportion of Total Land Designated for Nature⁴¹

⁴¹ Natural Capital Solutions, 2022. A Nature Capital Assessment of Cambridgeshire and Peterborough. [\[Link to source\]](#)

3 Housing

3.1 Housing Prices

The ONS publishes the annual median value of the prices paid for residential property by geographical area⁴². Although the data is published on a quarterly basis, the year ending March was used in each year for a fair comparison of house price changes over time and between locations. The quarterly data release as of March provided the median price of a full year of house sales. This indicator examines the geospatial variation in house prices across C&P.

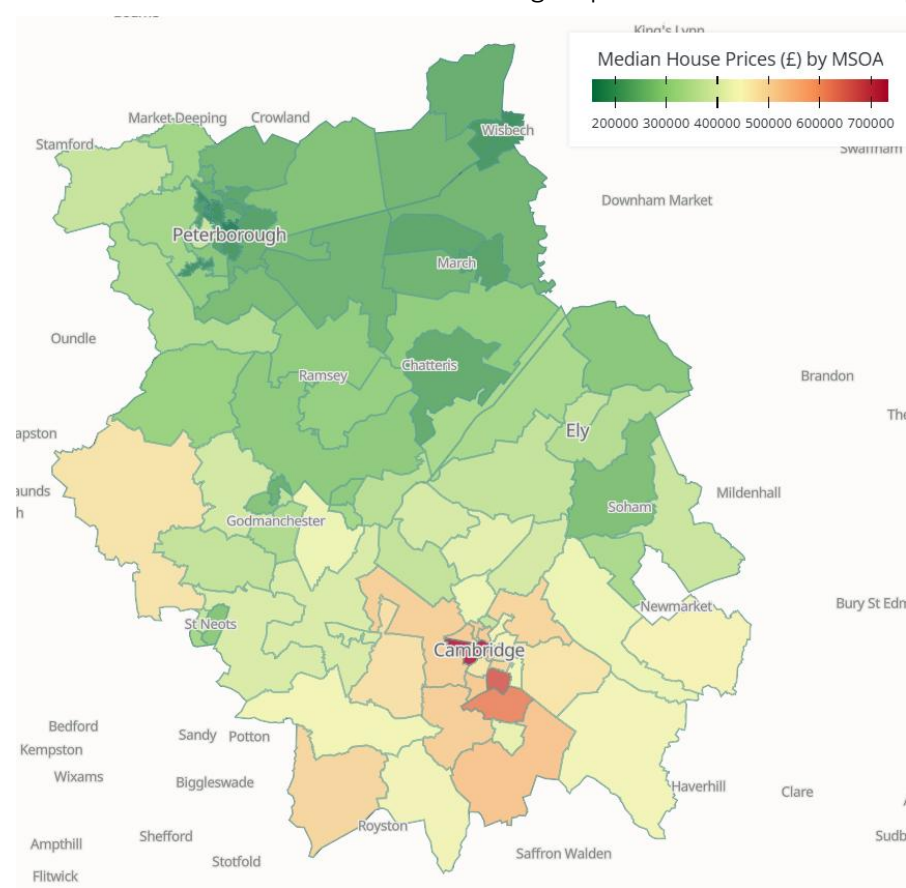


Figure 3-1: Median House Prices (£) by MSOA in 2025

In the year ending March 2025, the median house price in C&P was £325,000. This compares to England’s median house price of £300,000. Within C&P, house prices diverged significantly between the constituent local authority areas. For instance, Cambridge had a median house price of £493,000 in 2025, whilst the median house price in Peterborough was £245,000.

Figure 3-1 maps the median house price ONS data by MSOA, thus presenting the distribution of house prices across the entire C&P region at a relatively small geography. The majority of MSOAs had median house prices within the range of £251,600-£435,600. The map shows that MSOAs in the south and the east of the region generally had higher house prices. Indeed, all 10 of the MSOAs with the lowest median house price were situated in either Peterborough or Fenland, whereas all 10 of the MSOAs with the highest median house price were in either Cambridge or South Cambridgeshire.

3.2 Housing Affordability

Housing affordability estimates provided by the ONS were calculated by dividing house prices by gross annual residence-based earnings, based on the median of both house prices and

⁴² ONS, 2025. Median house prices for administrative geographies. [\[Link to source\]](#)



earnings⁴³. Affordability ratios can be used to compare affordability over time and between areas. A lower affordability ratio indicates that house prices are more affordable, whereas a higher affordability ratio indicates house prices are less affordable.

Local Authority Assessment: Across C&P's local authority areas, the housing affordability ratio as of 2024 ranged between 6.6 and 10.9, that is, a ratio of house price to earnings of between six and eleven times. The most affordable housing was in Fenland (6.6), whilst the least affordable housing was in Cambridge (10.9). This compared to England's housing affordability ratio of 7.7. **Figure 3-2** plots the housing affordability ratio within each of C&P's local authority areas during the period 2017 to 2024. In every year, Cambridge had the largest ratio (least affordable), though it fell to its lowest historical ratio since 2017 (13.3), in 2024 (10.9). In all but one of the years, Fenland had the smallest ratio, and moreover, fell to its lowest ratio in 2024 (at 6.6) since 2017.

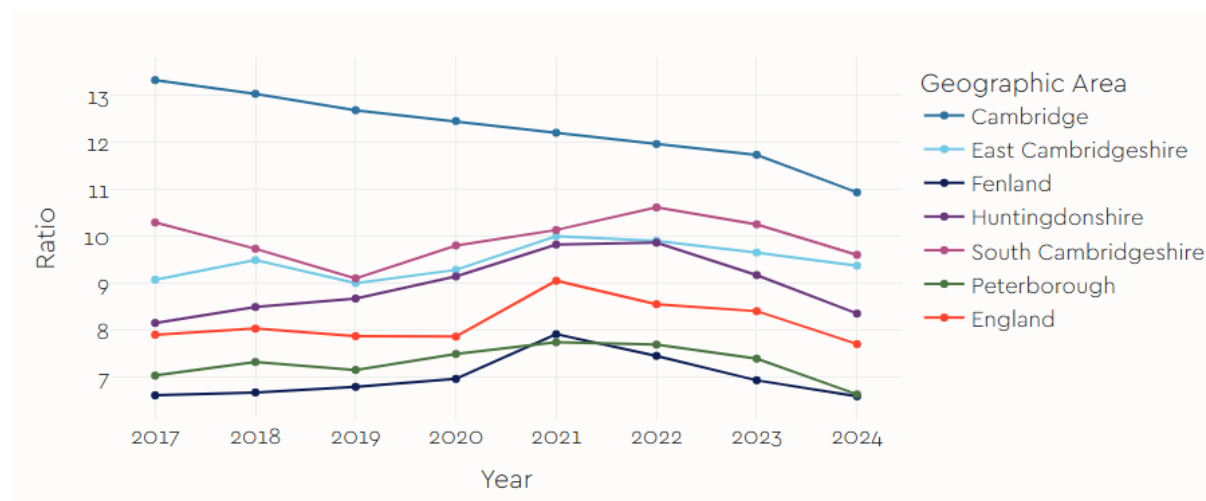


Figure 3-2: Housing Affordability (Ratio) by Local Authority Area & England and by Year

To allow investigation of housing affordability at a local level, housing affordability using LSOA-level house price data was calculated and annual income data relating to the containing MSOA during 2020, the latest year for which small geography income data was available. **Figure 3-3** displays the housing affordability ratio for each LSOA in C&P.

Overall, within the region, there was a wide range in housing affordability, with affordability ratios ranging from 2 to 23, depending on the location. In general, housing within LSOAs in the north of the region, e.g. within Fenland, was more affordable than in LSOAs in the south.

⁴³ ONS, 2025. House price to residence-based earnings ratio. [\[Link to source\]](#)

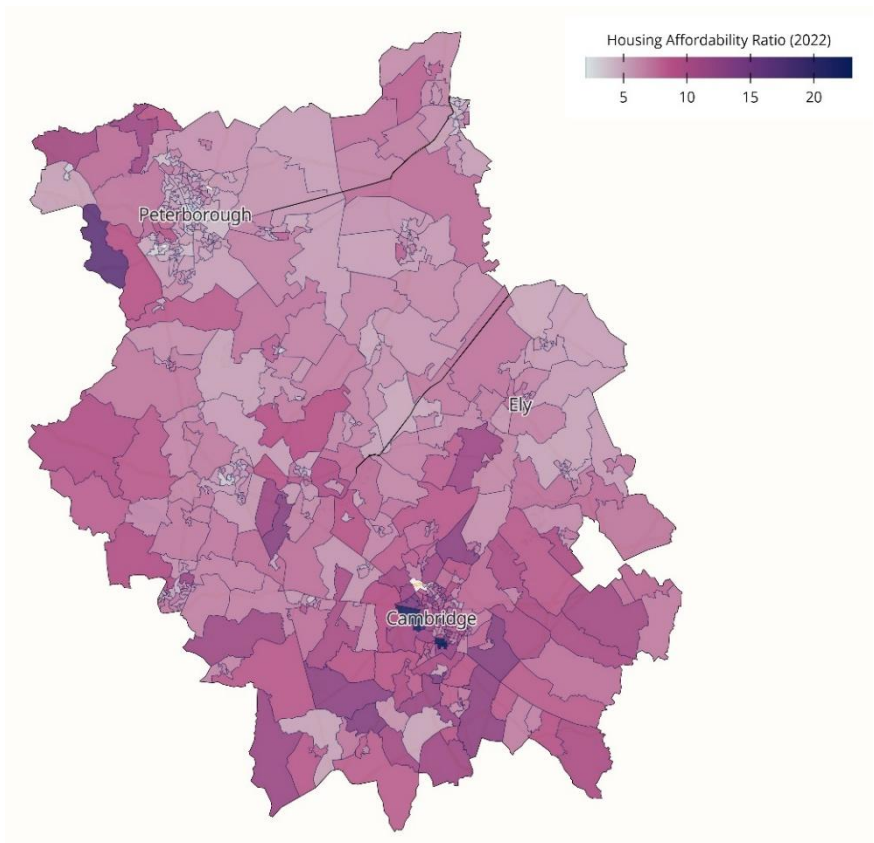


Figure 3-3: Housing Affordability in Each LSOA

3.3 Housing Affordability (Low Earners)

Housing affordability for low earners provided by the ONS is a ratio measuring the affordability of houses for the population in the lowest quartiles of earnings⁴⁴. It was calculated by dividing the lower quartile of house prices by the lower quartile of earnings for each local authority area in the C&P region. Figure 3-4 plots the housing affordability for low earners in each local authority area within C&P. The higher the ratio, the more unaffordable housing is for low earners.

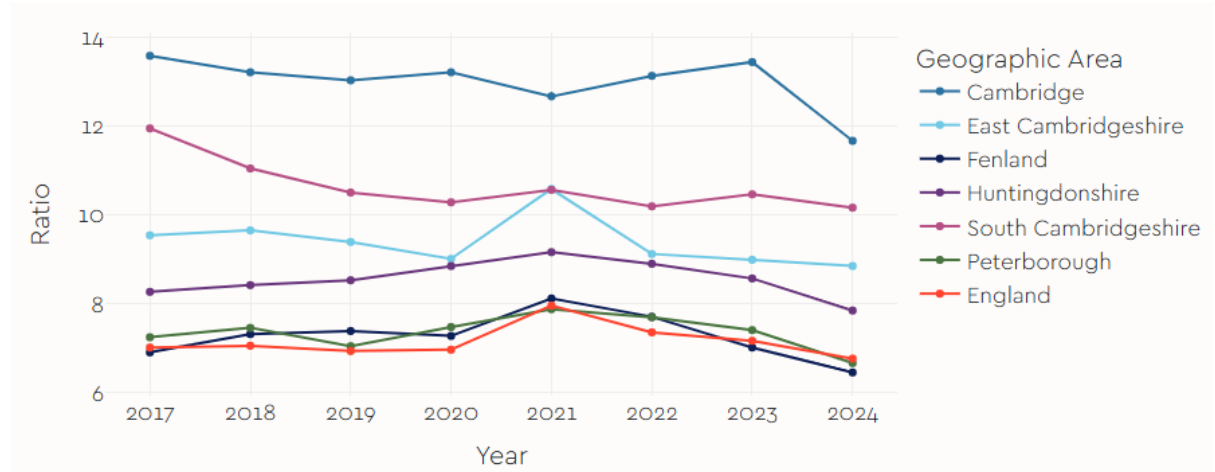


Figure 3-4: Housing Affordability for Low Earners (Ratio) by Local Authority Area & England and by Year

In every year between 2017 and 2024, Cambridge had the highest housing affordability ratio (least affordable housing) for low-income earners within the C&P region, though it fell to its lowest value of 11.66 in 2024. In comparison, England had a ratio of 6.77. In all but two of the years, Fenland had the smallest ratio, and in 2024 was 6.46, the lowest historically. Peterborough was marginally larger at

⁴⁴ ONS, 2025. House price to residence-based earnings ratio. [\[Link to source\]](#)

6.67 in 2024 and replaced Fenland in the two years of 2019 and 2021 as the C&P local authority area with the smallest housing affordability for low earners ratio (most affordable for housing). Between 2017 and 2024, all C&P's local authority areas' housing affordability for low earners ratio decreased. The largest absolute reduction was in Cambridge, from 13.57 in 2017 to 11.66 in 2024.

3.4 Private Rental Affordability

Private rented accommodation is that which is rented from a body other than a local authority or housing association. This dataset defines the ratio of the median monthly rent in the private sector to one-twelfth of the median full-time worker's net salary⁴⁵. This dataset specifically uses the median price for a one-bedroom property, which is defined as a self-contained property with one bedroom, including houses, bungalows, flats, and maisonettes.

Figure 3-5 plots the cost of private rent as a percentage of average net monthly income in each local authority area in the C&P region between 2019 and 2023. The data source only discloses values for East Cambridgeshire between 2020 and 2021.

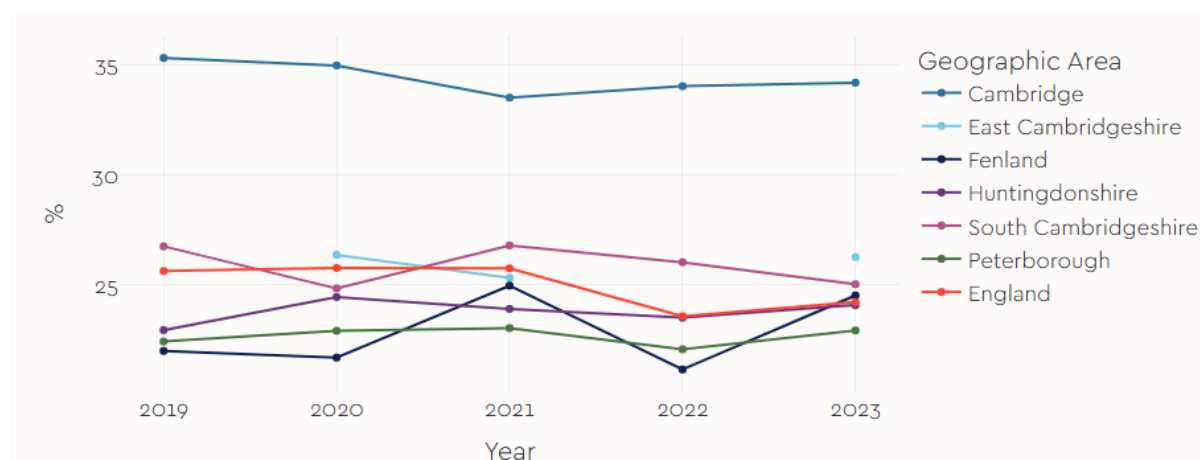


Figure 3-5: Private Rental Affordability (%) by Local Authority Area & England and by Year

Consistent with other measures of affordability, private rents in Cambridge represent the highest percentage of monthly salary within the region. This is reflective of the high property prices in the area. The cost of rent as a percentage of monthly salary in Cambridge decreased slightly since 2019, falling to 34% in 2023, but still represents just over a third of the median wage.

South Cambridgeshire was the second least affordable area in the C&P region in rental terms, with private rent representing 25% of net average income. In 2023, Peterborough was the most affordable local authority area from the perspective of private rent, with rent representing 23% of the average salary.

3.5 Housing Delivery

Housing delivery numbers were sourced from the net additional dwellings statistics for each local authority area⁴⁶. They measure the absolute change in dwelling stock from year to year, calculated by consolidating the total net additions to the housing stock, subtracting any losses of housing stock (such as due to demolitions). Net additions can include new build homes, change of use of buildings (such as a housing converted into multiple flats) and conversions from alternate building types (such as offices). The data incorporated both private sector and public sector additions to the housing stock. The data only included completed housing developments, though. Projects in the process of completion were therefore not included in the annual total. Housing delivery helps to understand how many new homes are being added each year within each location.

⁴⁵ ONS, 2023. Private rental market summary statistics in England. [\[Link to source\]](#)

⁴⁶ MHCLG, 2025. Live tables on housing supply: net additional dwellings. [\[Link to source\]](#)

Figure 3-6 plots the net increase in housing stock for each local authority area in the region since 2001-02. In 2024-25, a total of 5,629 additions were made to the housing supply in C&P. This was up from the 4,696 additions in the previous year of 2023-24 and was the second highest absolute number of additions since 2001-02 (highest was 5,706 additions in 2022-23). Between 2014-15 and 2024-25, an average of 4,812 additions to housing supply were made in C&P in each year. Across the region, the number of net additions to the housing supply between 2001-02 and 2024-25 totalled 102,436. During this entire period, net housing supply in Peterborough contributed 22.8% to C&P's total with 23,399 net additions, followed by South Cambridgeshire (21.0%) and Huntingdonshire (18.8%).

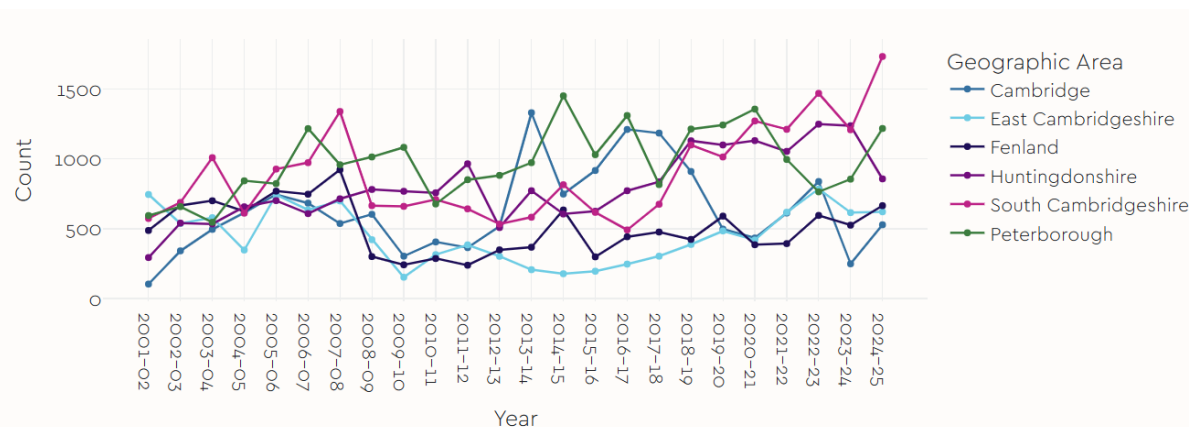


Figure 3-6: Net Additional Housing Delivery (Count) by Local Authority Area and by Year

In the most recent year of data, 2024-25, South Cambridgeshire had the highest net additions to housing supply within the region, increasing its housing stock by 1,735 homes, which was 30.8% of C&P's total. Peterborough had the second highest net additions at 1,219 (21.7% of C&P's total). The fewest net additions to the housing supply across all C&P's local authority areas were in Cambridge, with 529 additions, representing 9.4% of C&P's total.

3.6 Affordable Housing Delivery

Affordable housing delivery data from the MHCLG was defined as housing for sale or rent, for those whose needs are not met by the [private] market⁴⁷. It included a variety of different properties, such as new builds or private sector acquisitions. The affordable houses are provided for rent or sale, under a range of tenures such as social rent, affordable rent, and shared ownership. Monitoring affordable housing delivery is important for assessing the functionality of the housing market to meet the needs of the population since it identifies key shortages within the market, essential for informing housing planning and development. Figure 3-7 plots the number of additional affordable homes added to the housing stock by year.

⁴⁷ MHCLG, 2024. Live tables on affordable housing supply. [\[Link to source\]](#)

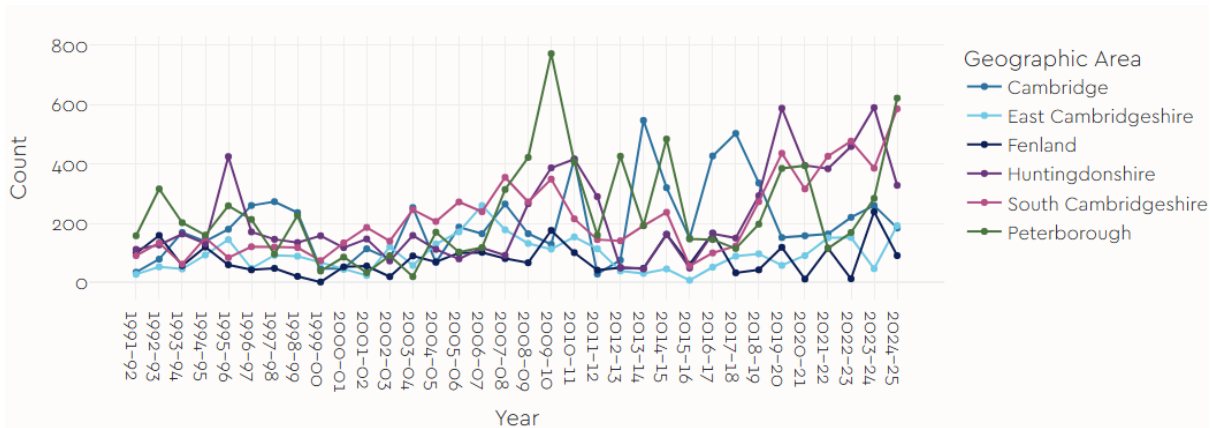


Figure 3-7: Affordable Housing Delivery (Count) by Local Authority Area and by Year

From 1991-92, an additional 35,760 affordable houses were added to the C&P region’s housing stock as of 2024-25. During this period, the most affordable housing delivery was in Peterborough with 22.5% of C&P’s total (8,040 additions), followed by Huntingdonshire with 7,486 additions, which was 20.9% of C&P’s total. The fewest affordable housing additions were in Fenland with 2,722 houses, 7.6% of C&P’s total.

In the most recent year of data, 2024-25, the most affordable housing supply was in Peterborough with 622 of C&P’s total 2,003 affordable housing delivery, which was 31.1% of C&P’s total. South Cambridgeshire had the second most affordable housing supply with 586, 29.3% of C&P’s total. Fenland had the lowest supply, with 91 affordable housing deliveries, which was 4.5% of C&P’s total.

Figure 3-8 charts the year-on-year growth rate of the number of additional affordable homes added to the housing stocks of C&P and England. Overall, C&P had a higher average yearly growth rate of 10.7%, compared to England’s 5.3%. Although C&P’s year-on-year growth rate was more volatile than England’s. 2015-16 was the lowest year-on-year growth rate for both C&P and England during the entire period between 1992-93 and 2024-25. However, 2016-17 was the year in which the highest year-on-year growth rate for C&P of 124% occurred, 95 percentage points above the England rate in the same year.

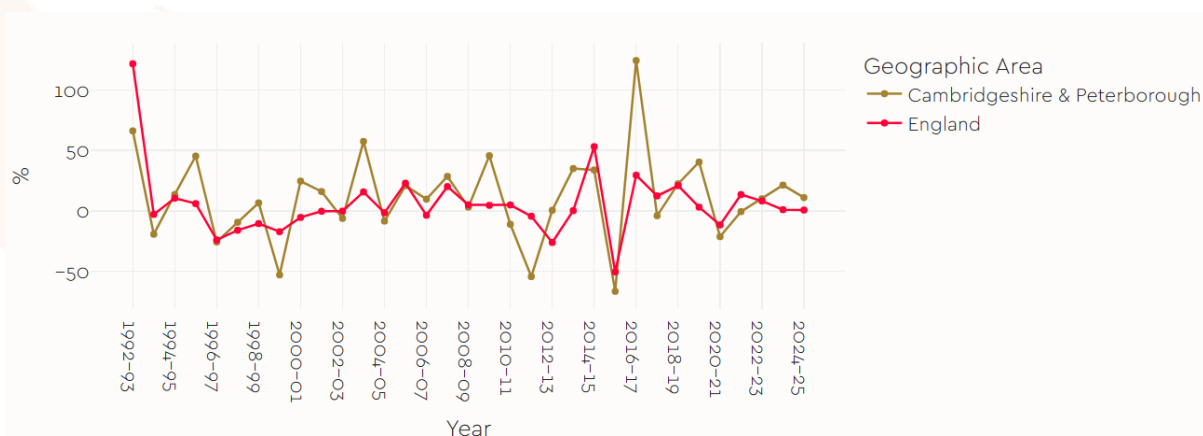


Figure 3-8: Year-on-year Growth in Affordable Housing Delivery (%) by Geographical Area and by Year



3.7 Housing as Second Homes

Second homes are defined as any unoccupied dwellings that have no usual residents. This indicator reports second homes as a proportion of the total number of dwellings by area⁴⁸. The number of dwellings classified a second homes was collected from the 2021 Census and divided by the total number of occupied dwellings within the local authority area, also collected from the 2021 Census. In areas of poor housing affordability, or where vacancy of these properties creates seasonal impacts on the economy, the presence of high levels of second-home ownership may be a concern.

Figure 3-9 charts the percentage of dwellings classified as second homes both nationally and in each local authority area in C&P.

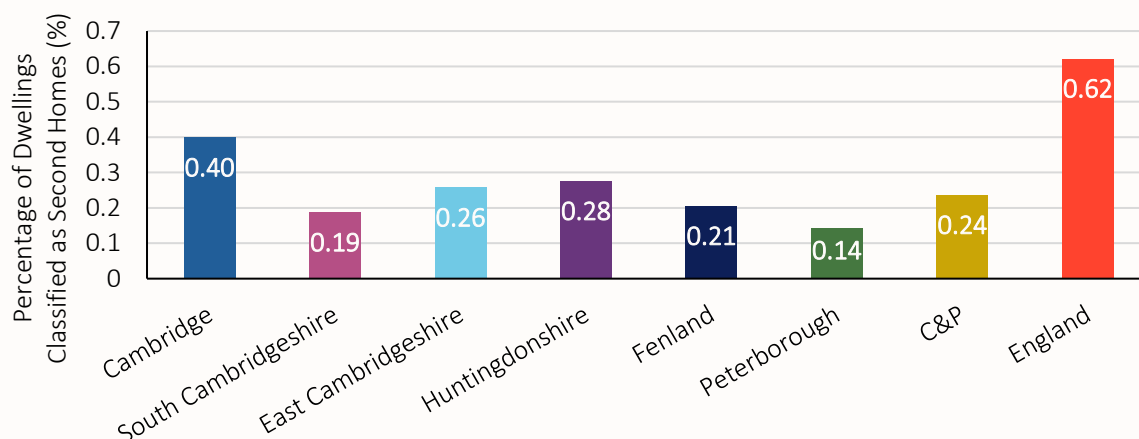


Figure 3-9: Dwellings Classified as Second Homes (%) by Local Authority Area & England in 2021

Overall, the average percentage of second homes across the C&P region was 0.24%, lower than the rate in England overall (0.62%). Within the region, Cambridge had the highest percentage of second homes (0.40%), whereas Peterborough had the lowest percentage of second homes (0.14%).

3.8 Rough Sleeping

Rough sleeping data provided by the MHCLG was defined as individuals actively or intending to sleep in either the open air or places not designed for habitation⁴⁹. The data included on the streets, bus stops, doorways, stairways, and car parks, whilst the individual must either have been in the process of sleeping in these areas, or have clear intentions to do so, such as standing near or sitting on makeshift bedding. A count was conducted annually on the same night of the 30th of October, to provide an estimate for the number of rough sleepers in each area on a night in autumn and to assess the change in rough sleepers over time. The count excluded any homeless individuals staying in hostels or shelters, and squatters. Where possible, data were also collected on the demographic characteristics of the individuals who were rough sleeping. Protected characteristics such as age and sex were recorded, if disclosed. Any individuals who appeared to be asleep at the time of the data collection did not have their demographic characteristics obtained.

Figure 3-10 plots the number of rough sleepers identified in each local authority area in the C&P region between 2010 and 2024. During this period, Peterborough and Cambridge generally had the highest number of rough sleepers, each averaging around 25 rough sleepers per yearly

⁴⁸ ONS, 2021. Number of vacant and second homes, England and Wales: Census 2021. [\[Link to source\]](#)

⁴⁹ MHCLG, 2025. Rough sleeping snapshot in England: autumn 2024. [\[Link to source\]](#)





snapshot. Comparatively, C&P had an average yearly snapshot of 70 rough sleepers, whilst East Cambridgeshire and South Cambridgeshire each had an average yearly snapshot of two rough sleepers. There was a notable decrease in 2020, within which rough sleeping in Peterborough fell considerably, from 37 rough sleepers the previous year of 2019 to nine a year later. During 2020, the government initiated several interventions targeted at reducing rough sleeping to protect vulnerable groups and prevent the spread of COVID-19. These included the Everyone In scheme and the Rough Sleeping Accommodation Programme, possible explanations for the sudden decrease in rough sleeping in this period.

In the latest data, covering 2024, Cambridge had the highest number of rough sleepers at 26. Peterborough had the second highest count at 16, though a sizeable drop from the previous year's count for Peterborough of 24. Huntingdonshire had the third highest number of rough sleepers in the region, with nine in 2024, whilst South Cambridgeshire had the lowest count of one. Overall, within C&P, the count of rough sleepers in 2024 of 62 was unchanged from the previous year.

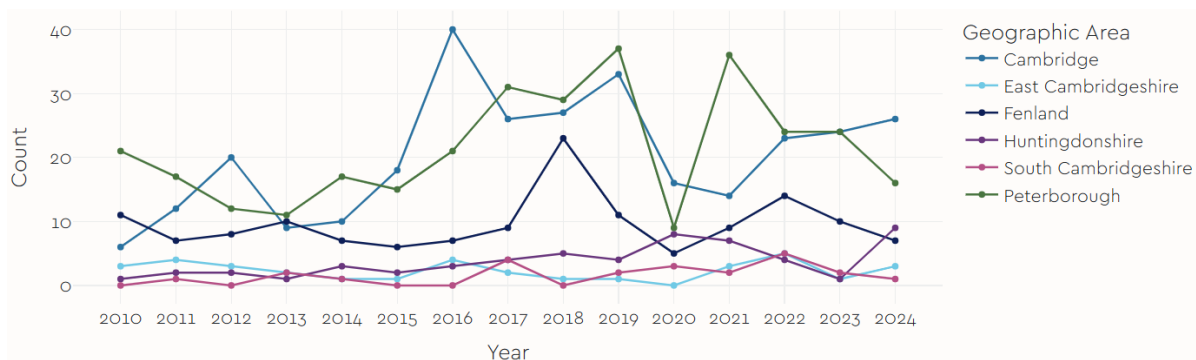


Figure 3-10: Rough Sleepers (Count) by Local Authority Area by Year

Figure 3-11 and Figure 3-12 chart the demographic breakdown of the total number of rough sleepers in each C&P local authority area. It is important to note that this data was only obtained if it was available. However, a disaggregation by sex has been included herein to gain an initial understanding of rough sleeping amongst different protected characteristics. In some cases, there was no data available on a protected characteristic as it was not identified within the sample that responded to questions on their demographic. Note that, consequently, there were data gaps on female rough sleepers in Fenland, Huntingdonshire, South Cambridgeshire, and East Cambridgeshire throughout the period. This does not necessarily indicate that there were no female rough sleepers in these areas, as it is possible that the data was not disclosed. Nevertheless, generally between both sexes a higher proportion of rough sleepers were males compared to females.

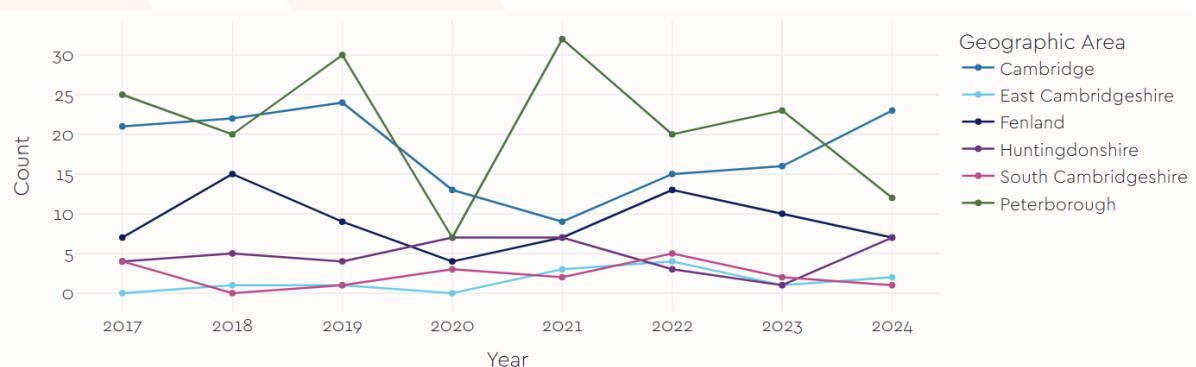


Figure 3-11: Estimate of Male Rough Sleepers (Count) by Local Authority Area by Year

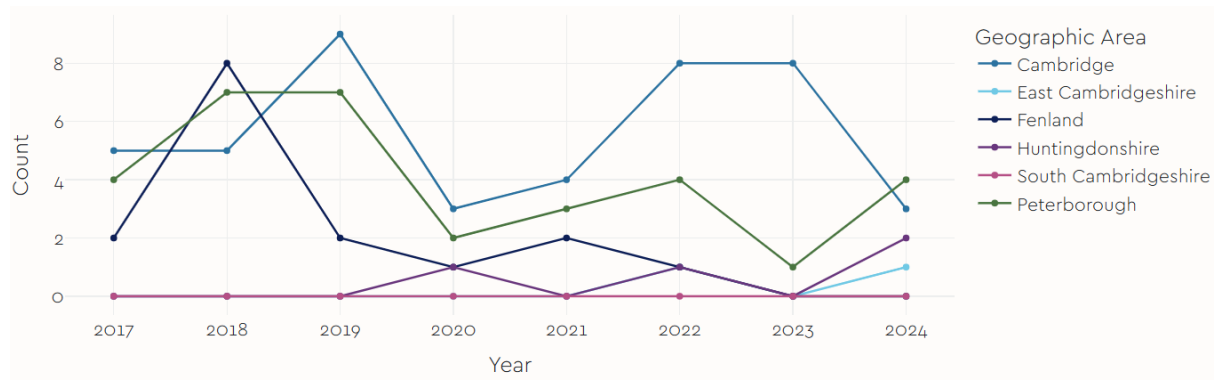


Figure 3-12: Estimate of Female Rough Sleepers (Count) by Local Authority Area by Year

Figure 3-13 and Figure 3-14 plot the demographic breakdown of rough sleeping estimates by age groups in each local authority area in the C&P region. Overall, during this period, the count of rough sleepers within each age grouping suggests that a substantially higher proportion of rough sleepers were over the age of 26 compared to those aged 18-25.

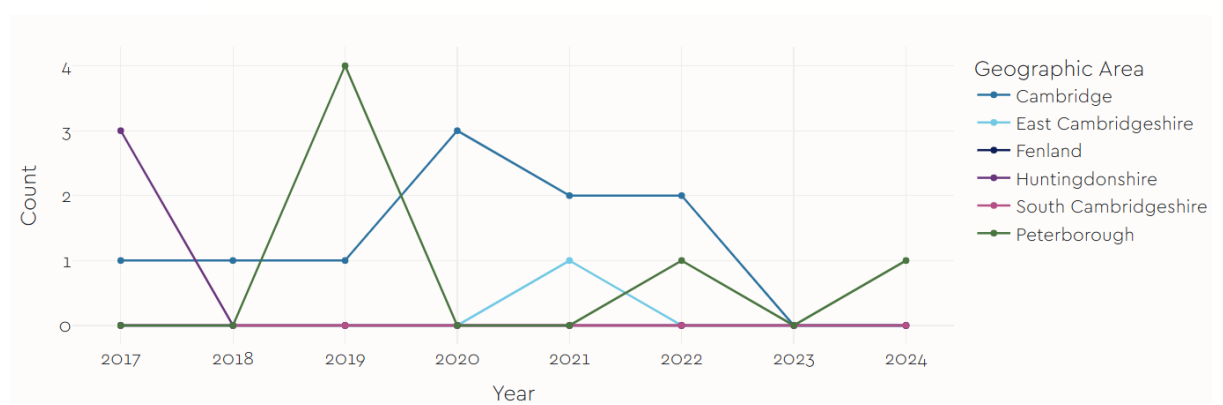


Figure 3-13: Rough Sleeping Estimates for 18-25 Years Olds (Count) by Local Authority Area by Year

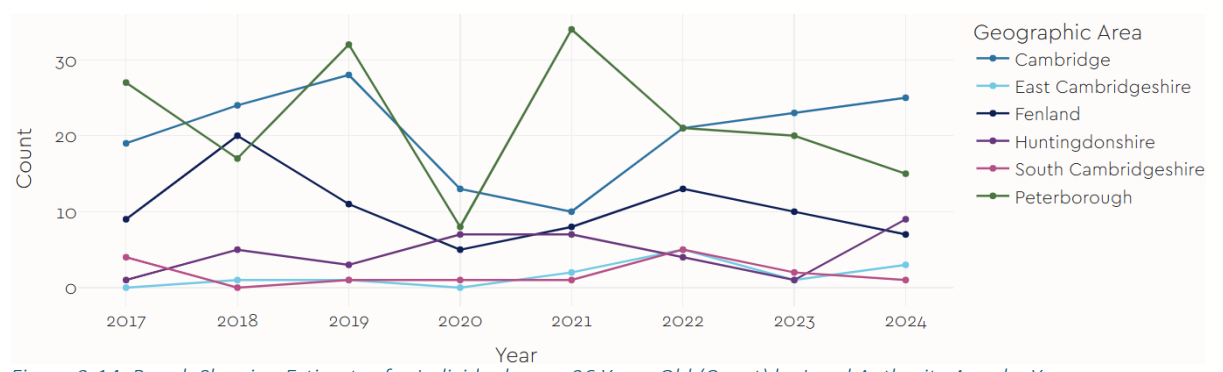


Figure 3-14: Rough Sleeping Estimates for Individuals over 26 Years Old (Count) by Local Authority Area by Year