

Peterborough

Cambridgeshire

'Mark Three' New Town – Designated 21 July 1967

Peterborough was a city long before it was designated a New Town. The feasibility of a large-scale expansion of Peterborough was first examined in the early 1960s, when Sir Henry Wells carried out a study for the Government on providing homes, workplaces and services and amenities for 70,000 incomers. The expanded town would take up London 'overspill' and create a regional growth city, acting as a counter-magnet to the capital. Today, Peterborough is an important regional centre, providing employment and services for people across a wide catchment area. It has been growing for many years, through a mixture of peripheral expansion and the redevelopment of vacant and derelict sites within the urban area. One of the most noticeable examples of this is at Hampton, a major urban extension under way on reclaimed brickfields.



Key facts:

- **Location:** 124 kilometres north of London, 56 kilometres north east of Northampton.
- **2011 Census population:** 183,631, in 74,023 households.¹
- **Local authority:** Peterborough City Council.
- **Local Plan status:** Peterborough Core Strategy Development Plan Document (adopted 2011).

New Town designation:

- **Designated:** 21 July 1967.
- **Designated area:** 6,455 hectares.
- **Intended population:** 188,000 (population at designation: 81,000).
- **Development Corporation:** Aimed to help relieve London's housing needs, absorb some of the natural increase in the population of the South East, and improve the existing city. The New Town's township concept was the central feature of the Hancock Hawkes advisory plan of 1968 and of the Development Corporation's masterplan of 1970. Development Corporation wound up 30 September 1988.

Housing, deprivation and health:

- The proportion of homes in Peterborough that are owner-occupied (59.3%) is 0.6% higher than the UK New Towns average and 4.3% lower than the UK average. 19.5% of households are in social rent – 2.0% lower than the UK New Towns average and 1.4% higher than the UK average. 19.1% of households are in private rent – 6.2% and 3.4% higher than the UK New Towns and UK averages, respectively.
- Household deprivation is broadly in line with the English New Towns and England averages. 40.1% of households are not deprived in any dimension – around 2% lower than the English New Towns and England averages. 0.7% are deprived in four dimensions – 0.1% lower than the English New Towns average and 0.1% higher than the England average.
- The 2011 Census reported that 44.3% of Peterborough New Town residents declared themselves to be in 'very good' health – 2.4% and 3.3% lower than the UK New Towns and

UK averages, respectively. 37.3% declared themselves to be in 'good' health – around 3.5% higher than the UK New Towns and UK averages. 4.0% and 1.1%, respectively, declared 'bad' and 'very bad' health – 0.1-0.3% lower than the UK New Towns and UK averages.

Employment/economic profile:

- Peterborough has a diverse economy. Two of the biggest employers are in the public sector, but large numbers of people are employed in a range of service industries, including insurance, publishing, travel, retailing and logistics. Manufacturing still has a significant place in the economy. An important characteristic is Peterborough's concentration of companies engaged in environment-related activities.
- Within the Greater Cambridge Greater Peterborough LEP.

Development Corporation legacy:

- The character of the modern city of Peterborough is often associated with its New Town background, but its core also contains important historic buildings and the surrounding rural area contains high-quality historic environments.
- The new Orton, Bretton and Werrington townships were designed to include a generous provision of open space. Their well integrated green infrastructure is easily accessible by local residents, but some play areas are too small and suffer from vandalism and anti-social activities because of a lack of natural casual surveillance.
- The landscaped parkways are an important part of the city's 'Green Grid'.

Key issues for the future:

- Delivering viable growth with appropriate infrastructure.
- Delivering sustainable development that contributes to Peterborough's ambition to be Environment Capital of the UK.
- Improving the quality of life for people and communities through new development, regeneration, the provision of services and facilities, and the protection and enhancement of heritage and environmental assets.

¹ Peterborough City Council area data used owing to the tight administrative boundary

Did you know?

Peterborough's 40th anniversary was marked by a three-year 'Forty Years On' programme of theatre, oral history and archive events.