

Section 1

Introduction

Key Characteristics of Peterborough

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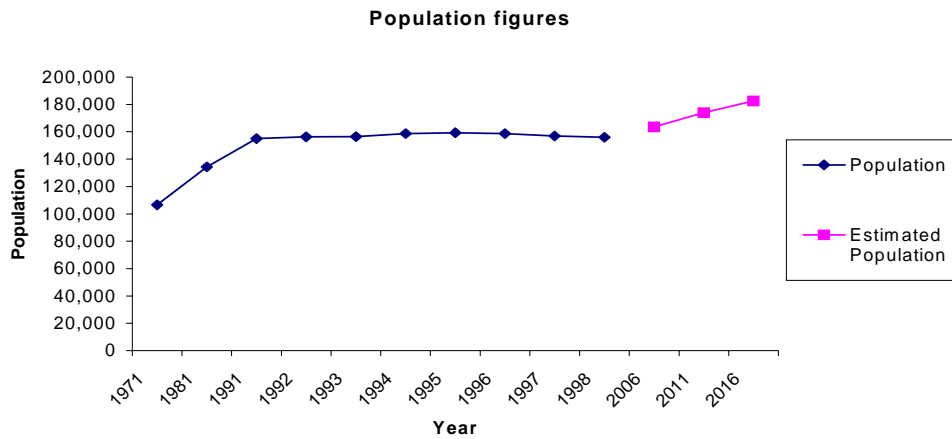
- 1.1 Peterborough is situated in the East of England, strategically located between East Anglia and the Midlands. Peterborough has excellent road and rail connections both north-south and east-west. The city is 78 miles from London, five miles from the A1, and less than 20 miles from the A14, which links the east coast ports of Felixstowe and Harwich with the Midlands.



- 1.2 Peterborough was designated a 'New Town' in 1968, and the Peterborough Development Corporation was established to double the city's population in close partnership with the City Council. The Corporation's master plan was to concentrate development in four new residential townships, each with a full range of social and economic facilities. The last of these, Hampton, is now being built to the south of the city, which will continue the city's growth with the development of over 8,000 houses and industrial and commercial space for 12,000 jobs.
- 1.3 During the New Town stage of development, new parkways - heavily landscaped dual carriageway roads - were built to improve the transport infrastructure, and bus services were encouraged. A network of cycle routes was established and Peterborough now has one of Britain's largest segregated cycling systems (the "Green Wheel", funded by the Millennium Commission), over 100km in length.
- 1.4 According to a study commissioned by the East of England Regional Assembly, Peterborough's status as a sub-regional 'capital city' provides the basis for substantial economic growth over the next 20 years and beyond.
- 1.5 Peterborough was designated an Environment City in 1992, one of only four cities in Britain to be given this status. A unique partnership exists between public, private and voluntary sectors, in the form of the Peterborough Environment City Trust, which takes a lead role in many environmental initiatives in the area.

- 1.6 The Peterborough unitary authority area comprises the city itself, with a population of 136,900 together with a small rural hinterland with a population of 19,490.

Population and estimated population figures



- 1.7 The above graph indicates the rapid growth of Peterborough from 1971 to 1991. The seventies witnessed the greatest degree of change, resulting from new town expansion.
- 1.8 Over the coming years, the population of the city is set to continue to grow by some 11.6%, from 156,500 (mid 2001 est) to 181,800 in 2016. Peterborough is forecast to grow faster than all neighbouring authorities.
- 1.9 However, Peterborough has recently been recognised as an area for sustained growth by the Office of the Deputy Prime Minister (ODPM) as part of the Sustainable Communities Initiative which will have the effect of increasing population further as new housing developments are undertaken.
- 1.10 The City Council determined, in 2002, that it should take a broader, longer term perspective on the opportunities for growth and change. In conjunction with the East of England Development Agency and English Partnerships, it assembled a “City Centre Masterplan” with contributions from a wide range of stakeholders. The new Masterplan, currently at consultation stage, sets out the vision of how Peterborough will transform over the next 15-20 years, identifying investment opportunities and the need for a comprehensive approach to future transport needs.

1.11 Peterborough possesses an inherent audit culture with close working links with key partner organisations. The development and recent publication of the Peterborough Transport Audit, in association with the Peterborough Environment City Trust (PECT), is an example of this.