

Thurrock: A place of opportunity, enterprise and excellence, where individuals, communities and businesses flourish

Housing Overview and Scrutiny Committee

The meeting will be held at **7.00 pm** on **6 October 2016**

Committee Room 1, Civic Offices, New Road, Grays, Essex RM17 6SL

Membership:

Councillors Gerard Rice (Chair), Chris Baker (Vice-Chair), Jan Baker, Sue MacPherson, Jane Potheary and Joycelyn Redsell

Lynn Mansfield, Housing Tenant Representative

Substitutes:

Councillors John Allen, Tony Fish, Ben Maney, Terry Piccolo and Kevin Wheeler

Agenda

Open to Public and Press

	Page
1 Apologies for Absence	
2 Minutes	5 - 12
To approve as a correct record the minutes of the Housing Overview and Scrutiny Committee meeting held on 21 July 2016.	
3 Urgent Items	
To receive additional items that the Chair is of the opinion should be considered as a matter of urgency, in accordance with Section 100B (4) (b) of the Local Government Act 1972.	
4 Declaration of Interests	
5 Update on the Homelessness Prevention Strategy 2015-2016	13 - 44
6 Transforming Homes Update	45 - 54

7	Sheltered Housing Decommissioning - Update	55 - 70
8	Fixed Term Secure Tenancies	71 - 122
9	Work Programme	123 - 124

Queries regarding this Agenda or notification of apologies:

Please contact Kenna-Victoria Martin, Senior Democratic Services Officer by sending an email to Direct.Democracy@thurrock.gov.uk

Agenda published on: **28 September 2016**

Information for members of the public and councillors

Access to Information and Meetings

Members of the public can attend all meetings of the council and its committees and have the right to see the agenda, which will be published no later than 5 working days before the meeting, and minutes once they are published.

Recording of meetings

This meeting may be recorded for transmission and publication on the Council's website. At the start of the meeting the Chair will confirm if all or part of the meeting is to be recorded.

Members of the public not wishing any speech or address to be recorded for publication to the Internet should contact Democratic Services to discuss any concerns.

If you have any queries regarding this, please contact Democratic Services at Direct.Democracy@thurrock.gov.uk

Guidelines on filming, photography, recording and use of social media at council and committee meetings

The council welcomes the filming, photography, recording and use of social media at council and committee meetings as a means of reporting on its proceedings because it helps to make the council more transparent and accountable to its local communities.

If you wish to film or photograph the proceedings of a meeting and have any special requirements or are intending to bring in large equipment please contact the Communications Team at CommunicationsTeam@thurrock.gov.uk before the meeting. The Chair of the meeting will then be consulted and their agreement sought to any specific request made.

Where members of the public use a laptop, tablet device, smart phone or similar devices to use social media, make recordings or take photographs these devices must be set to 'silent' mode to avoid interrupting proceedings of the council or committee.

The use of flash photography or additional lighting may be allowed provided it has been discussed prior to the meeting and agreement reached to ensure that it will not disrupt proceedings.

The Chair of the meeting may terminate or suspend filming, photography, recording and use of social media if any of these activities, in their opinion, are disrupting proceedings at the meeting.

Thurrock Council Wi-Fi

Wi-Fi is available throughout the Civic Offices. You can access Wi-Fi on your device by simply turning on the Wi-Fi on your laptop, Smartphone or tablet.

- You should connect to TBC-CIVIC
- Enter the password **Thurrock** to connect to/join the Wi-Fi network.
- A Terms & Conditions page should appear and you have to accept these before you can begin using Wi-Fi. Some devices require you to access your browser to bring up the Terms & Conditions page, which you must accept.

The ICT department can offer support for council owned devices only.

Evacuation Procedures

In the case of an emergency, you should evacuate the building using the nearest available exit and congregate at the assembly point at Kings Walk.

How to view this agenda on a tablet device



You can view the agenda on your [iPad](#), [Android Device](#) or [Blackberry Playbook](#) with the free modern.gov app.

Members of the Council should ensure that their device is sufficiently charged, although a limited number of charging points will be available in Members Services.

To view any “exempt” information that may be included on the agenda for this meeting, Councillors should:

- Access the modern.gov app
- Enter your username and password

DECLARING INTERESTS FLOWCHART – QUESTIONS TO ASK YOURSELF

Breaching those parts identified as a pecuniary interest is potentially a criminal offence

Helpful Reminders for Members

- *Is your register of interests up to date?*
- *In particular have you declared to the Monitoring Officer all disclosable pecuniary interests?*
- *Have you checked the register to ensure that they have been recorded correctly?*

When should you declare an interest *at a meeting*?

- **What matters are being discussed at the meeting?** (including Council, Cabinet, Committees, Subs, Joint Committees and Joint Subs); or
- If you are a Cabinet Member making decisions other than in Cabinet **what matter is before you for single member decision?**



Does the business to be transacted at the meeting

- relate to; or
- likely to affect

any of your registered interests and in particular any of your Disclosable Pecuniary Interests?

Disclosable Pecuniary Interests shall include your interests or those of:

- your spouse or civil partner's
- a person you are living with as husband/ wife
- a person you are living with as if you were civil partners

where you are aware that this other person has the interest.

A detailed description of a disclosable pecuniary interest is included in the Members Code of Conduct at Chapter 7 of the Constitution. **Please seek advice from the Monitoring Officer about disclosable pecuniary interests.**

What is a Non-Pecuniary interest? – this is an interest which is not pecuniary (as defined) but is nonetheless so significant that a member of the public with knowledge of the relevant facts, would reasonably regard to be so significant that it would materially impact upon your judgement of the public interest.

Pecuniary

If the interest is not already in the register you must (unless the interest has been agreed by the Monitoring Officer to be sensitive) disclose the existence and nature of the interest to the meeting

If the Interest is not entered in the register and is not the subject of a pending notification you must within 28 days notify the Monitoring Officer of the interest for inclusion in the register

Unless you have received dispensation upon previous application from the Monitoring Officer, you must:

- Not participate or participate further in any discussion of the matter at a meeting;
- Not participate in any vote or further vote taken at the meeting; and
- leave the room while the item is being considered/voted upon

If you are a Cabinet Member you may make arrangements for the matter to be dealt with by a third person but take no further steps

Non- pecuniary

Declare the nature and extent of your interest including enough detail to allow a member of the public to understand its nature



You may participate and vote in the usual way but you should seek advice on Predetermination and Bias from the Monitoring Officer.

Vision: Thurrock: A place of **opportunity**, **enterprise** and **excellence**, where **individuals**, **communities** and **businesses** flourish.

To achieve our vision, we have identified five strategic priorities:

1. Create a great place for learning and opportunity

- Ensure that every place of learning is rated “Good” or better
- Raise levels of aspiration and attainment so that residents can take advantage of local job opportunities
- Support families to give children the best possible start in life

2. Encourage and promote job creation and economic prosperity

- Promote Thurrock and encourage inward investment to enable and sustain growth
- Support business and develop the local skilled workforce they require
- Work with partners to secure improved infrastructure and built environment

3. Build pride, responsibility and respect

- Create welcoming, safe, and resilient communities which value fairness
- Work in partnership with communities to help them take responsibility for shaping their quality of life
- Empower residents through choice and independence to improve their health and well-being

4. Improve health and well-being

- Ensure people stay healthy longer, adding years to life and life to years
- Reduce inequalities in health and well-being and safeguard the most vulnerable people with timely intervention and care accessed closer to home
- Enhance quality of life through improved housing, employment and opportunity

5. Promote and protect our clean and green environment

- Enhance access to Thurrock's river frontage, cultural assets and leisure opportunities
- Promote Thurrock's natural environment and biodiversity
- Inspire high quality design and standards in our buildings and public space

Minutes of the Meeting of the Housing Overview and Scrutiny Committee held on 21 July 2016 at 7.00 pm

Present: Councillors Gerard Rice (Chair), Chris Baker (Vice-Chair), Jan Baker, Sue MacPherson, Jane Potheary and Joycelyn Redsell

Lynn Mansfield, Housing Tenant Representative

In attendance: Roger Harris, Corporate Director of Adults, Housing and Health
Matthew Essex, Head of Regeneration and Assets
Richard Parkin, Head of Environment
Dulal Ahmed, Housing Enforcement Manager
Dawn Shepherd, Housing Strategy and Quality Manager
Kenna-Victoria Martin, Senior Democratic Services Officer

Before the start of the Meeting, all present were advised that the meeting may be filmed and was being recorded, with the audio recording to be made available on the Council's website.

1. Minutes

The Minutes of the Housing Overview and Scrutiny Committee held on the 14 March 2016 were approved as a correct record.

2. Urgent Items

There were no items of urgent business.

3. Declaration of Interests

No interests were declared.

4. Update on the Housing and Planning Act 2016

The Housing Strategy and Quality Manager presented the report to Members explaining that a report had been put before the Committee last year and Officers were back with a further update for Members following the Housing and Planning Act 2016 receiving royal assent in May 2016.

Members were notified that Officers had provisions in place and were awaiting further information on the legislation and guidance from the Government.

During discussions Officers advised of the three key changes to local authority and private Housing which were to be introduced by the legislation:

- Fixed Term tenancies

- Pay to Stay provisions
- Sale of higher value Council houses

Members were taken through the changes and the following was highlighted:

- The 2016 Housing and Planning Act required all Local Authorities to issue only fixed term secure tenancies;
- The tenancies were to be for a minimum period of two years and a maximum of ten years. There was an exception where children under the age of 9 were living in the property, then the tenancy could be extended up to the 19th birthday of the child.
- The Council could determine the length of period that tenancies for properties without children would be given, provisions for the elderly and those with disabilities could also be included;
- Six months before the end of the fixed term the Council were to review the tenancy;
- The Council were to charge a higher rent to a tenant on a 'high income'. High income would initially mean over £31,000 in England, outside London;
- The Pay to Stay scheme was likely to affect around 700 households within Thurrock and any receipts were to be paid to the treasury The Act also required the Council to pay a sum equivalent to the market value of any 'higher value' Council housing stock which would become vacant during the year. Members were notified that Officers were awaiting further details regarding the definition of 'higher value'.

The Chair of the Committee enquired as to the consultation period within the recommendations of the report. The Housing Strategy and Quality Manager explained the consultation would be started following the meeting with the plan to report back to the Committee in October, prior to Cabinet in November.

Councillor Redsell queried as to who was on the working group and whether the new legislation would affect the right to buy scheme. Officers confirmed that the right to buy scheme would not be affected by the legislation. She continued by explaining the working group was currently officer based, however Members would be invited to the consultation

Councillor Potheary sought clarification if a child was under 9years; if once the 10year period was finished if a family would be removed from their property. Officers explained that the Council had discretion within the Tenancy Policy to grant a further fixed term tenancy.

Councillor MacPherson commented that the minimum tenancy was for 2years, she further sought as to how a tenant could end their tenancy if they so wished. The Housing Strategy and Quality Manager informed the Committee that tenants could end their tenancy in the usual way at any time.

The Chair of the Committee clarified that Officers were awaiting further guidance and information from the Government and confirmed with Officers that a report would be presented to the Committee at their October meeting.

The Housing Enforcement Manager reported to Members the extension of Mandatory Licensing for Houses of Multiple Occupation (HMOs) in doing so he explained:

- At the end of December 2015, the Government consulted on the proposals to extend the scope of mandatory licensing of HMOs, following the new definition to extend the scope of mandatory licensing of HMOs Thurrock has over 300 two storey HMO buildings, including shared houses and single tenancies on its private sector housing database;
- The Council were proposing new fees to be implemented in 2017/2018, with the proposed fees reflecting the administrative costs to license the HMO changes;
- Should the two storey HMO definition be adopted, it would require 300 HMO landlords in the borough to be licensed and;
- The new fees took into account the local housing supply conditions in the private rented sector and would encourage private landlord authorisation to ensure decent standards in properties; where there were several people sharing basic facilities and further required landlords to be a 'Fit and Proper' person to be granted a licence.

The Housing Enforcement Manager continued to advise the Committee that Essex Police were supportive of the initiative as it may assist in reducing crime and disorder related to poorly managed HMOs.

Councillor Rice, Chair of the Committee commented that he welcomed the new regulations.

Members enquired as to how the Council would find HMOs and how would the needs of young people be assisted. Officers stated that the Council knew of 300 HMO within the borough and this was largely linked to complaints and Housing Benefit data. It was confirmed that through the consultation Officers would incorporate the needs of young people.

The Committee queried as to different services within the Council working together such as: Planning, Council Tax and Benefits. The Housing Enforcement Manager confirmed that his team were working alongside Officers in Planning, Building Control and Trading Standings.

RESOLVED that the Housing Overview & Scrutiny Committee:

- 1. Note the new legislative requirements of the Housing & Planning Act 2016;**
- 2. Approve a public consultation to inform a revised tenancy policy;**
- 3. Approve a public consultation into an extension of HMO licensing and new fees 2017/18;**

4. **Agree to review the outcomes of the consultations at the next Overview & Scrutiny meeting in October with a view to making recommendations to Cabinet in November.**

5. **Housing Repairs and Maintenance Working Group**

The Head of Environment introduced the report to the Committee informing them following a number of queries raised regarding the progress with the Housing Repairs Service, the previous portfolio holder for Housing, suggested a cross party member working group.

He continued to notify Members the ultimate aim of the working group was to make recommendations that would further improve tenant satisfaction. Members were further informed the working group made a number of recommendations, which included:

- Review of tenants rating the service as “fair” in satisfaction surveys and not just poor or terrible;
- Implementation of quality pledge ID Cards for Mears operatives that provide the name, photo and Trade that each operative is qualified in and;
- Undertaking the customer surveys, and to present feedback to Housing Overview and Scrutiny annually.

The Head of Environment advised Committee Members that following winter 2015/2016 there was a high level of discontent with the Gas Breakdown and Repairs service that Mears were providing tenants. Thurrock worked with Liberty Gas to transfer the repairs and maintenance function over to them. Since Liberty Gas were completing boiler servicing on behalf of the Council and they were able to offer a “3 Star Service”, to include repairs and maintenance on a price per property basis.

Officers discussed the issue of damp and mould and advised the Committee that following customer satisfaction surveys only 44.7% of respondents rated the service as Good or Excellent and that only 33% of residents said that the work undertaken fully resolved the issue. During the discussion it was mentioned that to tackle the issue of damp and mould was not only a case of repairing but also a change in lifestyles.

Members commented that Repairs Satisfaction was reported to have 86.4% of tenant last year rating the service as good or excellent. Officers confirmed that in June following a satisfaction survey 86% of Thurrock residents rated the service good or excellent. The Committee were informed there was new leadership at Mears, which Officers were confident, would assist in approving the service offered to residents in relation to communication. Members were further informed that previously 29% of residents had rated the service with poor communication.

The Committee discussed the use of dry masters within Council properties to help residents living with damp and mould. During the discussion Officers

commented that with limited resources it was more a situation of educating tenants on things they could do to help with tackling damp and mould within their homes.

RESOLVED

1. **That Housing Overview and Scrutiny are asked to note the recommendations made by the working group and note progress made in terms of implementation.**
 - *Implementation of quality pledge ID Cards for Mears operatives that provide the name, photo and Trade that each operative is qualified in.*
 - *Inviting the company undertaking the customer surveys, KWest, to present feedback to Housing Overview and Scrutiny annually.*
 - *Consider providing new tenants with photographs of void properties before the work was completed so there is an understanding of the work that has to be undertaken.*
 - *Review of tenants rating the service as “fair” in satisfaction surveys and not just poor or terrible.*
 - *Providing information / communication or training on the repairs process for Councillors to ensure they know where to direct tenants to for general enquiries / concerns*
 - *Add an additional question to customer surveys to see if tenants are happy with the way there call was handled by the contact centre*

2. **That Housing Overview and Scrutiny are also asked to note the update on the changes made to the Responsive Repairs Contract and to ask for an update regarding the Damp and Mould working group to come back later in the year.**

6. Housing Development Update

The Head of Regeneration and Assets presented the report to Members explaining the following:

- A number of reports had been received by Cabinet, outlining the work being undertaken to explore the potential to bring forward the regeneration of the Borough’s key housing estates;
- It was proposed that the overall objective of the estate regeneration programme should be to broaden and increase the range, quality and quantity of affordable housing for existing and new residents;
- The programme also planned to support the provision of the facilities and services necessary to support growing communities.

Officers stated that discussions were focused on the opportunities available in the borough and to assist with the programme 11 principles has been collated, these were stated within the report.

Councillor Potheary enquired if lessons had been learnt from the previous discussions with local people in respect of Seabrooke Rise. The Head of Regeneration and Assets explained that the main learning point to emerge from that work was on the timing of local engagement. In the previous work there had been an understandable desire to engage with local people at the earliest possible point to give them the opportunity to shape any proposals for their estate. However, engaging so early meant that the Council had been unable to answer residents' immediate questions which, alongside the Council's lack of a track record in estate regeneration, gave rise to significant concerns about the motivation for the proposals.

He continued to explain that the work now being undertaken, including the preparation of the principles contained within the report, was intended to provide a much more rounded understanding of the issues, opportunities and challenges to any estate regeneration programme. Over the coming months, the service and housing needs would be assessed and proposals developed which could be assessed for financial viability before any engagement activity was undertaken. Whilst it was acknowledged that this could result in abortive work in the very likely event that the plans were changed through discussions with residents it did mean that there would be a clear base position and the Council would be able to commit to particular proposals in response to likely questions and challenges.

During discussions it was raised that figures showed there was a need for more, smaller properties (i.e. one and two bedroom homes). It was discussed that, if possible, Officers wanted to use the estate regeneration programme to address service needs as well as providing new homes and so include provision for GP surgeries, nurseries and schools.

In reviewing the proposal to offer Hogg Lane South to Gloriana for consideration as a development site, Members stated that it was fundamental to take school places into account when looking at the programme. It was commented that schools in the area were not expanding and with a limited number of school places available to children already in the borough the development of the site could cause a further impact on schools. The Head of Regeneration and Assets notified the Committee if a site became available with space to include a primary school the Council could apply for Section 106 contribution for education.

RESOLVED that the Housing Overview & Scrutiny Committee:

- 1. Note the progress of Housing Development and Estate Regeneration Programmes;**
- 2. Consider and comment upon the emerging principles which would underpin any future Estate Regeneration Programme; and**
- 3. Consider the proposal to offer the Hogg Lane South site as a development opportunity for Gloriana in advance of a future report to Cabinet.**

7. Work Programme

Members discussed the work programme for the current municipal year.

RESOLVED that Housing Overview and Scrutiny Members agreed:

- 1. A report on the budget is presented to the October or December meeting;**
- 2. An update report on the Housing and Planning Act 2016 is brought to the October meeting;**
- 3. An update report on Housing Repairs is brought to the December meeting.**

The meeting finished at 9.05 pm

Approved as a true and correct record

CHAIR

DATE

**Any queries regarding these Minutes, please contact
Democratic Services at Direct.Democracy@thurrock.gov.uk**

This page is intentionally left blank

6 October 2016	ITEM: 5
Housing -Overview & Scrutiny Committee	
Update on the Homelessness Prevention Strategy 2015-2016	
Wards and communities affected: All	Key Decision: Key
Report of: Dawn Shepherd, Housing Strategy & Quality Manager, Housing	
Accountable Head of Service: Richard Birchett, Interim Head of Housing	
Accountable Director: Roger Harris, Corporate Director of Adults, Housing & Health	
This report is Public	

Executive Summary

There is a statutory duty on every Local Authority to have a Homelessness Strategy which sets out the local authority's plans for the prevention of homelessness and for securing that sufficient accommodation and support are, or will be, available for people who become homeless or who are at risk of becoming so.

Thurrock Council adopted a 5 year Homelessness Prevention Strategy in October 2015.

An action plan was devised and a Homelessness forum set up to drive forward the action plan

The action plan has been in place for one year and this report outlines the progress to date.

1. Recommendation(s)

1.1 That the Committee notes the updates in the Homelessness Prevention Strategy Action Plan

2. Introduction and Background

2.1 Every Local Authority must have a Homelessness Strategy which sets out the local authority's plans for the prevention of homelessness and for securing that sufficient accommodation and support are, or will be, available for people who become homeless or who are at risk of becoming so.

The local authority must ensure that all organisations whose work can help to prevent homelessness and/or meet the needs of homeless people are involved in the strategy.

- 2.2 Following an extensive consultation period, Thurrock Council adopted a new Homelessness Prevention Strategy at a Cabinet meeting in October 2015.

The strategy covered a five year period and an initial action plan was presented to Cabinet with a commitment to monitor the action plan annually at Housing Overview & Scrutiny Committee.

Subsequently, a multi-agency homelessness Forum was set up to drive forward the actions.

- 2.3 This report provides an overview of the action plan, highlighting its progress to date. The updated plan is attached as Annex 1.

The report also provides updated statistics on homelessness within Thurrock over the past year in comparison with previous years to enable the Committee to understand the challenges currently faced by the Council.

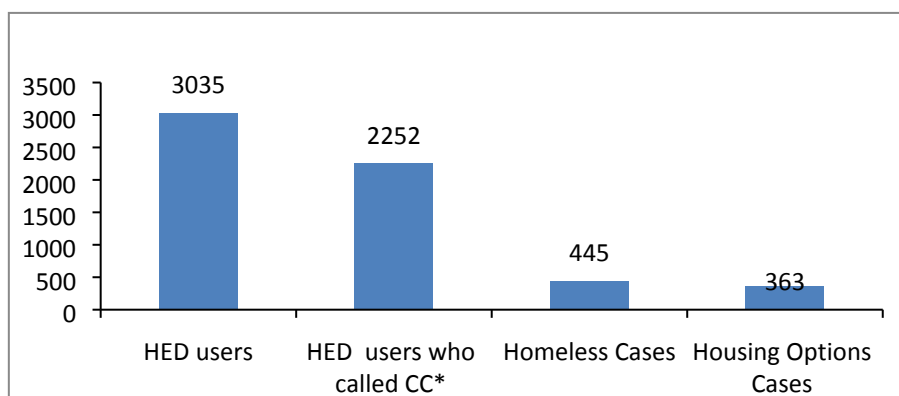
3. Issues, Options and Analysis of Options

3.1 Homelessness in Thurrock – Key points

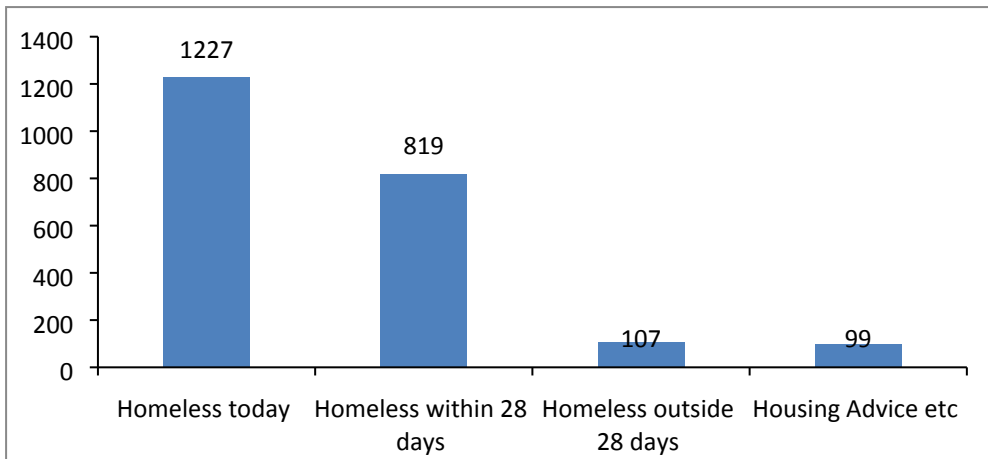
3.1.1 Number of homeless approaches to the service during 2015-16

Thurrock Council operates an online assessment tool (HED) through which people access the service. Applicants indicating on the form that they are homeless are contacted by the team to offer advice and assistance, or to take a homeless application.

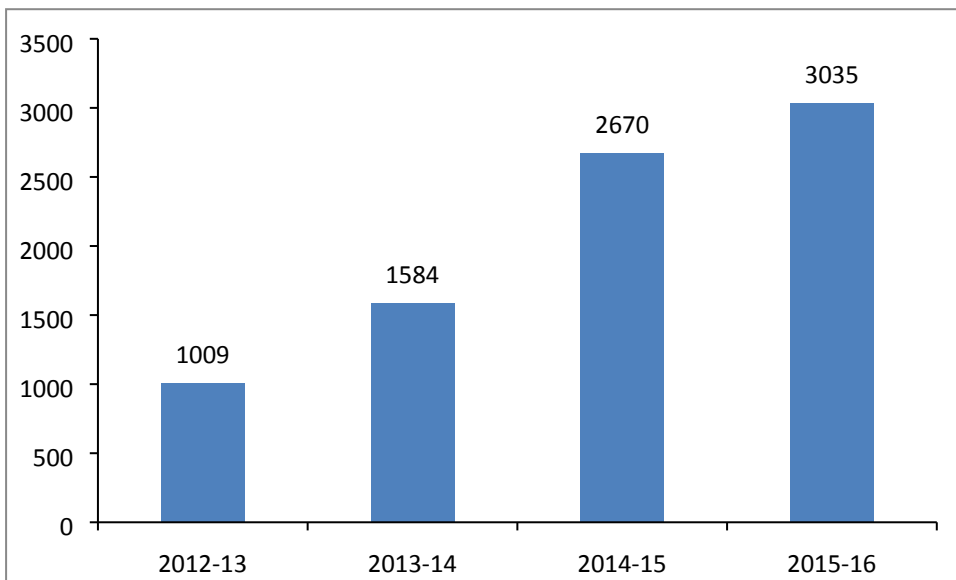
There were over 3,035 HED approaches completed throughout the year 2015-16



*74% of the HED users call the contact centre for the following reasons:



The number of approaches to the services has continued to increase year on year; this is the picture nationally



3.1.2. Main causes of homelessness in Thurrock:

Reason for homelessness	2014-15	2015-16	
Eviction by parents, family or friend	42%	36%	Reduced by 6%
The ending of an Assured Short hold tenancy	33%	50%	Increased by 17%

Until 2015 eviction by parent, family or friend was the biggest reason for homelessness in Thurrock.

This changed recently when evictions from private landlords i.e. the ending of an assured short hold tenancy became the greatest reason with a large increase of 17%

This increase has also been seen nationally where the figure has risen more gradually from 11% in 2009/10 to 31% in 2015/16

Anecdotally it appears that many landlords want to either sell their properties to benefit from the increase in house prices or to enable them to re-let the properties at a higher rent to benefit from rent increases. The Council monitors this situation carefully.

London boroughs continuing to use Thurrock properties has not helped the situation due to the large incentives being offered.

The Local Housing allowance (LHA) is well below market rents making it very difficult for people in receipt of housing benefit to find affordable accommodation due to the high shortfalls

	*Average monthly rent (Grays)	Monthly LHA	Monthly Shortfall
1 Bedroom	£780	£555	£225
2 Bedroom	£964	£698	£266
3 bedroom	£1188	£816	£372
4 bedroom	£1724	£1,155	£569

*Figure provided by Home.co.uk

The LHA has now been set for four years and therefore this shortfall could increase

3.1.3 Number of homeless acceptances

Where the local authority determines that a household is eligible for assistance, homeless (or threatened with homelessness in 28 days) has a priority need and is not intentionally homeless then a rehousing duty is owed to the household.

	2014 - 15	2015 - 16	increase
Homeless applications	400	448	12%
Rehousing duty owed	194	226	16%

3.1.4 Number of homeless preventions

Thurrock Council is committed to preventing homelessness and therefore aims to assist people to either stay in their current accommodation or move to an alternative wherever possible.

Historically the private rented sector has been used for preventions and a landlord incentive scheme is in place to assist this.

However, it has become increasingly difficult faced with the current situation in the private rented sector discussed above and subsequently the number of preventions has decreased in the past year.

3.1.5 Number in temporary accommodation

The number of people living in temporary accommodation fluctuates from day to day but on average there are around 80-90 people in temporary accommodation provided by Thurrock Council

The Council uses two hostels providing a total of 38 rooms – singles, doubles and family rooms. Both are managed by St Mungo’s Housing Association and offer support programmes to all residents.

In addition the council uses its own accommodation – known as furnished lets. The number varies but there are currently around 65 in place. This accommodation is used because it has become increasingly difficult to access private rented accommodation to use for temporary accommodation.

Wherever possible the Council provides accommodation in the borough; occasionally when there is no alternative, accommodation is used outside of the borough but for a very limited period of time. Thurrock compares favourably when considering the situation for other surrounding borough:

Local Authority (data for Q1 2016-17)	Total of TA	Accommodated in another LA district
Newham	3,956	1,522
Redbridge	2,205	915
Barking and Dagenham	1,461	289
Havering	711	59
Basildon	404	0
Castle Point	108	60
Thurrock	87	0
Southend-on-Sea*	82	0
Rochford	62	0
Brentwood	48	0

When extra accommodation is required the Council have to use bed and breakfast. This is an expensive option that is unsuitable for residents and is therefore only used when all other options have been exhausted.

The number of people accommodated in B & B has decreased in Thurrock

	2015	2016
No of households placed in B & B - March to August	82	52

Families and young people aged 16 – 17 years must not be accommodated in B & B unless there are no alternatives available, and must not spend more than 6 weeks in this type of accommodation.

	2014-15	2015-16	Increase
Average number in Temporary Accommodation	79	94	18%
Families or young people in B & B > 6 weeks	0	0	0

3.2 Homelessness Prevention Strategy Action Plan – update

The updated action plan is attached at Annex 1 but there have been a number of key actions which have already been completed:

3.2.1 Action 30: *Housing first approach in place with working agreements for support from partner services and agencies*

Housing first is an approach to preventing persistent homelessness amongst people who are long term or recurrently homeless, with high ongoing support needs. It provides open ended support which is not conditional upon compliance with any treatment or behaviour modification.

Service users are likely to be those with severe and/or enduring mental health problems, poor physical health, learning difficulties and educational needs; they are likely to be socially marginalised and often have a history of substance abuse and offending.

Typically service users will have been in and out of various types of accommodation for many years, failing to sustain tenancies or adhere to any

pathways into housing. Usually they will have spent time in hostels, prison and sleeping rough.

It is difficult to quantify the needs in Thurrock because long term homelessness is very often hidden and not formally recorded. However, there are two groups of people who could benefit from a Housing First scheme:

- Group 1 – Rough Sleepers
- Group 2 – people with complex needs

A one year pilot scheme is being jointly funded through Housing, Adult Social Care and Public Health. St Mungo's have won the contract to provide the service for the pilot scheme and 5 service users will be assisted.

Accommodation will be provided either through Council housing stock or the private rented sector, and will consist of a studio or one bed self-contained property.

The support of other agencies is an important factor to the success of the scheme and a working protocol with partner agencies will need to be implemented to ensure ongoing priority support is achieved. The provider will be expected to work with Housing to put this into place.

A multi-agency steering group has been set up to guide the project and the co-ordinator from the Camden Council housing First scheme has been assisting with the programme set up. It is anticipated that the scheme will commence within the next few weeks.

3.2.2 *Action 28: Agree a working protocol with Domestic abuse support agencies with an agreed sharing data protocol. Protocol to include simplified flowchart for quick reference*

A new protocol has been agreed between Changing Pathways (formally women's aid) SERICC, Adult Social Care and Housing to provide support to those experiencing domestic abuse and/or sexual violence, who are facing homelessness as a result.

The protocol includes flow charts to enable quick reference for officers.

The protocol also provides an alternative route to homelessness for victims so that cases can be prioritised through the housing allocations process rather than going through the homelessness legislation.

The protocol was launched at a recent conference and will be available to all colleagues within the council and other partner agencies.

3.2.3 *Action 26: increase training and awareness of domestic and sexual abuse for all housing staff*

An annual training conference has been instigated – this took place in July 2016. Subjects included:

- Child exploitation
- Female Genital Mutilation
- Forced Marriage
- Modern Slavery
- Homelessness legislation
- The work of SERICC

In addition to Housing staff other council and partner agency colleagues were invited and the event was well attended.

Attendees were particularly moved to hear the story of a survivor of domestic abuse who told her own story and explained how she had been able to move on and turn her life around with the assistance of the refuge.

3.2.4 *Action 8: Re-establish a working Landlord forum*

The Private Landlord forum has been set up with the first meeting held on 18 August 2016. Around 18 landlords attended and a representative from the eastern landlords Association gave a presentation.

3.2.5 *Action 6: Increase the provision of supported housing schemes*

A house of multiple occupation (HMO) has been set up in conjunction with Children's services to assist four young people who are working as apprentices but who would otherwise have been homeless. The scheme is for young people being supported through Inspire and is proving very successful.

3.2.6 *Action 29: Develop SLAs and working protocols*

Working protocols are being set up – for example a protocol is in place with children's services for people who are found to be intentionally homeless but have children in the household. The protocol allows sufficient time for the service to carry out their statutory assessments under the Children Act whilst the person is still accommodated by the housing service. It also provides for increased professionals meetings at an early stage.

3.2.7 *Action 9: Develop incentives for Thurrock Landlords to take homeless applicants as a discharge of duty or prevention*

Officers have been working closely with private landlords and have managed to secure 48 new tenancies since the strategy was implemented in October 2015.

3.2.8 Action 31: *Homelessness forum to be set up to drive forward the action plan with identified leads for specific areas - leading on actions with regular updates*

The homelessness forum was set up in January 2016; membership of the forum includes:

Adult Social care	Housing Allocations	Southern Housing
Children's services	Local Area Coordinators	SERICC
Local Church	Mental health	Sheltered housing
Disability forum	Open Doors	Tenancy Management
Drug & Alcohol support team	Police	Thurrock Council Private Housing
Family Mosaic	Probation	Troubled Families
Business Improvement	Public Health	Welfare reform
Housing Enforcement	Regeneration	Women's aid
Housing Performance	Rent & welfare team	Young people mediation service
Housing Safeguarding	Sanctuary housing	Youth council
Housing Solutions		

The forum met on 8 February and 11 July 2016 and smaller task and finish groups have been meeting to deliver specific actions from the plan.

4. **Reasons for Recommendation**

The Council has a statutory duty to implement a five year homelessness strategy in order to set out the Local Authority's plans for the prevention of homelessness, and for securing that sufficient accommodation and support are, or will be, available for people who become homeless or who are at risk of becoming so.

It is good practice to review the strategy action plan annually to ensure that it continues to meet the local needs.

5. **Consultation**

Not required – this is an update only

6. Impact on corporate policies, priorities, performance and community impact

The homelessness strategy action plan identifies specific areas for future work which address the corporate priorities of building pride, responsibility and respect within the home and improving health and wellbeing by preventing homelessness which can have an adverse impact.

7. Implications

7.1 Financial

Implications verified by: **Julie Curtis**
HRA and development accountant

If homelessness numbers continues to rise there are likely to be increased costs to the service – particularly if there are increases in temporary accommodation

7.2 Legal

Implications verified by: **Martin Hall**
Housing Solicitor / Housing Team Leader

There are no legal implications – this is an update only

7.3 Diversity and Equality

Implications verified by: **Natalie Warren**
Community Development & Equalities Manager

An equality impact assessment was completed when the new strategy was implemented. The homelessness forum will monitor impacts through statistics and feedback from support providers to the group – in particular whether or not any particular group appears to be increasing in homelessness presentations. To date this has not been the case.

However, going forward figures relating to community and equality impacts will be produced on a quarterly basis, and presented to the forum, the group will review the data and put in place any necessary actions to investigate or resolve any issues that may be identified. At each quarterly forum current data will be reviewed against previous data to monitor progress taken, and any appropriate actions still required referred to the correct team, with the measure of success being no evidence of adverse impacts identified.

7.4 **Other implications** (where significant) – i.e. Staff, Health, Sustainability, Crime and Disorder)

8. **Background papers used in preparing the report** (including their location on the Council's website or identification whether any are exempt or protected by copyright):

None

9. **Appendices to the report**

- Appendix 1 – Thurrock Homelessness Prevention Strategy Action Plan

Report Author:

Dawn Shepherd

Housing Strategy & Quality Manager Housing, Business Improvement

This page is intentionally left blank

Thurrock Council

Homelessness Prevention Strategy

Working Action Plan

2015-20

No	Key area	Objective	Action required	Outcome required	Measure of success	Completion By	Lead	Update
----	----------	-----------	-----------------	------------------	--------------------	---------------	------	--------

1	Housing Supply	Increase the supply of affordable housing in the borough	Influence future house building and planning to meet smaller household needs –i.e. studio, one and two bedroom properties	Reduction in the percentage of people waiting for 1 and 2 bedroom properties on the Housing Register	Increase in % of smaller properties built each year	April 2020	Housing Investment & Development Team	
			Influence future housing supply to include more affordable purchasing options such as shared ownership & help to buy	Increase in the number of Housing register applicants who are removed because they have purchased a property	Increase in number of applicants on Housing register taking up shared ownership & other purchasing options	April 2020	Housing Investment & Development Team	
3			Raise awareness of purchasing options & ensure all are considered as a prevention to homelessness when providing advice and assistance through the Housing Solutions service	All clients approaching the Housing Solutions team will receive information and advice on purchase options – target people via text messaging & social media	100% Housing Solutions team fully trained on purchasing options	April 2016	Homeless Triage and Housing Allocations Managers	Linked to review of Housing Registrations team, assimilation of service into the Allocations Service is underway, aim to complete integration by January 2017 (AB 12.9.16)

No	Key area	Objective	Action required	Outcome required	Measure of success	Completion By	Lead	Update
----	----------	-----------	-----------------	------------------	--------------------	---------------	------	--------

4			Ensure the Council makes good use of adapted properties via its Accessible Housing Register	Early maximisation of priority banding for potentially homeless applicants in need of adapted properties, even where they are not yet homeless within 28 days	Implement a process for fast tracking homeless applicants who are in need of an adaptation	November 2015	Housing Solution Team and Housing Allocations Managers	This is ongoing and properties that have been adapted are advertised for the AHR alongside properties that could possibly be suitable also being considered. (AB 9.9.16)
6	Housing Supply	Increase the supply of supported housing in the borough	Research the provision and need for supported housing for specific groups of people – to include those with Autism, learning difficulties, mental health, complex and dual needs and the under 25s	Extensive report on housing needs through liaison with support groups and partner agencies	Sufficient information and evidence base to support the next stage	April 2016	Housing Strategy Team	Currently working with ASC to increase housing (HMO) for individuals with learning difficulties.
			Work with Adult Social Care to increase the provision of supported housing in line with the research undertaken - to include private options and empty homes	Supported housing schemes built/identified/refurbished/designated to meet the needs identified in the research report Accommodation developed meets REACH standards and represents a joint working approach	Ongoing development plan All new schemes meet REACH standards	April 2020	Housing Strategy Team	

No	Key area	Objective	Action required	Outcome required	Measure of success	Completion By	Lead	Update
----	----------	-----------	-----------------	------------------	--------------------	---------------	------	--------

7	Housing Supply		Encourage a programme of move on from Supported accommodation to free up spaces	All eligible supported housing residents are on the Housing Register and are awarded the appropriate priority and encouraged to bid once ready for move on	Supported schemes have no more than two people waiting for supported accommodation at any time	April 2016	Housing Allocations Manager	Progress against this target is dependant both on the applications preparation for move on and the supply of properties plus the awareness of providers of the aspect of the Housing Allocations Scheme. Awareness training is given to providers upon request (AB)
		Increase the supply of good quality private rented housing in Thurrock	Improve working relationships with private landlords and options for longer tenancies	Re-establish a working Landlord forum	Landlord forum meets twice per year	April 2016	Housing Solutions - Private Housing Team	Landlord forum held on the 18 th August 16. We captured the following feedback at the private landlord forum on our evaluations forms. This will inform the frequency of the meetings and future agenda topics

No	Key area	Objective	Action required	Outcome required	Measure of success	Completion By	Lead	Update
----	----------	-----------	-----------------	------------------	--------------------	---------------	------	--------

9			Develop incentives for Thurrock landlords to take Thurrock homeless applicants as a discharge of duty or prevention – including pre-tenancy training, gas servicing and extensive monitoring of tenants to mirror introductory tenancies processes	Officers are using a variety of incentives to entice landlords to work with the Council	20% increase in the number of landlords offering properties to the Council year on year	April 2020	Housing Strategy Team	Pre-tenancy training programme in process of start up – to include private rental tenants and young people going into HMOs.
			Tackle under occupation across all tenure types including social housing tenants unaffected by the bedroom under-occupation reform and elderly home-owners	Incentive schemes in operation for all tenures to reduce under-occupation including options available for elderly owner occupiers to lease back properties to the Council	Reduction in under occupation across the borough	April 2017	Housing Strategy Team	Initial discussions underway with ASC – further research of options to be carried out re owner occupiers downsizing

No	Key area	Objective	Action required	Outcome required	Measure of success	Completion By	Lead	Update
----	----------	-----------	-----------------	------------------	--------------------	---------------	------	--------

11			Joint working with environmental health and other enforcement agencies to ensure that landlords carry out their responsibilities to provide safe and sanitary conditions in order to prevent homelessness	Reduction in number of homeless approaches and priority bandings due to insanitary conditions	Reduction in the number of priorities awarded year on year due to insanitary conditions	April 2020	Private Housing Team	Work in progress (DS 12.9.16)
12	Housing Supply	Improve cross boundary working and monitoring of placements within Thurrock to reduce adverse impacts on Thurrock services	Improve working relationships with London boroughs and set up information sharing agreements particularly regarding households with complex needs such as mental health, medical, specialist schooling and ASB issues	Protocol in place with London boroughs identified as placing people in Thurrock – including a data sharing agreement.	Year on year reduction in the number of cases presenting to services in crisis where the resident is unknown to the service	April 2016	Housing Solutions Team	Work has been undertaken and is ongoing with LGA East of England Steering Group. Meeting took place 25.7.16 and working protocols in the process of being implemented. (DS 12.9.16)
			Monitor the impact of placements on services within the borough	Set up monthly reporting and monitoring of placements within the borough and share with partner agencies as appropriate	Monthly monitoring reports set up with partner agencies Detailed knowledge and understanding of the impact on services	April 2017	Housing Solutions Team and Housing Quality Team	Work to start once protocols are in place with London boroughs

No	Key area	Objective	Action required	Outcome required	Measure of success	Completion By	Lead	Update
14	Education & Mediation	Reduce number of parental evictions	Develop an education programme for school staff to enable them to teach pupils about homelessness and its implications and to promote staying at home	Annual conferences set up with school staff providing access to resources and knowledge updates	One school conference held in September each year with representation from every secondary school and college in the borough	September 2015	Housing Strategy Team	First conference held in September 2015 – very successful. No conference this year due to low response rate. (BN)
15			Reduce the number of parental evictions through use of mediation and floating support services and crash pads for periods of respite for 16 to 25 year olds	Reduction in the number of homeless applications from young people under 25 evicted by family or friends	10% reduction year on year in number of homeless applications from under 25s Mediation service extended to 18 to 21 year olds	April 2016	Housing Solutions & Housing strategy Team	Family Mosaic providing mediation to 18 to 21 years
16			Improve access to debt advice and encourage its use	Recruitment of a dedicated housing & welfare advice officer within the Housing solutions team	Officer in post	September 2015	Strategic Lead Housing	Completed

No	Key area	Objective	Action required	Outcome required	Measure of success	Completion By	Lead	Update
----	----------	-----------	-----------------	------------------	--------------------	---------------	------	--------

17	Finance	Improve knowledge & understanding of money management and budgeting skills	Improve working partnerships with Housing benefits & agree fast tracking of claims for the housing solutions service where all documentation is provided	Reduction in NTQs and evictions for non-payment of rent where delay in HB payment is the cause	Zero evictions caused though non-payment of HB	April 2016	Housing & Welfare Advice Officer	Tracy Farnsworth working with council tenants and Tracy Looker working with private renters and liaising with housing benefit to speed up claims and applications. (IW)
			Increase understanding of access to welfare benefits amongst staff and customers through regular training updates	All Housing solutions staff can give accurate advice to clients on how to claim appropriate benefits	All housing solutions staff receive training at least once per year	April 2016	Housing & Welfare Advice Officer	Universal credit training is ongoing with staff Ian White is running the training and he is also training volunteers in the hubs. (IW)
19			Offer programmes to increase understanding of money management & budgeting skills within secondary schools & colleges	Include money management & budgeting skills in annual conference for skills with offer of ongoing training for individual schools	Annual schools conference in place	Ongoing	Housing Strategy Team	1 st Schools conference took place in 2015 – more to be arranged depending on demand (BN)

No	Key area	Objective	Action required	Outcome required	Measure of success	Completion By	Lead	Update
----	----------	-----------	-----------------	------------------	--------------------	---------------	------	--------

20		Prevent mortgage repossessions	Build expertise amongst staff and partners to enable negotiation with mortgage providers in order to prevent mortgage repossessions	Staff actively engage in preventing mortgage repossessions	Reduction in homeless application taken due to mortgage repossession	April 2017	Housing Solutions Team	Very minimal numbers of mortgage repossessions presented, as such training not warranted although written procedures could be put in place as a solution. (EF and FL 12.9.16)
	Page 33	Improve Tenancy sustainment across all tenures	Monitor Council evictions of Introductory and secure tenancies to determine appropriate levels of support and monitoring	Support provided in a timely manner to tenants in need	Decrease in Council evictions of secure and introductory tenancies year on year	April 2020	Thurrock Council Rents and Tenancy Management Managers	
22			Investigate options for increased floating support across all tenures – offer as part of the incentive to private landlords	Business case for Senior management outlining floating support requirements – in preparation for procurement of service for 2016 onwards	Appropriate levels of support in place so that tenants wait no longer than one week for an assessment	September 2015	Housing Strategy Team	Procurement for floating support services for Council & Non-Council tenants to commence 16 th Nov.

No	Key area	Objective	Action required	Outcome required	Measure of success	Completion By	Lead	Update
----	----------	-----------	-----------------	------------------	--------------------	---------------	------	--------

23	Page 34		Develop mandatory pre-tenancy training for potential Council tenants and across all tenures where the Council introduces the tenant to a landlord. Increase awareness of the implications of eviction amongst tenants of all tenures	Production of a DVD outlining what can happen when a family are made homeless – “busting the myths” DVD sent to all failing Council tenants and all new tenants at Sign Up – including private tenants assisted by the Council A package of mandatory pre-tenancy training available across tenures in a number of formats e.g. DVD / on line learning / classroom learning	Increased awareness amongst tenants – evidenced through floating support agencies (base lines to be agreed) Decrease of 10% year on year in evictions from all tenancy types due to tenancy breaches	April 2017	Housing Strategy Team	Pre-tenancy training programme being developed for introduction from April 2016 with changes to allocations scheme to make mandatory for all new tenants
24			Increase access to specialised refuge spaces for people with complex needs such as drug, alcohol, mental health issues and complex needs and those with no recourse to public funds Research options for safe houses within Council stock including options for a	Increase usage of the UK Gold online refuge service to enable links with specialist services Business case detailing requirements to senior managers with recommendations	Appropriate accommodation available to meet all client’s needs (including support needs) in 100% of cases	April 2017	Housing Safeguarding Team	

No	Key area	Objective	Action required	Outcome required	Measure of success	Completion By	Lead	Update
----	----------	-----------	-----------------	------------------	--------------------	---------------	------	--------

25	Domestic abuse & sexual violence	Appropriate emergency and ongoing housing and support available	Crash Pad facility for short term needs and move on accommodation from the refuge					
			Promote the sanctuary scheme as an alternative to moving home across all tenures and increase awareness of services available to support clients with a variety of support needs	<p>Increased awareness of how the Sanctuary Scheme works amongst staff, agencies and clients – through use of literature, schools, advertising etc.</p> <p>Increased use of Lead professionals to set up joint meetings involving partner agencies and support groups</p>	<p>Increase of 20% in the number of Sanctuary Schemes used year on year to prevent a homeless application being made</p> <p>Appropriate support is provided to clients in 95% of cases – evidenced through survey following episodes of involvement with the Housing department</p>	April 2020	Housing Safeguarding Team	

No	Key area	Objective	Action required	Outcome required	Measure of success	Completion By	Lead	Update
----	----------	-----------	-----------------	------------------	--------------------	---------------	------	--------

26	Domestic abuse & sexual violence	Increase awareness of and appropriate responses to suspected and actual cases of domestic abuse and sexual violence	Increase training and awareness of sexual and domestic abuse for all housing staff	All Housing staff attend mandatory training on Domestic abuse and sexual violence and undertake the new process training	100% attendance at training by all Housing frontline staff every 3 years – monitoring programme in place	April 2016	Housing Strategy Team	Domestic and Sexual Violence Conference held on 15 th July 16 which increased awareness and provided training (N Hammant 8.9.16)
27			Improve working relationships between professionals – including Council (all directorates) and partner agencies	<p>Opportunities made available to shadow Domestic Abuse officers and/or partner agency staff</p> <p>Open days, conferences etc. highlighted to Housing and other partner agencies</p> <p>Partners to be invited to team meetings and events</p>	<p>At least 5 people per year undertake a shadowing opportunity</p> <p>At least 5 teams per year invite partners to team meetings</p>	April 2020	Housing Strategy Team	
28			Agree a working protocol with Domestic abuse support agencies with an agreed sharing data protocol. Protocol to include simplified flowchart for quick reference	All Housing staff have access to and regularly refer to the working protocol	Protocol completed and regularly updated; access given to all housing staff	April 2016	Housing Strategy Team	Working protocol launched and training rolled out to staff at Staff Conference (BN and DS)

No	Key area	Objective	Action required	Outcome required	Measure of success	Completion By	Lead	Update
----	----------	-----------	-----------------	------------------	--------------------	---------------	------	--------

29	Partnership working	Develop agreed housing pathways	Develop SLAs and working protocols between Housing solutions and partner agencies - to include a robust hospital discharge policy for both mental health and physical health	Working protocols in use by all staff and regularly updated	Reduction in emergency presentations of homeless applicants because of a hospital or prison discharge	April 2017	Housing Strategy Team	Work is underway to review all existing working protocols and identify any new ones which may be required. (BN)
30			Explore options and consult with partners on a "Housing First" approach to include improved support provision by supporting agencies and partners	Business case presented to senior management with recommendations for future programme	Housing first approach in place with working agreements for support from partner services and agencies	April 2017	Housing Strategy Team	One year Housing First pilot scheme jointly funded through Housing, Adult Social Care and Public Health approved by DMT due to commence end Sept 16. St Mungo's appointed as service provider for scheme. (NH)

No	Key area	Objective	Action required	Outcome required	Measure of success	Completion By	Lead	Update
----	----------	-----------	-----------------	------------------	--------------------	---------------	------	--------

3	Page 38							
			Homelessness forum to be set up to drive forward the action plan with identified leads for specific areas - leading on actions with regular updates	Quarterly homelessness forum in place for sharing information, training & developing links with the Housing solutions Ongoing monitoring of outcomes with clearly defined baselines	Action Plan is a living document with identified objectives and successful outcomes	April 2016	Housing Strategy Team	Homelessness forums took place 8.2.16 and 1.7.16
3 2		Adopt a	Provision of regular opportunities for joint working, shadowing and training across the Council and with partner Agencies	Agreed programme in place allowing opportunities for shadowing and training	At least 5 shadowing opportunities are completed every year At least 2 joint training events completed every year	April 2017	Housing Strategy Team	

No	Key area	Objective	Action required	Outcome required	Measure of success	Completion By	Lead	Update
----	----------	-----------	-----------------	------------------	--------------------	---------------	------	--------

33	Partnership working	corporate commitment to preventing homelessness	Increase the knowledge of members around homelessness prevention and the advice they can provide to constituents	Regular Members training sessions provided	All members offered a training session at least once every two years	April 2016	Housing Solutions Team Managers	Richard Parkin has carried out members training session, more sessions planned.
34			Work in partnership with the DWP to maximise job opportunities for customer	Housing options advice incorporates signposting to employment and training advice	Increase in number of applicants on Housing waiting lists who are referred to DWP	April 2019	Housing Welfare Officer	
35		Adopt a corporate commitment to supporting homeless households	Improve communication between Housing solutions staff and health professionals to enable links between health professionals and those in temporary accommodation	Systems set up to communicate details to health care professionals as appropriate	All families and vulnerable people in temporary accommodation have the opportunity to link up to health visitors, GPs, support services etc.	April 2016	Housing Solutions Team Managers	Systems are in place for residents in TA Hostels to be referred to the appropriate health care professionals; this is facilitated by St Mungo's. Work is also underway ensure that all residents that are placed in TA are given the same opportunity. (DS)

No	Key area	Objective	Action required	Outcome required	Measure of success	Completion By	Lead	Update
----	----------	-----------	-----------------	------------------	--------------------	---------------	------	--------

36	Strategic planning	Improve monitoring to enable the highest standards of future strategic planning	Continue to monitor equality strands against local and national trends to ensure no specific equality group is being adversely impacted	Quarterly monitoring reports produced and presented as part of the annual strategy review	No evidence of adverse impacts identified	Ongoing	Homelessness Forum	Emailed Wassim then Discuss with Dawn
37			Ensure statistics collected are more detailed and consistent to enable a better understanding and assist with forward planning including the collection of data around homeless applicants with supported housing needs	A comprehensive set of data with consistent written definitions is identified; the new Housing IT systems is programmed to capture the appropriate data and staff are fully trained in how to input the data accurately	Accurate comprehensive set of statistics is available quickly and easily, that managers are confident reflects the current housing climate	April 2016	Performance Manager	Northgate homelessness module to be implemented on 4 November 2016. Data will be more precise and reporting more robust
38			Ensure there is sufficient provision of adapted temporary accommodation	Review of temporary accommodation completed to identify availability of adapted accommodation against	Zero number of incidents when adapted accommodation is not available when required	April 2016	Temporary Accommodation Manager	Currently have 1 adapted property within TA – at present this meet the demand

Page 40

No	Key area	Objective	Action required	Outcome required	Measure of success	Completion By	Lead	Update
----	----------	-----------	-----------------	------------------	--------------------	---------------	------	--------

39		Decrease use of B & B		anticipated need				
			Eliminate the use of B & B for all customers except in an emergency and then for a minimal period;	Sufficient temporary accommodation is available within the borough to meet needs as required	Use of B & B only in an emergency No 16 & 17 years are placed in B & B accommodation or families for more than 6 weeks	April 2016	Temporary Accommodation Manager	The use of B & B has dropped since 2015. Numbers have reduced from 82 to 52 households for the same 6 month period in 2015 to 2016 No households with children stayed over 6 weeks in a B&B. (WF)
40		Review priority banding	Consider impact of priority bandings for statutory homeless and those who are homeless at home and options for improving priority to non- statutory homeless groups	Research paper produced which outlines all impacts and enables senior managers to make recommendations for the Housing Allocations Scheme review	Decisions made with highest level of information available	April 2017	Housing Strategy Team	

No	Key area	Objective	Action required	Outcome required	Measure of success	Completion By	Lead	Update
----	----------	-----------	-----------------	------------------	--------------------	---------------	------	--------

41	Customer services	Communication	Improve effective communications between officers and customers – both verbally and written including adequate means of communications for Non-English speakers and those with sight and hearing impairments	Improved delivery of advice ensuring accuracy and relevance and written advice is always provided in a language which the customer can understand	Improved satisfaction levels amongst service users	April 2016	Housing Solutions Team Managers	Commenced a review of the whole service Work ongoing(DS 12.9.16)
42			Improve the online housing advice tool to incorporate better options advice, signposting to employment and other services and to manage customer expectations better	The online advice tool provides sufficient information to allow customers to access all services required themselves and to fully understand any processes and next steps	25% reduction in appointments with Housing solutions staff year on year	April 2019	Housing Strategy Team	With the new Northgate Housing Management System being implemented this year provisions for new on line tool underway (DS 12.9.16)

No	Key area	Objective	Action required	Outcome required	Measure of success	Completion By	Lead	Update
----	----------	-----------	-----------------	------------------	--------------------	---------------	------	--------

43	No Second Night Out	Increased options for rough sleepers	Increase emergency provision and self-referral options – HMOs, hostels etc.	Direct access available to suitable emergency accommodation for rough sleepers	100% of rough sleepers can access accommodation within 24 hours	April 2017	Housing Strategy Team	No suitable accommodation at the moment, rough sleepers being referred out of borough. (BN & DS)
44			Effective system in place for forming an assessment of rough sleepers within 72 hours of identification, including those with no local connection/entitlement	All rough Sleepers taken to a safe place, their needs assessed and given housing options advice	100% of identified rough sleepers are assessed within 72 hours of identification and	April 2016	Reconnection worker	Council secured a further contract with St Mungo's to provide reconnection service for rough sleepers in conjunction with Basildon Council. (DS)
45			Reconnection protocol in place which includes access to funding for documents and travel - includes support to prevent a return to rough sleeping	Offers of reconnection are made where possible and appropriate	100% of customers are reconnected where this is identified as a viable option	April 2016	Reconnection worker	As above

No	Key area	Objective	Action required	Outcome required	Measure of success	Completion By	Lead	Update
----	----------	-----------	-----------------	------------------	--------------------	---------------	------	--------

46			Ensure that data around rough sleepers is accurate	Carry out a formal rough sleeper count every 2 years and an informed estimate on alternate years with the assistance of agencies and partners	Formal count completed every 2 nd year	Ongoing	Housing Strategy Team	Not required as St Mungo's have ongoing accurate data that can be used to inform Government return. (DS)
----	--	--	--	---	---	---------	-----------------------	--

6 October 2016	ITEM: 6
Housing Overview and Scrutiny Committee	
Transforming Homes Update	
Wards and communities affected: All	Key Decision: Not Applicable
Report of: Susan Cardozo – Housing Asset Investment and Delivery Manager	
Accountable Head of Service: Richard Birchett - Interim Head of Housing Adults, Housing & Health	
Accountable Director: Roger Harris – Corporate Director of Adults Housing and Health	
This report is public	

Executive Summary

This comprehensive internal and external refurbishment programme is now in year 4 of an 8 year programme. The programme brings significant improvements to the long term viability of the council housing assets and to the living conditions for our residents.

This report provides an update on the Transforming Homes programme to end of year 3 and an outline of the plans for the delivery of the programme for the remaining years 4 - 8.

Headline milestones:

- 6085 properties benefitting from the programme
- 84% customer satisfaction good to excellent rating
- 981 properties adapted for specific needs of residents
- 11 resident engagement events held
- 45% of the construction spend is in the local economy
- 55% of supply chain partners registered in Thurrock

1. Recommendation(s)

- 1.1 That the progress with the Transforming Homes programme be noted and the key benefits that will be delivered through year 4 of the programme for 2016/17.**

2. Introduction and Background

- 2.1 Two key principles have been central to delivery of this programme of work. The first, to ensure investment is targeted at maximising improvements to the Councils assets and the second, to ensure our internal processes support a mechanism for challenging our contractors to deliver the best service for our residents. With these two key principles in mind, the programme has progressed with improving the Councils assets, the lives and opportunities for our residents while also driving efficiency savings through stringent contract management .
- 2.2 The programme commenced in 2013 and is currently part-way through its fourth year. The original programme timeframe aimed to upgrade all major internal components and carry out any required external works in 5 years to 2018/19, thereby raising all domestic Council assets to the new Thurrock standard.
- 2.3 In December 2015, Cabinet reviewed the financial implications of the budget announcements and key policy changes through the government's introduction of the Housing and Planning Bill and Welfare Reform Bill 2015. Cabinet subsequently approved an extension of the Transforming Homes programme by up to 1 year for internal improvements (1,000 homes) and up to 3 years for external improvements (5,000 homes), where the asset can withstand delayed completion. This extends the timeframe for full completion of the programme to 2021 for all property elements.
- 2.4 It is important to note that essential components in our properties will continue to age and will require on-going maintenance. There will be a requirement for a rolling programme of investment after Transforming Homes to ensure core components are updated at the appropriate time in order to continue to ensure our housing is maintained at a standard which is suitable for the needs of our local communities.

3. Issues, options and Analysis of Options

- 3.1 This report provides an update on the Transforming Homes programme to end of year 3 and an outline of the plans for the delivery of the programme for the remaining years 4 - 8.

4. Milestone Completions

- 4.1 The milestone target for the end of year three was to ensure that 6,000 of the circa 10,000 Council homes were at the new Thurrock standard. At the end of year three the programme achieved this target with 6085 homes completed.
- 4.2 The following table illustrates the numbers and types of works achieved by the programme to the end of Year 3:

Figure 1: Internal Works Completed by Element

Element	Number Completed
Kitchens	3909
Bathrooms	3296
Adaptations	981
Boilers	1348
Re-wires	1235

- 4.3 Year 3 of the programme also saw the commencement of the comprehensive external upgrades and 614 properties benefitted from these works in the last year, the breakdown is as follows:

Figure 2: External Works Completed

Location	Element	Number of properties
Seabrooke Rise	Roofing/Rainwater goods/soffits and concrete repairs	257
Broxburn Drive	Window Replacements	216
Coronation Avenue	Roof Repairs/rainwater goods /soffits	63
Tasmania and Brisbane Houses	Roof Repairs	128

5. Resident Engagement

- 5.1 Resident focused delivery is key to the success of the programme. From the outset residents were able to inform the choices in products and all residents continue to have the opportunity to choose from a range of colours and finishes for their new kitchens and bathrooms.
- 5.2 Before works start in a new area, face to face events are held. These have worked well in helping residents understand what the programme will be doing in their area and how they can best prepare ahead of the works. These sessions also give the opportunity for residents to meet the teams from both Thurrock and the contactors, ask any questions they might have and view samples of floor coverings, wall tiles, bathroom fittings, kitchen units and paint colours.
- 5.3 Separate sessions have been held specifically for leaseholders who own properties in blocks where communal or external works are planned. These have given leaseholders the opportunity to discuss the type of works that are required to their blocks and also the apportionment of the charges that will apply under the terms of their lease.

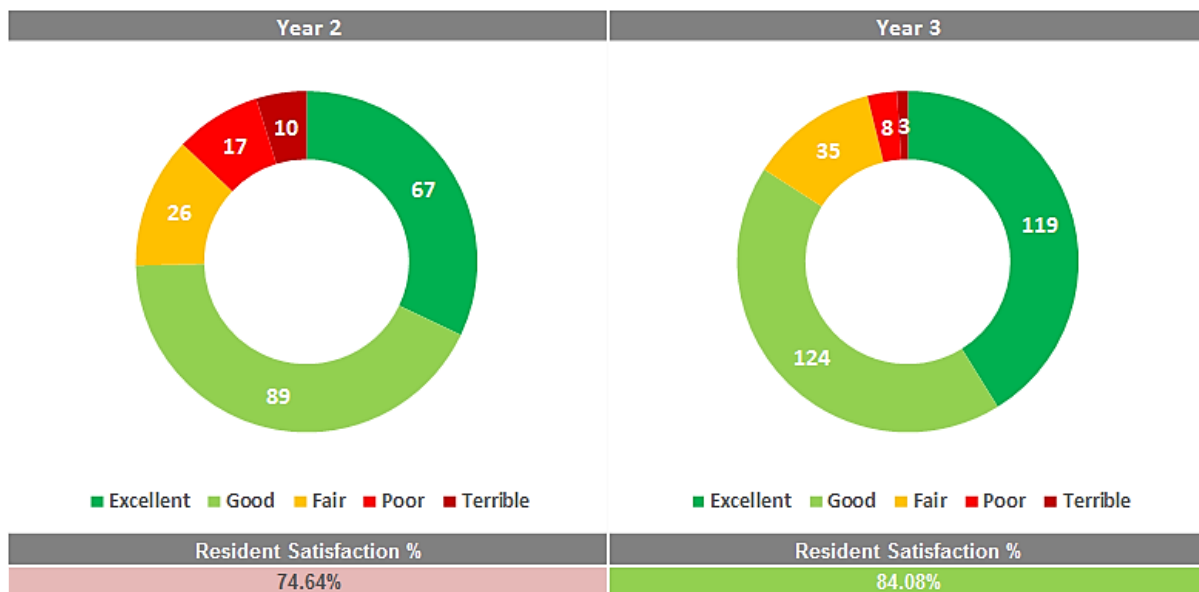
5.4 Resident Engagement Events held in the last year:

Number	Target Group
5	Face to face sessions held locally on estates where works are currently scheduled
2	Sessions held on site at sheltered complexes
4	Sessions specifically for leaseholders

6. Customer Feedback

- 6.1 It is a priority for all partners to ensure emerging issues are addressed as quickly as possible to minimise disruption to residents. The key performance target is to achieve 80% resident satisfaction across the programme. In future years our aim is to increase this.
- 6.2 In Year 3 the programme has seen significant improvements in resident satisfaction achieving 84% good to excellent rating overall. This is 10 percentage points higher than the Year 2 outturn of 74%.

Figure 1 : Resident Satisfaction for Year 2 and Year 3



These results are based on independent telephone surveys conducted and the average response rate from residents is 22.13%

- 6.3. There has been a decrease in complaints received for 2015/16 compared with 2014/15.

	2014/15	2015/16
Concerns	90	38
Stage 1 Complaints	48	48
Stage 2 Complaints	26	15
Stage 3 Complaints	7	6
Total	171	107

- 6.4 We continue to learn from the customer feedback and in response we have implemented an enhanced inspection process for works in progress to address any concerns as they arise and are also closely monitoring the percentage of properties handed over by the contractors snag free.

- 6.5 The programme supports residents during the works process through the Resident Liaison team and the success of this support is reflected in the resident satisfaction results. In addition to this some of our residents take the time to write to us formally to record their compliments about the service they have received.

- 7 formal compliments have been recorded for 2015/16
- A further 6 compliments have been received this year to date

7. Supporting Independent Living

- 7.1 The Transforming Homes programme supports independent living ensuring our stock meets the specific housing needs of elderly, vulnerable or disabled households through the provision of appropriate attributes and facilities. Where our initial visit highlights a household with that may require some adaptation of facilities in order to continue to live independently in their homes Occupational Health assessments are undertaken. Occupational Therapists embedded within the Quality Assurance Team visit these properties to undertake detailed assessments of needs of the residents. The recommend adaptations relevant to the household are then carried out as part of the works programme.

- 7.2 To the end of year three, 981 adaptations have been delivered across the programme. The majority of these are adapted bathroom facilities.

8. Delivering Social Value

- 8.1 The significant investment which is currently taking place in the Council's housing stock represents a real opportunity to provide additional social value to the local communities in the borough. Our commissioning, contract management and partnering approach supports a framework for social value

delivery to support training and employment opportunities for all segments of our communities and maximise spend in the local economy.

8.2 The key successes achieved during 2015/16 are:

- Over 45% of the Transforming Homes programme spend is in the local economy.
- Over 50% of supply chain partners are registered in Thurrock.
- 9 apprenticeships made available this year across the programme
- 40% of the delivery workforce is based locally.
- 54 unemployed young people have benefitted this year from support programmes. To date, 53% of these young people have progressed into employment, education, training or volunteering.

9. Thermal Efficiency

9.1 We are continuously working to improve our stock whilst effectively supporting our residents to live in warm and healthy homes. A key contributing factor is to improve the overall thermal efficiency of our homes and support some of our most vulnerable residents out of fuel poverty. Through the Transforming Homes Programme we achieve a number of measures that will improve the energy efficiency of homes, including but not limited to roof insulation, boiler replacement, and cavity wall insulation and window replacements.

9.2 In both 2014/15 and 2015/16 we successfully secured external funding under the Energy Company Obligation via a partnering scheme with Eon Energy as well as additional funding from the Government as part of the Green Deal. These funding streams supplemented the capital investment made by the Council and facilitated installation of external wall insulation to a total of 342 homes.

9.3 Further energy efficiencies have been achieved through the installation of more efficient 'A grade' boilers in over 1348 homes through this Transforming Homes programme.

9.4 We continue to explore new funding opportunities to address the most thermally inefficient solid wall properties in the stock. We are working closely with energy partners to identify possibilities for securing funding under a new energy obligation scheme as soon as it becomes available.

10. Tackling Damp and Mould

10.1 Damp and Mould is an issue faced by a number of our residents and this is a common theme with large social landlords. Mould and dampness are often considered as the same issue and therefore, over the delivery of our programmes, we have embedded an approach that ensures the matter is

appropriately understood and addressed based on the physical findings within the home.

- 10.2 Predominately within the housing stock, mould and dampness can be attributed to condensation. The cause of condensation is associated to inadequate space heating and ventilation meaning the environment within resident's homes becomes humid and causes condensation to form on cold surfaces and associated mould to form throughout the home. There are a number of everyday normal household functions which increase moisture within a home environment and in a number of instances residents are often unaware of the impact they are making. To address this factor, the Housing department is taking steps to educate residents through different communication channels.
- 10.3 The programme has continued to allocate resources to address the damp and mould issues with surveys and remedial works. This is achieved both through reactive maintenance and proactive identification as part of the Transforming Homes programme. In years 1 to 3 of the programme over 800 surveys have been carried out and over 600 remedial works.
- 10.4 Remedial works include:
- Mechanical and passive ventilation, insulation, heating, proprietary decorative treatments and on-going advice to residents.
 - Resolution of building defects such as leaks, damage to structures etc.
 - Provision of chemical or physical damp proof courses.
 - We are also looking to change how we deal with issues around damp and mould to ensure that problems are identified and tackled earlier.

11. Programme Budget Position

- 11.1 In 2015/16 the Transforming Homes outturn was £19.59m against the overall budget of £58.4m spread across the remaining 6 years of the programme.
- 11.2 A mid term financial review of the programme has highlighted that additional funding will be required in the region of £10.4m in order to achieve the full internal programme specification by 2019 and the external programme by 2021.

There are a number of reasons for this which mostly are due to the poor quality of some of our stock and so requiring a higher level of remedial works:

- A number of high cost properties that have required extensive structural works such as underpinning
- High level of spend on voids requiring major works to bring them up to a lettable standard.
- Higher than anticipated spend on combatting damp and mould

- Funding required for the energy efficiency programme
 - The inclusion of Fire Safety Works
 - Improvements to the original specification
 - The need to undertake reactive boiler replacements arising from breakdown visits ahead of programme timeframes
 - We will be investigating the number of double visits.
- 11.3 The HRA business plan is looking to address this additional requirement across then next 5 years from within existing HRA resources. The revised HRA business plan will be reported as part of budget setting to Cabinet in February 2017.

12. Key deliverables for Year 4 of the Programme 2016/17:

- 12.1 Undertaking internal improvements works to 65% of the council housing stock, helping to improve long term viability of council properties while improving the wellbeing of residents and creating social and economic opportunities.
- Resident focused delivery: continue resident engagement in choice in internal works, and extend this to consultation and engagement regarding external works programmes where appropriate;
 - Extending strong partnerships: with contractors delivering works, ensuring ongoing improvement in performance and partnership working, underpinning the ability of the Council to bring additional tangible benefits to local residents.
 - Commence procurement of delivery arrangements to take the programme through to year 8.
- 12.2 A key focus across the programme is to drive improvement by continuing to monitor the satisfaction and ensure robust challenge of contractor performance. Resident feedback allows for the identification of areas of poor performance and ensures that the services that are delivered reflect our residents' needs. In addition to this, the Housing team will continue to review and implement processes and procedures in response to resident's feedback and contractor performance gaps to ensure effective management and control of the programme.

13. Reasons for Recommendation

- 13.1 The programme supports strategic and local opportunities, investing in the long-term integrity of the Councils assets, contributing to resident wellbeing and the long-term regeneration of Thurrock and through the provision of employment opportunities.

14. Consultation (including Overview and Scrutiny, if applicable)

Not applicable

15. Impact on corporate policies, priorities, performance and community impact

15.1 The improvement of the Council's assets is linked to key corporate priorities:

- Creating a great place for learning and opportunity
- Encourage and promote job creation and economic prosperity
- Building pride, responsibility and respect
- Improve health and well-being

16. Implications

16.1 Financial

Implications verified by: **Julie Curtis**
HRA and Development Accountant

The HRA business plan is looking to address the additional requirement of the Transforming Homes programme across the next 5 years from within existing HRA resources. The revised HRA business plan will be reported as part of budget setting to Cabinet in February 2017

16.2 Legal

Implications verified by: **Chima Obichukwu**
Housing Solicitor

There are no legal implications from this report

16.3 Diversity and Equality

Implications verified by: **Rebecca Price**
Community Development and Equalities Team

A full impact assessment has been undertaken of the implementation of the Housing delivery of the Transforming Homes investment programme.

16.4 Other implications (where significant) – i.e. Staff, Health, Sustainability, Crime and Disorder)

Not applicable

17. Background papers used in preparing the report

- Implications of the Housing and Planning Bill and Welfare Reform 2015 on the HRA Services and Affordable Housing Programme – Report to Cabinet December 2015

18. Appendices to the report
None

Report Author:

Susan Cardozo

Housing Asset Investment and Delivery Manager

6 October 2016	ITEM: 7
Housing Overview and Scrutiny Committee	
Sheltered Housing Decommissioning – Update	
Wards and communities affected: Tilbury Riverside & Thurrock Park	Key Decision: Yes
Report of: Dawn Shepherd – Housing Strategy & Quality manager	
Accountable Head of Service: Richard Birchett, Interim Head of Housing	
Accountable Director: Roger Harris – Corporate Director of Adults, Housing and Health	
This report is public	

Executive Summary

In February 2015 Housing Overview & Scrutiny Committee noted and endorsed a programme of decommissioning of sheltered housing properties within the borough.

The decision followed a detailed review and analysis of sheltered accommodation and a full consultation with residents during 2013 -14

Seven schemes were potentially identified for decommissioning due to their lack of desirability and/or fitness for purpose. These were brought to Housing Overview & Scrutiny in a report dated 16 July 2014.

Subsequently, it was agreed in a further report in February 2015 that the decommissioning should be carried out in two phases.

This report outlines the progress on phase one of the decommissioning programme and identifies how the department will take forward the rest of the decommissioning programme

1. Recommendation(s)

- 1.1 That Members note the report and endorse the approach to further decommissioning of the remaining units/schemes identified in the February 2015 report.
- 1.2 That Members consider the options for using void properties during the decommissioning period

2. Introduction and Background

- 2.1 On 15 February 2015 Housing Overview & Scrutiny Committee noted and endorsed a programme of decommissioning of sheltered housing properties within the borough.

The decision followed a detailed review and analysis of sheltered accommodation and a full consultation with residents in 2013-14

The review also identified a new sheltered housing model and the introduction of service charges.

- 2.2 Seven schemes were potentially identified for decommissioning due to their lack of desirability and/or fitness for purpose.
- 2.3 It was agreed that a phased approach would be taken and that Phase 1 would incorporate the decommissioning of three schemes - Langland Close, St Cedds Court and Chichester Close.
- 2.4 The programme would be carried out in a very sensitive and supportive manner. Tenants would have the option to move with the assistance of a dedicated officer; no tenant would be forced to move but those who did would receive a disturbance payment to cover the cost of removals, new furnishings etc.
- 2.5 Phase 1 has now been completed and the outcomes are provided below.
- 2.6 Phase 2 provides for the decommissioning of Alexander Road, Dunlop Road, Montreal Road and Newton road – all in Tilbury. The reasons for decommissioning these blocks and planned approach are provided below.

3. Issues, Options and Analysis of Options

- 3.1 Although seven schemes were initially identified for decommissioning in the July 2014 report, it was agreed that a phased approach be used to ensure minimal levels of void properties.

Phase one involved three schemes and at each scheme sheltered tenants were offered the following options:

- to remain in the blocks with a mobile sheltered service
- to remain as a general needs tenant
- to move to an alternative property

- 3.2 Langland Close & Nottage Close – Corringham – a scheme consisting of 4 x three storey blocks with 11 properties in each. The schemes are separated by a major road and have no lift.

Following consultation with tenants in the block it was decided to decommission the two Nottage Close blocks first. This is now completed and the blocks are used for general needs tenants.

- 3.3 St Cedds Court – Whitmore Avenue, Grays – a mixed scheme with 34 sheltered flats on the ground floor and general needs accommodation above (studio flats and three bedroom maisonettes).

One tenant is still being assisted to move but receives a mobile sheltered service whilst waiting for a suitable property. The block is now used for general needs tenants.

- 3.4 Chichester Close, Aveley – consists of two blocks of 4 flats which are close to the sheltered schemes at the Sycamores and New Malting’s but separated completely. The flats have no lifts and there have been technical issues with the building

Future plans for the decommissioned blocks have not yet been agreed. Due to the technical issues with the building this is still under consideration.

- 3.5 The following outcomes have resulted:

	Tenants who remained with a mobile service	Tenants who remained as general needs tenants	Tenants who moved to alternative accommodation	Tenants still waiting to move	Total
Nottage Close	4	6	12	0	22
St Cedds Court	9	3	21	1	34
Chichester Close	1	3	4	0	8
Total	14	12	37	1	64

- 3.6 Langland Close

Although initially identified as a scheme for decommissioning, Langland Close has subsequently been used to accommodate tenants moving out of the Nottage Close scheme.

To date 5 properties have become void and been advertised. There have been an average of 20 people bidding for each property and therefore it is not recommended that any further decommissioning of this scheme is undertaken at this time.

The four other schemes identified within the original report in July 2014 have now been considered and the following recommendations are made:

3.7 Alexandra Road and Dunlop Road, Tilbury

This scheme consists of 10 blocks of 4 flats

- 20 x ground floor flats (2 in each block)
- 20 x 1st floor flats (2 in each block) with no lift

The flats were identified for decommissioning because they have been consistently hard to let to sheltered residents due to the lack of lift to the 1st floor. The properties would require major works to achieve DDA compliance.

3.8 Montreal Road and Newton Road, Tilbury

This scheme comprises of 4 blocks of 8 flats

- 16 x ground floor (4 in each block)
- 16 x 1st floor (4 in each block) with no lift

Tenants have access to the communal hall at Crown Court but it is a distance from the flats which are situated in the middle of general needs properties and isolated from the other properties within the scheme. Again, the lack of lift to the first floor make the accommodation unsuitable for sheltered residents.

3.9 Many sheltered tenants at the above Tilbury schemes have expressed an interest in the new scheme due to be built in Calcutta Road which is a HAPPI scheme specifically designed for older residents. There will be around 35 properties.

The Calcutta Road scheme would be subject to a local lettings plan, in line with the Council's existing Housing Allocations policy, since it provides a new build development within an existing Council Housing estate. The local lettings plan allows 75% of all 1st lettings to secure Council tenants living within a designated boundary, who meet the required criteria i.e. no rent arrears or other outstanding housing charges, no tenancy breaches and who pass a transfer inspection.

Interested tenants will be advised of the above and given the option to wait for the Calcutta scheme to be developed, however it is not anticipated that this will be completed before March 2018.

3.10 Whilst the Calcutta scheme would be available to residents of the decommissioned properties under the local lettings plan, there will only be around 25 properties which will qualify. Therefore there is no guarantee that everyone who wishes to move to the Calcutta Road scheme can be

accommodated and people will be prioritised in line with the Local lettings plan.

The local lettings plan states:

Where there are more tenants expressing an interest than properties available, tenants will be prioritised according to the amount of time they have lived consistently within the designated boundary. (Housing Allocations Scheme, Annex 6 s3.4)

Tenants will be advised of this and supported in making any decision to wait or move to an alternative property.

- 3.11 Tenants who do not wish to wait for the Calcutta Road will be given the option to move to alternative accommodation or remain in their current property but without a sheltered service in the future.

In summary the following three options will be available to tenants

Option 1 – to move to alternative accommodation

Option 2 – to remain in their current property until the Calcutta Road scheme is available and, providing they meet the local lettings criteria, to be given priority under the local lettings plan (subject to the clause stated above at 3.10)

Option 3 – to remain in their current property without the sheltered housing service – however the service would continue until the Calcutta Road scheme was open.

- 3.11 Due to the time scales involved, it is anticipated that this second phase of decommissioning is likely to take up to three years.

The Council will continue to provide a supportive and sensitive approach to the decommissioning whereby no tenant would be forced to move from their current home.

A dedicated officer will support tenants with the decommissioning process offering advice and assistance, including prioritising applications and assisting with bidding as necessary.

In line with the 1st Phase of decommissioning, home disturbance payments of up to £1700 will be paid to tenants who wish to move, to assist with removals, reconnections, furnishings etc. Home loss payments would not be paid – these are only required when it is compulsory for tenants to move and tenants will have the option to remain.

- 3.12 It is intended that Tilbury blocks will be used for general needs tenants following decommissioning. During the decommissioning period

consideration need to be taken as to how the empty properties will be used. The following options are possible and Members are asked to consider which approach should be taken:

Option 1 - General needs tenants could be allocated any empty properties as they arise. This will negate any rent loss or ASB issues with empty properties however, it may not be a popular option with sheltered tenants who will find themselves living with general needs tenants

Option 2. - Any empty properties could remain empty until the decommissioning is complete; however this will impact the rent collection and could incur HRA losses to the Council of up to £240,000 over a two year period – see financial implications below

Option 3. – Empty properties could be let to general needs tenants but in a very sensitive manner which is carefully managed – for example only to tenants over the age of 50. This may lead to some properties still remaining empty but will provide accommodation for older residents who do not meet the sheltered criteria.

4. Reasons for Recommendation

- 4.1 Phase 1 of the decommissioning has been achieved. In order to complete the decommissioning programme phase 2 needs to be implemented. It is believed that a very fair approach will be taken towards the process with as little stress and impact to tenants as possible.

5. Consultation (including Overview and Scrutiny, if applicable)

- 5.1 Full consultation took place and was fed back in the Housing Overview & scrutiny report in July 2014.

6. Impact on corporate policies, priorities, performance and community impact

- 6.1 None

7. Implications

7.1 Financial

Implications verified by: **Julie Curtis**
HRA and Development accountant

If the decision is taken not to fill void properties there is potential for rent loss. Empty properties during the decommissioning period will impact rent loss. A typical rent is around £85 per week. Whilst it is impossible to determine how the decommissioning will run, if we assume that decommissioning takes 2

years and that 25% of properties are decommissioned each year then the potential rent loss is around £80k in year one and £160k in year two.

Home disturbance payments are likely to be paid at up to £1700 per moving tenant. If all 72 tenants moved, the maximum amount paid over the period would be £122k.

7.2 Legal

Implications verified by: **Martin Hall**
Housing Solicitor / Housing Team Leader

The implementation of fixed term tenancies from April 2017 will impact tenants who transfer to alternative properties, however continuing secure tenancies can be issued to tenants who are required to move by the Council.

Whilst changes to the Council's tenancy policy have not yet been finalised, it is likely that older tenants will be given longer term tenancies.

7.3 Diversity and Equality

Implications verified by: **Natalie Warren**
Community Development & Equalities Manager

Decommissioning has the potential to seriously impact the lives of older people living in these properties. It is anticipated that through the sensitive and supportive approach taken we can reduce the impact this may have.

An impact assessment has been completed and is attached at Annex 1

7.4 Other implications (where significant) – i.e. Staff, Health, Sustainability, Crime and Disorder)

None

8. Background papers used in preparing the report (including their location on the Council's website or identification whether any are exempt or protected by copyright):

- Housing O & S report – Sheltered housing review, 16 July 2014
<https://thurrockintranet.moderngov.co.uk/documents/s1369/Sheltered%20Housing%20Review.pdf>
- Housing O & S report – Sheltered housing decommissioning – next step, 18 February 2015

<https://thurrockintranet.moderngov.co.uk/documents/s2449/Sheltered%20Housing%20Decommissioning%20-%20Next%20steps.pdf>

9. Appendices to the report

- Appendix 1 – Equality Impact Assessment

Report Author:

Dawn Shepherd

Housing Strategy & Quality Manager

Community and Equality Impact Assessment

As an authority we have made a commitment to apply a systematic screening process to both new policy development or changes to services.

This is to determine whether the proposals are likely to have a significant impact on different groups within our community.

This process has been developed, together with [full guidance \(PDF\)](#), to support officers in meeting our duties under the:

- Equality Act 2010.
- The Best Value Guidance
- The Public Services (Social Value) 2012 Act

In addition the guidance supports officers to consider our commitments set out in the [Thurrock Joint Compact](#) with the voluntary sector.

As well as supporting you to look at whether there is, or will be, a significant impact, the guidance will also consider ways in which you might mitigate this in the future.

About the service or policy development

Name of service or policy	Sheltered Housing Decommissioning Programme
Lead Officer	Bali Nahal
Contact Details	bnahal@thurrock.gov.uk

Why is this service or policy development/review needed?

Housing Overview & Scrutiny Committee endorsed the programme to decommission seven sheltered housing properties within the borough.

The sheltered complexes are available to tenants over sixty years of age, or who are aged between fifty five to sixty years, with a disability.

This assessment reiterates and highlights the support in place to minimise the impact of the programme.

The first phase of the programme has been successfully completed and three out of the seven schemes identified have been decommissioned. We are now entering the second phase to decommission the final four schemes.

1. Community impact (this can be used to assess impact on staff although a cumulative impact should be considered).

What impacts will this service or policy development have on communities?
Look at what you know? What does your research tell you?

Consider:

- National and local data sets – for example, [key statistics and ward profiles](#)
- Complaints
- Consultation and service monitoring information
- Voluntary and Community Organisations
- The Equality Act places a specific duty on people with ‘protected characteristics’. The table below details these groups and helps you to consider the impact on these groups.

	Positive	Neutral	Negative	What are the positive and negative impacts?	How will benefits be enhanced and negative impacts minimised or eliminated?
Local communities in general	Y		Y	Even though it was decided that the sheltered schemes	A lengthy public consultation took place for this work,

				<p>identified were unfit for purpose, the tenants living there built their own communities and embedded themselves into the wider community.</p> <p>The scheme residents are used to a certain lifestyle and living within familiar grounds.</p> <p>The community surrounding the schemes were used to older residents living near to them. This wider community may be more cautious of who will be moving into the sheltered schemes and some of them will be, and have already been, turned into general needs housing.</p> <p>Phase one has already been successfully completed.</p>	<p>which included those directly impacted and those living near to the complex. They were advised on plans for the initiative and given information about the proposed changes.</p> <p>In addition, phase one of the decommissioning programme has been successfully executed.</p> <p>The residents are aware that this work will be taking place and have had some time to adjust to the coming changes, whilst phase 1 has progressed.</p>
Age	Y		Y	<p>The residents of the sheltered complex will need to move or face changes to the types of support received.</p> <p>However, it has been agreed that the sheltered schemes are unfit</p>	<p>As already highlighted, a consultation took place to ensure all residents knew about the proposed changes. The first phase of the programme has progressed well.</p>

			<p>for purpose; therefore it would be unwise to expect the residents to continue to reside in the properties as they have been traditionally set up.</p>	<p>A dedicated support officer has been recruited to assist those whose livings arrangements will change; the officer helps with all aspects of moving, such as bidding for new properties and arranging and assisting with the moving of belongings. This support has worked well and has proved effective.</p> <p>In addition, the council recognises that some may be ready for a change quicker than others, and some may want to live in unsupported accommodation. Therefore there has been three options;</p> <ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. Moving to another sheltered property 2. Staying within the current property with some support 3. Staying within the scheme and having priority for a new scheme to be built in the same
--	--	--	--	---

COMMUNITY AND EQUALITY IMPACT ASSESSMENT

					area
Disability	Y		Y	The complexes which are decommissioning have many properties which are on the first floor which do not have lifts. Whilst tenants with disabilities would not have moved there some tenants may have developed disabilities over time. This could have a serious impact on accessibility and could result in tenants becoming housebound.	<p>Tenants with an urgent need to move will be accommodated via the usual priority rehousing.</p> <p>For tenants who have less urgent needs or who anticipate needs in the future, a move to an alternative property will assist in meeting future needs.</p> <p>If the tenants agree to move to the new development and are successful in obtaining a property, there will be a number of ground floor properties which are fully adapted. The scheme will be lifted to all floors.</p> <p>Each case will be reviewed depending on need and any additional requirements will be assessed case by case.</p>
Gender reassignment		Y			
Marriage and civil partnership		Y			
Pregnancy and maternity		Y			

COMMUNITY AND EQUALITY IMPACT ASSESSMENT

Race (including Gypsies, Roma and Travellers)		Y			
--	--	---	--	--	--

Religion or belief		Y			
---------------------------	--	---	--	--	--

Gender		Y			
---------------	--	---	--	--	--

Sexual orientation		Y			
---------------------------	--	---	--	--	--

Any community issues identified for this location? <i>See above link to ward profiles.</i> If the project is based in a specific location please state where, or whether Borough wide. Please note any detail of relevance e.g. is it an area with high unemployment, or public transport limited?					
---	--	--	--	--	--

2. Consultation.

Provide details of what steps you have taken or plan to take to consult the whole community or specific groups affected by the service or policy development e.g. on-line consultation, focus groups, consultation with representative groups?
This is a vital step – see [full guidance \(PDF\)](#).

- A range of events were held at each of the complexes so that tenants and their family members could participate in face to face conversations
- A letter to all tenants was issued to ensure they were aware of the consultation and invited to take part.
- The consultation took place online and in paper format as it was recognised that many of the residents were not computer literate and were more comfortable completing a paper questionnaire.

3. Monitoring and Review

How will you review community and equality impact once the service or policy has been implemented?
*These actions should be developed using the information gathered in **Section 1 and 2** and should be picked up in your departmental/service business plans.*

Action	By when?	By who?
The second phase of the decommissioning of sheltered complexes will be monitored closely. Residents will also	Sheltered Housing Officers and	Ongoing

COMMUNITY AND EQUALITY IMPACT ASSESSMENT

How will you review community and equality impact once the service or policy has been implemented?

*These actions should be developed using the information gathered in **Section 1 and 2** and should be picked up in your departmental/service business plans.*

continue to be assisted by the supporting officer. None of the residents will be forced to move, they will continue to have a range of options, so they can choose the one most suitable to them.	designated Supporting Officer	

4. Next steps

It is important the information gathered is used to inform any Council reports that are presented to Cabinet or Overview and Scrutiny committees. This will allow Members to be furnished with all the facts in relation to the impact their decisions will have on different equality groups and the community as a whole.

Take some time to précis your findings below. This can then be added to your report template for sign off by the Community Development and Equalities team at the consultation stage of the report cycle.

Implications/ Customer Impact

Decommissioning has the potential to seriously impact the lives of older people living in these properties. It is anticipated that through the sensitive and supportive approach taken we can reduce the impact this may have.

The Council will continue to provide a supportive and sensitive approach to the decommissioning whereby no tenant would be forced to move from their current home.

5. Sign off

The information contained in this template should be authorised by the relevant project sponsor or Head of Service who will be responsible for the accuracy of the information now provided and delivery of actions detailed.

Name	Role (e.g. project sponsor, head of service)	Date

COMMUNITY AND EQUALITY IMPACT ASSESSMENT	
---	--

6 October 2016	ITEM: 8
Housing Overview and Scrutiny Committee	
Fixed Term Secure Tenancies	
Wards and communities affected: All	Key Decision: Key
Report of: Dawn Shepherd, Housing Strategy & Quality Manager	
Accountable Head of Service: Richard Birchett, Interim Head of Housing	
Accountable Director: Roger Harris, Corporate Director of Adults, Housing and Health	
This report is Public	

Executive Summary

On 12 May 2016 the Housing and Planning Act 2016 received royal assent.

The Act contains provisions on the mandatory granting of fixed term secure tenancies.

From 1 April 2017 life time tenancies are expected to be replaced with secure tenancies for a fixed period of time, for all new tenants. Councils have some discretion over the length of the fixed term, but there is a minimum of two years and maximum of ten years term, except where there are children in the household.

Towards the end of the fixed term the tenancy will be reviewed and a decision made regarding a further tenancy.

Thurrock Council's tenancy policy determines the types of tenancies offered by the Council. The tenancy policy needs to be reviewed and updated to incorporate the new legislation and to determine any discretionary provisions i.e. length of fixed term tenancies and how households will be assessed at the review stage.

This report outlines the principles for fixed term tenancies and seeks guidance from Members on the length of fixed term tenancies to be offered and factors to be considered at the review stage

1. Recommendation(s)

It is recommended that Members:

1.1 Provide recommendations to Cabinet on the issue of fixed term tenancies for the groups outlined within the matrix at 3.3.4.

2. Introduction and Background

2.1 On 12 May 2016 the Housing and Planning Act 2016 received royal assent.

The Act contains provisions on the mandatory granting of fixed term secure tenancies. Regulations and a statutory Code of Guidance are expected during winter 2016-17 but some are now available.

2.1.1 From 1 April 2017 secure or so called “life time” tenancies will be replaced with secure tenancies for a fixed period of time, for all new tenants. The new provisions will not apply retrospectively to existing tenants before April 2017.

Councils have some discretion over the length of the fixed terms to be offered, but there is a minimum of two years and maximum of ten years term except where there are children in the household.

Councils can issue different length tenancies to different groups so long as they identify this within their tenancy policy.

An individual may seek a review of the length of tenancy offered to them. Guidance in relation to the review procedure will be issued at a later date.

2.1.2 Where the Council receives written notification that there are children in the household under the age of 9 years when the tenancy starts, the fixed term can be extended so that it ends on the 19th birthday of the youngest child.

2.1.3. During the fixed term period tenants will have similar rights as current lifetime tenants, with the following exceptions:

They will not have the right to claim compensation for any improvements they have carried out at the property.

In relation to tenancies granted before 1 April 2012, Councils will have a discretion to grant family members succession rights (spouses, civil partners, and those living together have absolute succession rights), but those family members will be ineligible for a lifetime tenancy but instead will be offered a 5 year fixed term tenancy.

2.1.4 Between nine and six months before the end of the fixed term the Council must review the tenancy and determine one of the following:

- To offer a further fixed term tenancy in the same property;
- To offer a fixed term tenancy in an alternative property;
- To end the tenancy and offer advice on buying a property or other housing options

- 2.1.5 The Council will continue to issue Introductory tenancies – the fixed term tenancy will start immediately after the introductory tenancy, provided the introductory tenancy has not been extended or possession proceedings started.
- 2.1.6 Existing old style secure tenants who transfer to alternative properties will receive a new fixed term tenancy except in limited circumstances. Those circumstances will be provided in the Statutory Code of Guidance but are generally expected to include
- people who are required to move by the Council (decants)
 - where the move is due to domestic abuse
 - moving via a mutual exchange

The Code of Guidance will also provide other limited grounds where discretion can be used to issue a further old style “life time” tenancies.

- 2.1.7 Criteria for determining the initial tenancy length and outcomes at the end of the fixed term must be contained within the council’s Tenancy Policy which will be revised.
- 2.1.8 A full consultation with the public was held between July and September 2016. Almost 300 people participated. The outcomes are attached in a report at Appendix 1
- 2.1.9 Cabinet approval will be required and a report with recommendations from this Committee will be presented to Cabinet in November 2016

3. Issues, Options and Analysis of Options

3.1 Length of the initial fixed term tenancy

- 3.1.1 The Council has discretion to issue fixed term tenancies of between 2 and 10 years.

The main objective of fixed term tenancies is to ensure that social housing is made available to those who need and are entitled to it, and that when tenants are able to meet their own housing needs they will move on into other options such as affordable rented properties or home ownership. This allows increased mobility when needed and helps to meet the needs of communities.

When deciding on the length of tenancy to be offered, the following advantages and disadvantages should be considered;

- 3.1.2 Certainty for tenants

Tenants with a longer tenancy are likely to feel more secure and settled, leading to less anxiety about potential change – this is particularly important for older and vulnerable tenants, those caring for others or with adapted properties or with children settled in local schools.

3.1.3 Increased sustainability within communities

The council strives to promote and build sustainable communities; this could be difficult where residents are unsure of their ability to stay in one particular place and could result in communities that feel they have less of a stake in the place where they live.

In turn, this could lead to a lower level of concern for the housing stock and environment creating areas in which crime, vandalism and anti-social behaviour are more likely to prosper. All of these factors could have a serious, detrimental impact on any social landlord and its tenants.

3.1.4 Administration costs

Reviewing tenancies will add an administrative cost to the Council, both in terms of finance and resources. Officers will be required to carry out reviews on tenancies six months before their end date – failure to do so would result in a further tenancy automatically taking place.

If tenants were not offered a further tenancy but refused to move, the Council would, like any landlord, still need to take legal action to evict them; this in turn could lead to increased legal costs and officer resource.

Extra void properties as a result of more tenants moving on will increase costs and resources.

3.1.5 Changing circumstances of tenants

Where a tenants' circumstances change during the fixed term, no account can be taken until the next review date.

Example: if the tenant's financial income increases substantially so that they can easily afford other housing options such as purchasing a property or privately renting, the tenant will continue as a secure tenant until the review date. Where a longer term tenancy is in place this thwarts the purpose of the policy i.e. to ensure Council accommodation is available to those in need of it.

Example: if the tenant's household size decreases because grown up children leave the home the property may be under-occupied. The tenant may not choose to down-size resulting in a continuing under occupation. Where a longer term tenancy is in place, this could continue for many years.

3.1.6 Long waiting lists

The Council holds a waiting list of applicants for housing. Currently there are 714 households with a priority need to be rehoused (at 15 September 2016)

Shorter term tenancies should result in some tenants moving on to other housing options and subsequently increase the number of properties available for letting to priority groups.

3.1.7 Options for specific schemes requiring shorter tenancy agreements

There are circumstances where issuing a longer tenancy would not be appropriate due to the circumstances of the tenant

- Example: A new scheme (Right Size) is due to be implemented as part of the recent Housing Allocations scheme review whereby elderly owner occupiers could be offered a sheltered tenancy in return for a lease of their property to the Council to house homeless households.

If such a scheme were adopted it would require the issuing of shorter tenancies to the owner occupiers to ensure that the sheltered tenancy only lasts as long as the lease of their property back to the council

- Example: The Council may wish in the future to introduce a key worker scheme to assist with recruitment to certain key roles, for example social workers. In such circumstances it would be preferable to offer a shorter fixed term tenancy since the tenants circumstances are more likely to change

3.2 Recommendation for fixed term tenancy length

Members of the Overview & Scrutiny Committee are asked to make recommendations to Cabinet on the length of fixed term tenancies for different groups of people.

To assist in this process tenants can be grouped according to whether or not there are children in the household and for other exceptional circumstances

3.2.1 Group A - Tenants with no children

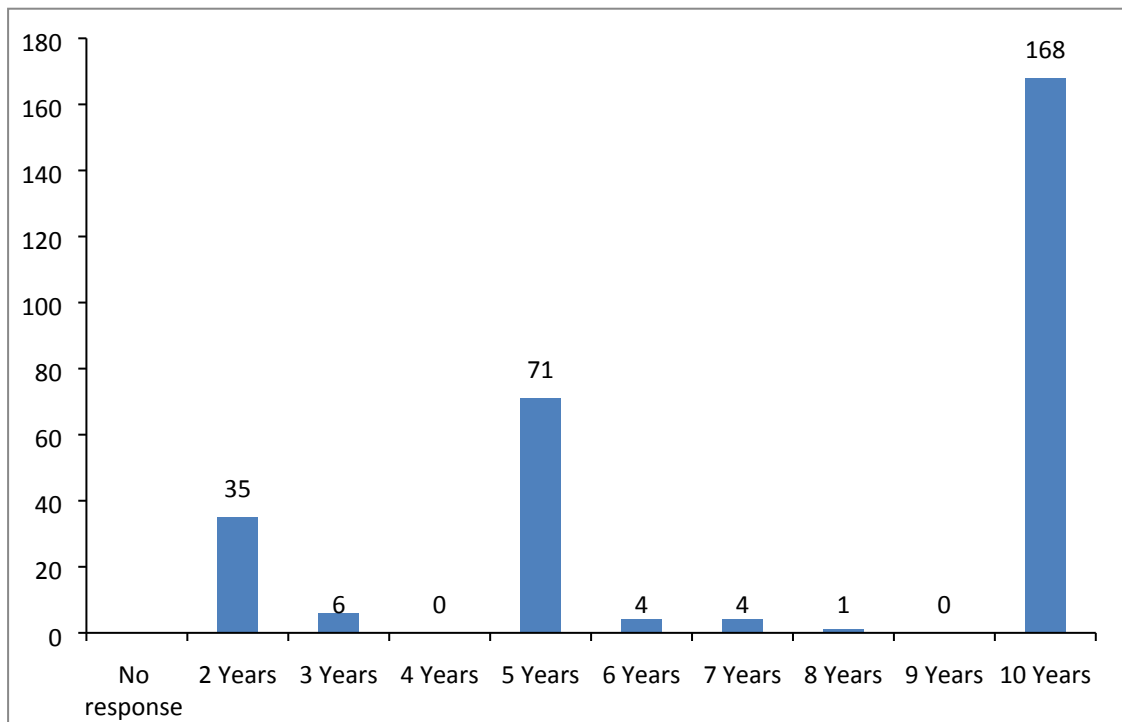
This group can be broken down further into those

- who are elderly – both in sheltered and non-sheltered accommodation
- with a vulnerability – e.g. long term mental or physical health issues
- who are caring for someone

Some tenants may meet more than one category.

Participants in the consultation were asked how long a fixed term tenancy should be, for people below pensionable age with no children.

The results are shown below



3.2.2 The majority of participants (57%) indicated that the maximum ten year tenancy should be the default position. 24% thought it should be 5 years

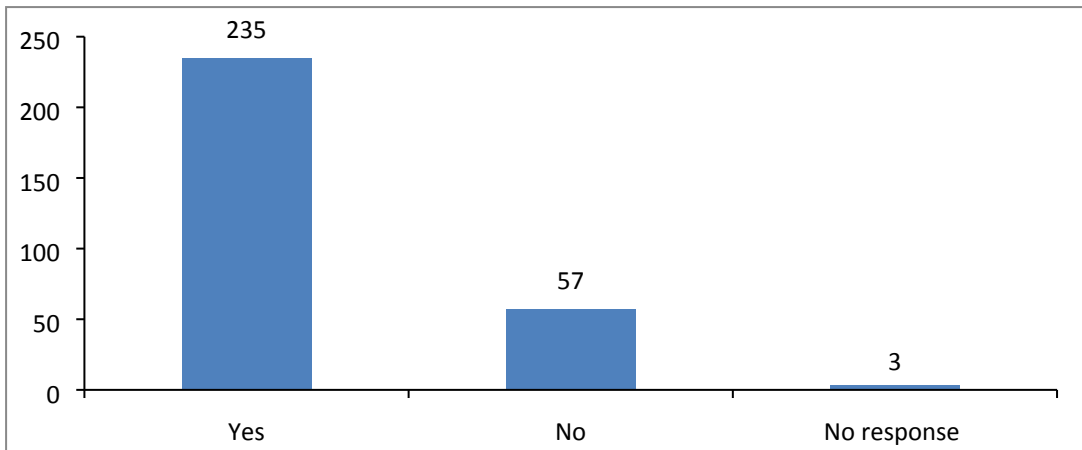
Where people have long term needs such as mental health or are caring for someone within the household this majority increased to 65% and 68% respectively.

Where the same question was asked about people above pensionable age the number recommending a ten year tenancy increased further to 87%.

3.2.3 Group B - Tenants with children

Where there are children in the household under the age of 9 years when the tenancy starts, the fixed term can be extended so that it ends on the 19th birthday of the youngest child.

Participants in the consultation were asked for their views on whether this should be implemented. The following results were shown:



Where there are children in the household above the age of 9 years, a lesser fixed term could be applied. For example - the default position could be a fixed term of the time up until that youngest child's 19th birthday with a set minimum term

3.2.4 Group C – tenants with special circumstances

Shorter tenancies could be issued to tenants with limited immigration rights – such as for the period of time up until the right expires

Shorter tenancies could be issued to people being offered accommodation to meet a time limited need in pursuance of a specific initiative – such as the Right Size campaign or a keyworker scheme

3.3. Review at the end of the fixed term

Between nine and six months before the end of the fixed term the Council must review the tenancy and determine one of the following:

- To offer a further fixed term tenancy in the same property;
- To offer a fixed term tenancy in an alternative property;
- To end the tenancy and offer advice on buying a property or other housing options

Criteria for determining the outcomes at the end of the fixed term must be contained within the council's Tenancy Policy and appeal procedures will also be available.

3.3.1 Participants in the consultation were asked in what circumstances they felt a further fixed term tenancy in the same property should not be issued

The following results were shown:

Where the household exhibited Anti-Social Behaviour	95%
Where the property was being under occupied	67%

Where the household had rent arrears	63%
Where the household had higher income levels	40%
Where the property was now unsuitable for medical reasons	53%

3.3.2 When considering whether or not to offer a further fixed term the following factors could be considered

- The household is under occupying the property and this is likely to continue for the foreseeable future – in such circumstances an alternative property should be offered that meets the family size
- The household has exhibited anti-social behaviour during the fixed term and this has not been addressed by the tenant to a satisfactory level at the point of review – in such circumstances no further tenancy would be offered (NB domestic abuse issues will always be considered where applicable)
- The tenancy has not been managed in a suitable manner i.e. there have been a number of tenancy breach instances such as rent arrears – in such circumstances no further tenancy would be offered
- The household is in receipt of income levels much higher than those determined within the financial qualification criteria in the Housing allocations Scheme so that the household can easily afford alternative housing – in such circumstances advice will be provided regarding options such as purchasing a property
- The property has been adapted to meet the needs of a member of the household who is no longer residing at the property – in such circumstances an alternative property should be offered that meets the family’s needs and size

3.3.3 Clearly defined processes for assessing the above, including a long term view of the tenancy history, will be provided within the tenancy policy.

Mechanisms for appeal and consistency of decision making at a management level will be built into the tenancy policy document.

3.3.4 Members are asked to recommend the default position for those within the categories described above. To assist – a matrix is provided below for completion

Tenants with no children	Recommended default tenancy term
Who are elderly	
With a vulnerability	

Who are caring for someone	
None of the above	
Tenants with children	Recommended default tenancy term
Where the youngest is aged below 9	
Where the youngest is aged above 9	
Tenants with special circumstances	Recommended default tenancy term
Tenants with limited immigration rights	
Tenancies offered under a specific incentive	

4. Reasons for Recommendation

- 4.1 The Housing and Planning Act 2016 has now received royal assent and the new provisions regarding fixed term secure tenancies must be implemented from 1 April 2017
- 4.2 Changes to the Council's Tenancy Policy are required and the applicable principles will need to be agreed before the policy is updated.

5. Consultation (including Overview and Scrutiny, if applicable)

- 5.1 The consultation for Fixed Term tenancies took place between 25 July 2016 and 23 September 2016, approximately 8 weeks. During this time, there was a range of activity to encourage feedback and instigate discussion within various groups.
- 5.2 A letter regarding the online survey was sent to all current social housing tenants and all of those on the housing waiting list, informing them of the change and encouraging them to take part in the consultation. In addition, the details for the consultation were shared on the Thurrock Council website and Twitter account, as well as the intranet so that staff could raise awareness and also get involved themselves.
- 5.3 The chairs for all the council forums were contacted such as the BME Forum, Mental Health Forum, and Women's Forum, LGBT Forum and the Disability Forum to request the groups take part in the consultation.
- 5.4 Fixed Term Tenancies were also discussed with certain groups face to face, such as the Sheltered Housing Officers and the Tenants Excellence Panel, so that they could raise awareness and assist tenants in completing the consultation.

6. Impact on corporate policies, priorities, performance and community impact

None

7. Implications

7.1 Financial

Implications verified by: **Julie Curtis**
HRA and Development Accountant

Increased administration due to extra checks and monitoring of fixed term tenancies at the end of their term will be required. This will inevitably increase costs.

The possibility of higher evictions where tenancies end and tenants refuse to leave could also lead to increased legal costs

7.2 Legal

Implications verified by: **Martin Hall**
Housing Solicitor / Team leader

The Housing and Planning Act 2016 received Royal assent in May 2016 and is likely to be implemented in the next 12 months, although no date has been specified as of yet.

The Council must implement the new arrangements, in line with regulations to be provided before the end of 2016.

Fixed term tenancies will be more complex to administer than current secure tenancies, particularly around the need to consider the age of children in the household and the requirement to review the tenant's circumstances 6 to 9 months prior to the end of the fixed term. Management of these tenancies will require new procedures around monitoring and possessions claims.

7.3 Diversity and Equality

Implications verified by: **Natalie Warren**
Community Development & Equalities Manager

An equality impact assessment has been undertaken and is attached at Appendix 2

7.4 Other implications (where significant) – i.e. Staff, Health, Sustainability, Crime and Disorder)

There is a large increase in the duties to be undertaken by officers to implement the monitoring and assessing of fixed term periods. This will necessitate an increase in the workforce.

- 8. Background papers used in preparing the report** (including their location on the Council's website or identification whether any are exempt or protected by copyright):

None

- 9. Appendices to the report**

Appendix 1 – Consultation results

Appendix 2 – Equality Impact Assessment

Report Authors:

Dawn Shepherd

Housing Strategy & Quality Manager

This page is intentionally left blank

Report Settings Summary

Event	Fixed Term Tenancies
Total Responses	295
Total Respondents	1
Questions	All
Filter	<i>(none)</i>
Pivot	<i>(none)</i>
Document Name	Update report for O & S
Created on	2016-09-21 10:03:59
Created by	Dawn Shepherd

Table 1

Length of Tenancy

Length of Tenancy

Question responses: **292 (98.98%)**

One of the exceptions to the 10 year limit is if a tenant has children. In this situation the fixed term can be extended up to the 19th birthday of the child.

Do you think that tenants with children should be given extended Fixed Term Tenancies until their youngest child is 19 years old?

Page 84

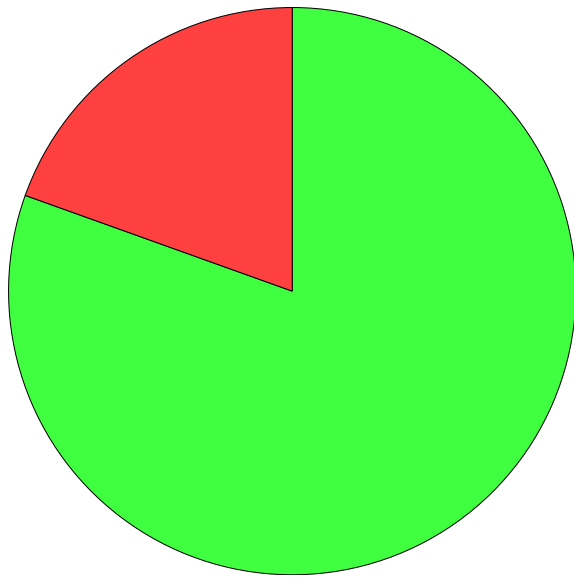


Table 2

	% Total	% Answer	Count
■ Yes	79.66%	80.48%	235
■ No	19.32%	19.52%	57
■ [No Response]	1.02%	--	3
Total	100.00%	100.00%	295

Table 3

19th Birthday no extention

19th Birthday no extention

Question responses: 49 (16.61%)

Can you explain why

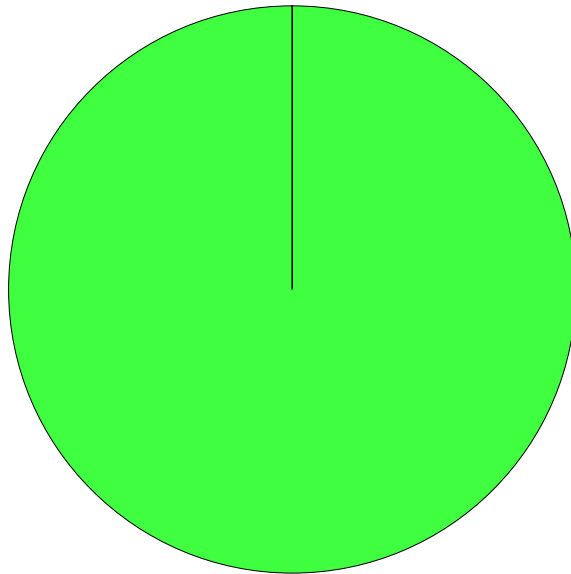


Table 4

	% Total	% Answer	Count
■ [Responses]	16.61%	100.00%	49
■ [No Response]	83.39%	--	246
Total	100.00%	100.00%	295

Table 5

Length of Tenancy 2

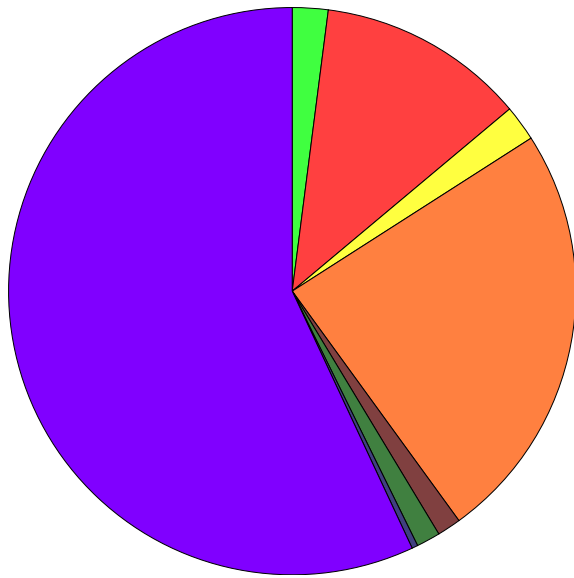
Length of Tenancy 2

Question responses: **295 (100.00%)**

The legislation states that tenants without children could be given a maximum Fixed Term Tenancy of up to 10 years.

How long do you think a Fixed Term Tenancy should be issued for, if a tenant does not have children and is below pensionable age?

Page 86



	% Total	% Answer	Count
...please select...	2.03%	2.03%	6
2 Years	11.86%	11.86%	35
3 Years	2.03%	2.03%	6
4 Years	0.00%	0.00%	0
5 Years	24.07%	24.07%	71
6 Years	1.36%	1.36%	4
7 Years	1.36%	1.36%	4
8 Years	0.34%	0.34%	1
9 Years	0.00%	0.00%	0
10 Years	56.95%	56.95%	168
Total	100.00%	100.00%	295

Table 7

Table 6

Length of Tenancy 2

Length of Tenancy 2

Question responses: **295 (100.00%)**

Older people may require more sustainability and reassurance as they progress through their retirement. The government has suggested that this group may require longer Fixed Term Tenancies.

How long do you think a Fixed Term Tenancy should be issued for, if a tenant is above pensionable age?

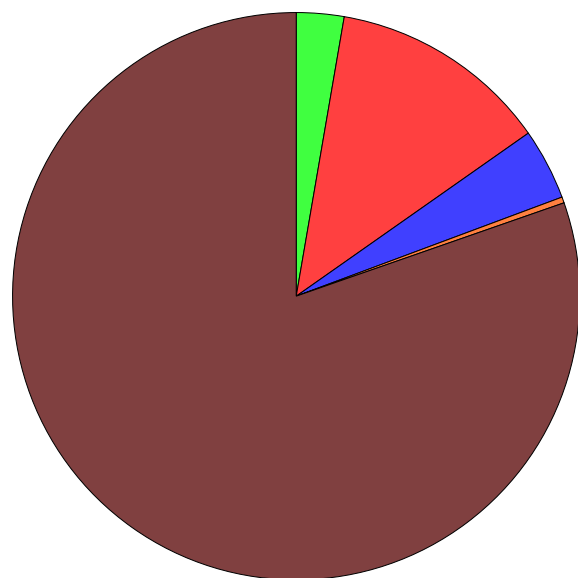


Table 8

	% Total	% Answer	Count
...please select...	2.71%	2.71%	8
6 Years	12.54%	12.54%	37
7 Years	0.00%	0.00%	0
8 Years	4.07%	4.07%	12
9 Years	0.34%	0.34%	1
10 Years	80.34%	80.34%	237
Total	100.00%	100.00%	295

Table 9

Length of Tenancy 2

Length of Tenancy 2

Question responses: **295 (100.00%)**

The government has suggested that people with long term needs may require a longer Fixed Term Tenancy.

How long do you think a Fixed Term Tenancy should be issued for, if a tenant is living in an adapted property suitable for their specific needs?

Page 88

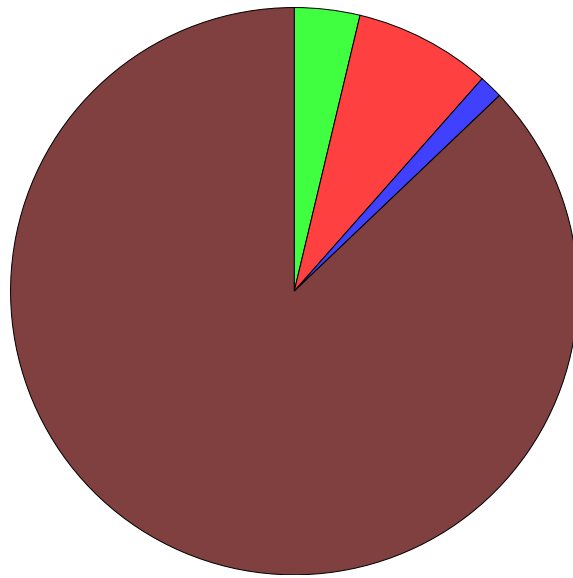


Table 10

	% Total	% Answer	Count
...please select...	3.73%	3.73%	11
6 Years	7.80%	7.80%	23
7 Years	0.00%	0.00%	0
8 Years	1.36%	1.36%	4
9 Years	0.00%	0.00%	0
10 Years	87.12%	87.12%	257
Total	100.00%	100.00%	295

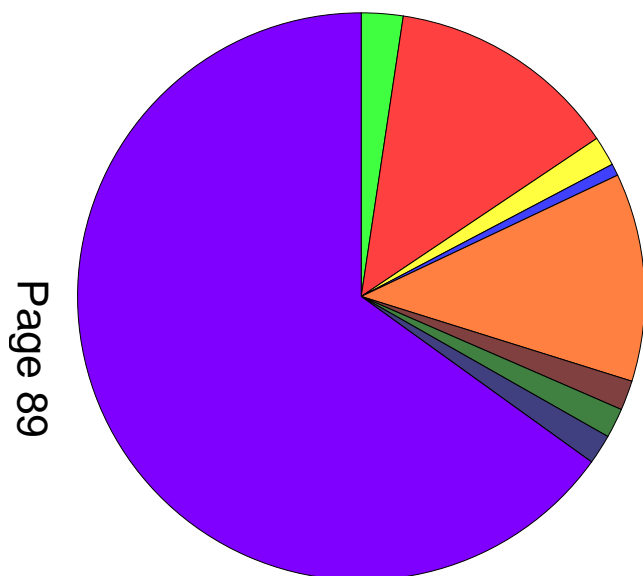
Table 11

Length of Tenancy 2

Length of Tenancy 2

Question responses: **295 (100.00%)**

How long do you think a Fixed Term Tenancy should be issued for, if a tenant has mental health problems?



	% Total	% Answer	Count
...please select...	2.37%	2.37%	7
2 Years	13.22%	13.22%	39
3 Years	1.69%	1.69%	5
4 Years	0.68%	0.68%	2
5 Years	11.86%	11.86%	35
6 Years	1.69%	1.69%	5
7 Years	1.69%	1.69%	5
8 Years	1.69%	1.69%	5
9 Years	0.00%	0.00%	0
10 Years	65.08%	65.08%	192
Total	100.00%	100.00%	295

Table 13

Table 12

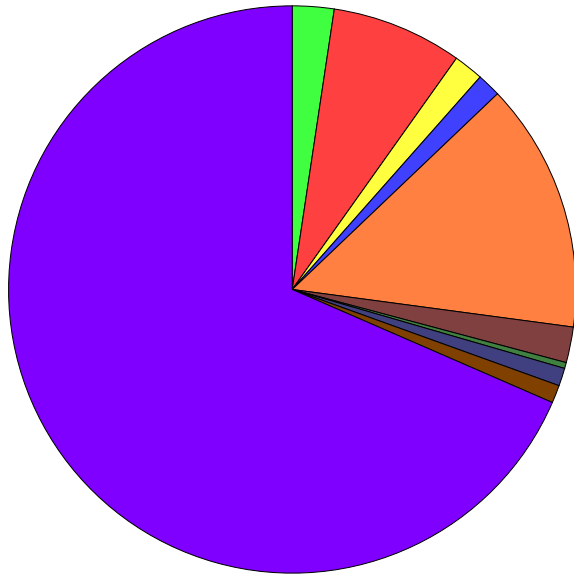
Length of Tenancy 2

Length of Tenancy 2

Question responses: **295 (100.00%)**

How long do you think a Fixed Term Tenancy should be issued for, if a tenant is a carer of someone within the property?

Page 90



	% Total	% Answer	Count
...please select...	2.37%	2.37%	7
2 Years	7.46%	7.46%	22
3 Years	1.69%	1.69%	5
4 Years	1.36%	1.36%	4
5 Years	14.24%	14.24%	42
6 Years	2.03%	2.03%	6
7 Years	0.34%	0.34%	1
8 Years	1.02%	1.02%	3
9 Years	1.02%	1.02%	3
10 Years	68.47%	68.47%	202
Total	100.00%	100.00%	295

Table 15

Table 14

Not issue a further Fixed Term Tenancy

Not issue a further Fixed Term Tenancy

Question responses: **290 (98.31%)**

In what circumstances should the council not issue a further Fixed Term Tenancy? You can tick as many options as you wish.

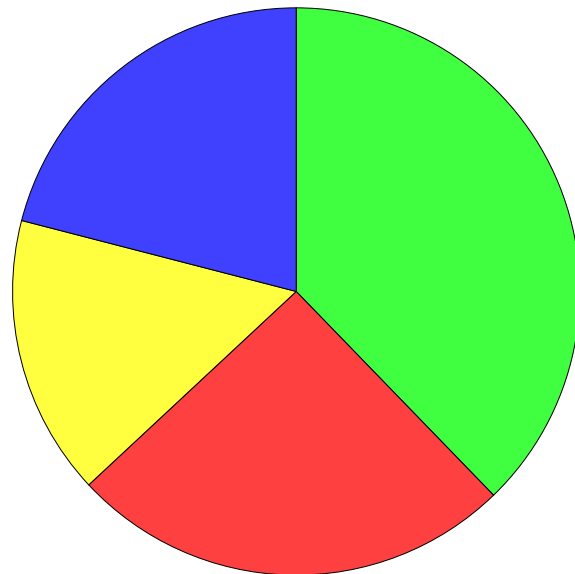


Table 16

	% Total	% Answer	Frequency	Count
Anti-Social Behaviour	37.50%	37.75%	94.58%	279
Rent arrears	25.13%	25.30%	63.39%	187
Higher income levels	15.86%	15.97%	40.00%	118
Unsuitable for medical reasons	20.83%	20.97%	52.54%	155
[No Response]	0.67%	--	1.69%	5
Total	100.00%	100.00%	0%	744

Table 17

Tenancy Review

Tenancy Review

Question responses: **287 (97.29%)**

Do you think a further Fixed Term Tenancy, in the same property, should be given to a household who is under occupying at the time of the review?

Page 92

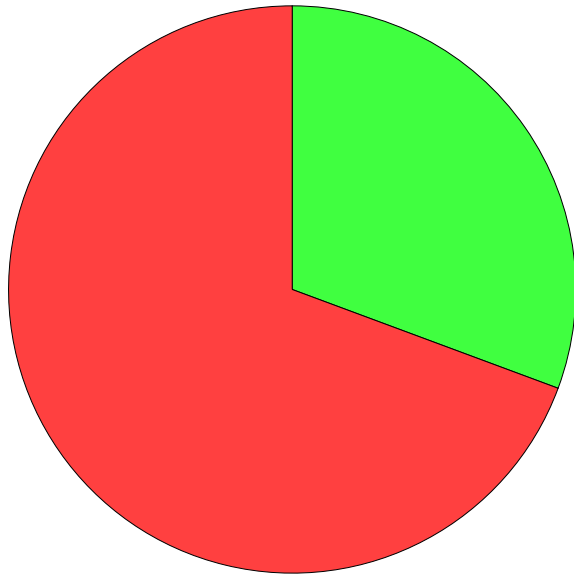


Table 18

	% Total	% Answer	Count
■ Yes	29.83%	30.66%	88
■ No	67.46%	69.34%	199
■ [No Response]	2.71%	--	8
Total	100.00%	100.00%	295

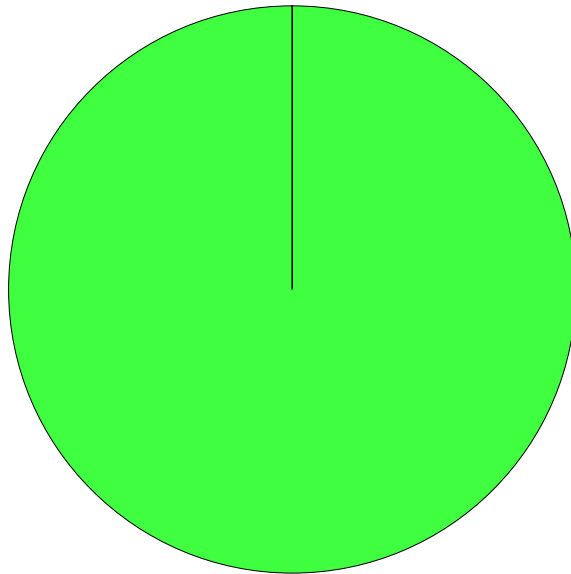
Table 19

same propety for under occupancy reason

same propety for under occupancy reason

Question responses: 75 (25.42%)

Can you please explain why



	% Total	% Answer	Count
[Responses]	25.42%	100.00%	75
[No Response]	74.58%	--	220
Total	100.00%	100.00%	295

Table 21

Table 20

Tenancy Review 2

Tenancy Review 2

Question responses: **285 (96.61%)**

A property is under occupied when it has more bedrooms than required by the household.

Do you think that a Fixed Term Tenancy, in a different property, should be given to a household if they are under occupying at the time of the review?

Page 94

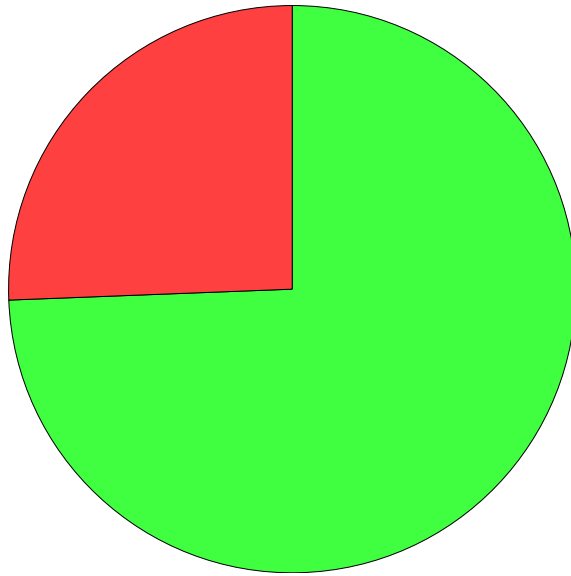


Table 22

	% Total	% Answer	Count
■ Yes	71.86%	74.39%	212
■ No	24.75%	25.61%	73
■ [No Response]	3.39%	--	10
Total	100.00%	100.00%	295

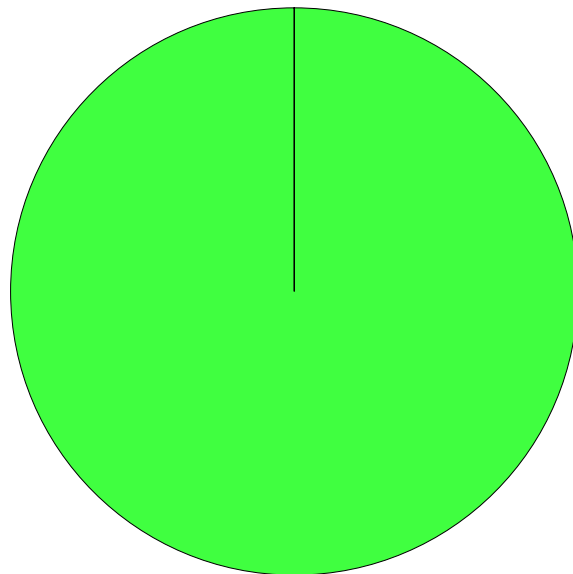
Table 23

Move to smaller house

Move to smaller house

Question responses: **56 (18.98%)**

Can you please explain why



	% Total	% Answer	Count
■ [Responses]	18.98%	100.00%	56
■ [No Response]	81.02%	--	239
Total	100.00%	100.00%	295

Table 25

Table 24

Direct offer

Direct offer

Question responses: **291 (98.64%)**

If the council chooses to offer an alternative property do you think the tenant should be able to bid for a property or should the council offer a property direct?

Page 96

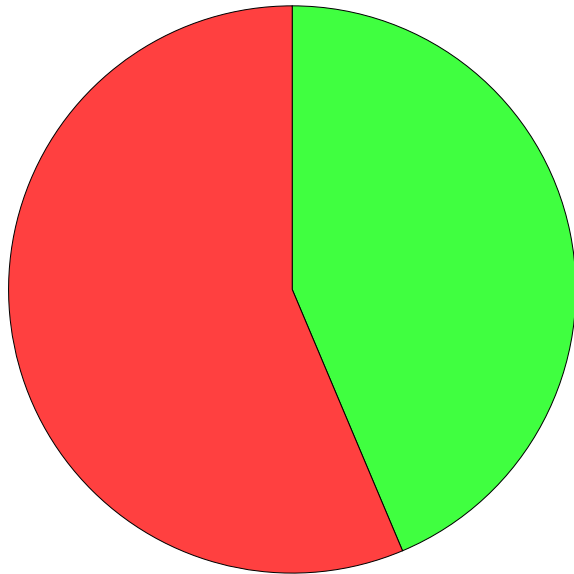


Table 26

	% Total	% Answer	Count
■ Bid for a property	43.05%	43.64%	127
■ Direct offer from the council	55.59%	56.36%	164
■ [No Response]	1.36%	--	4
Total	100.00%	100.00%	295

Table 27

Transfer

Question responses: **288 (97.63%)**

Do you think the council should offer secure tenancies to tenants transferring from other boroughs, who already hold secure tenancies in the borough they are moving from?

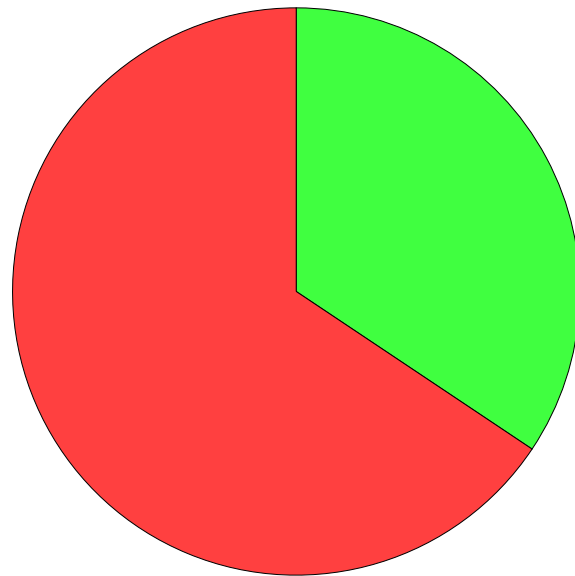


Table 28

	% Total	% Answer	Count
<input type="checkbox"/> Yes	33.56%	34.38%	99
<input type="checkbox"/> No	64.07%	65.63%	189
<input type="checkbox"/> [No Response]	2.37%	--	7
Total	100.00%	100.00%	295

Table 29

yes give secure to transferring

yes give secure to transferring

Question responses: **84 (28.47%)**

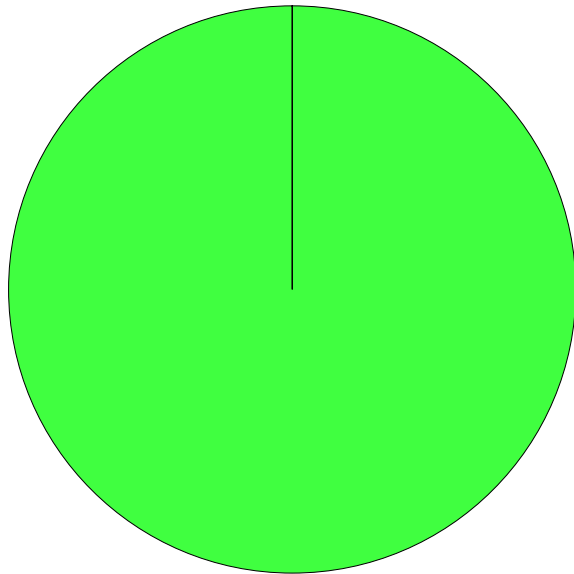
Can you please explain why

	% Total	% Answer	Count
■ [Responses]	28.47%	100.00%	84
■ [No Response]	71.53%	--	211
Total	100.00%	100.00%	295

Table 31

Page 98

Table 30



Others Succeed

Question responses: **290 (98.31%)**

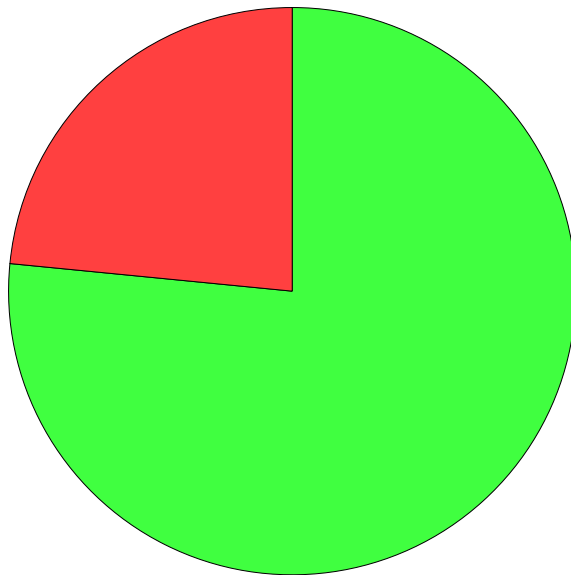
If an existing tenant dies, the tenancy includes one right to succession for the spouse or partner, who may continue to succeed in a lifetime tenancy.

Do you think children or other family members should have the right to succeed a property?

	% Total	% Answer	Count
■ Yes	75.25%	76.55%	222
■ No	23.05%	23.45%	68
■ [No Response]	1.69%	--	5
Total	100.00%	100.00%	295

Table 33

Table 32



Succession for Family options

Succession for Family options

Question responses: **222 (75.25%)**

Which family members should be given succession? Tick as many options as you wish.

Page 100

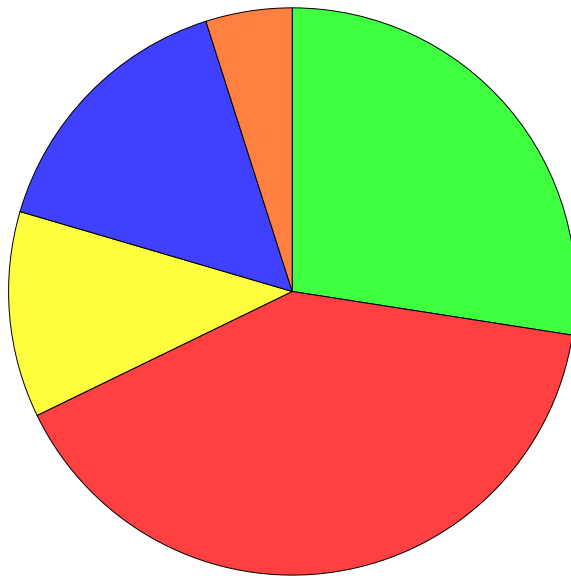


Table 34

	% Total	% Answer	Frequency	Count
Parents	24.13%	27.46%	49.15%	145
Children	35.44%	40.34%	72.20%	213
Grandparents	10.32%	11.74%	21.02%	62
Siblings	13.64%	15.53%	27.80%	82
Aunts/ Uncles	4.33%	4.92%	8.81%	26
[No Response]	12.15%	--	24.75%	73
Total	100.00%	100.00%	0%	601

Table 35

Family length of succession

Family length of succession

Question responses: **222 (75.25%)**

How long should the succession be granted for?







	% Total	% Answer	Count
 ..please select..	6.44%	8.56%	19
 2 Years	3.05%	4.05%	9
 3 Years	1.02%	1.35%	3
 4 Years	1.02%	1.35%	3
 5 Years	63.73%	84.68%	188
 [No Response]	24.75%	--	73
Total	100.00%	100.00%	295

Table 37

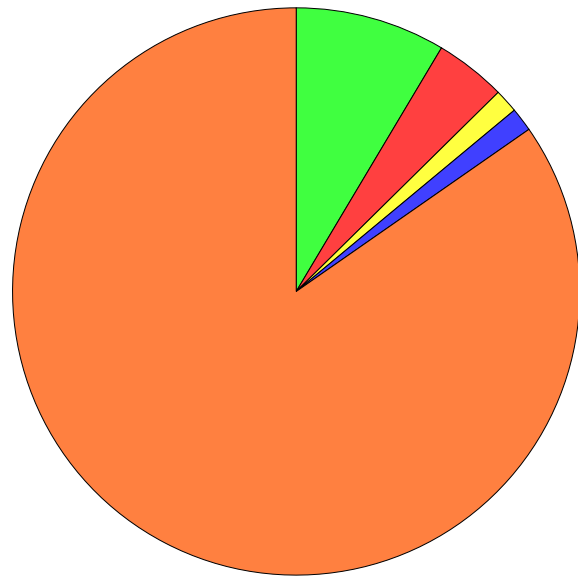


Table 36

General comments

General comments

Question responses: **136 (46.10%)**

Please use this space to write any general comments that you may have about Fixed Term Tenancies or this consultation:

Page 102

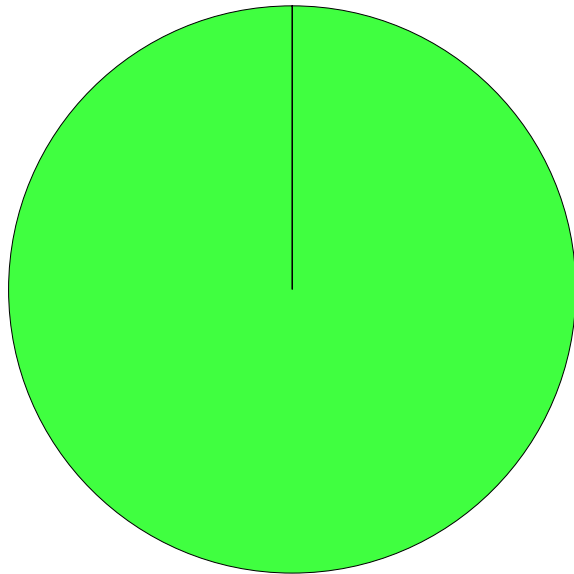


Table 38

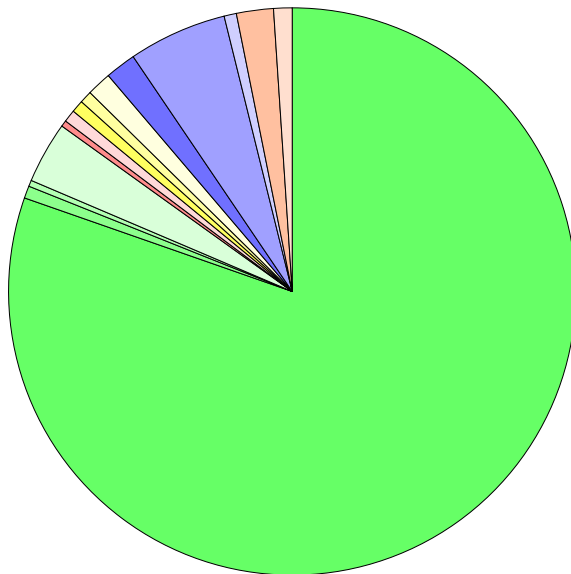
	% Total	% Answer	Count
■ [Responses]	46.10%	100.00%	136
■ [No Response]	53.90%	--	159
Total	100.00%	100.00%	295

Table 39

Ethnicity

Question responses: **285 (96.61%)**

What is your ethnic group, choose ONE and tick the appropriate box



	% Total	% Answer	Count
White			
English / Welsh / Scottish / Northern Irish / British	77.63%	80.35%	229
Irish	0.68%	0.70%	2
Gypsy or Irish Traveller	0.34%	0.35%	1
Any other White background	3.39%	3.51%	10
Mixed			
White and Black Caribbean	0.00%	0.00%	0
White and Black African	0.34%	0.35%	1
White and Asian	0.00%	0.00%	0
Any other Mixed background	0.68%	0.70%	2
Asian or Asian British			
Indian	0.68%	0.70%	2
Pakistani	0.00%	0.00%	0

Ethnicity











	% Total	% Answer	Count
 Bangladeshi	0.68%	0.70%	2
 Chinese	0.00%	0.00%	0
 Any other Asian background	1.36%	1.40%	4
Black or Black British			
 Caribbean	1.69%	1.75%	5
 African	5.42%	5.61%	16
 Any other Black background	0.68%	0.70%	2
Other ethnic group			
 Arab	0.00%	0.00%	0
 Prefer not to say	2.03%	2.11%	6
 Any other ethnic group	1.02%	1.05%	3
 [No Response]	3.39%	--	10
Total	100.00%	100.00%	295

Table 41

Table 40

Other ethnicity

Question responses: **5 (1.69%)**

The above ethnic groups are those categories used on the 2011 census. If you feel that these categories do not represent your ethnicity please use your preferred description here e.g. Polish

If you selected other, please write in your ethnic group in the box below

	% Total	% Answer	Count
■ [Responses]	1.69%	100.00%	5
■ [No Response]	98.31%	--	290
Total	100.00%	100.00%	295

Table 43

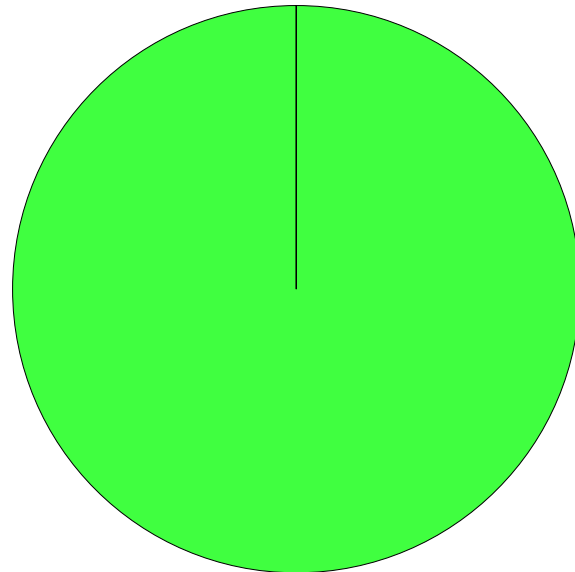


Table 42

Age

Age

Question responses: **285 (96.61%)**

Please specify your age group

Page 106

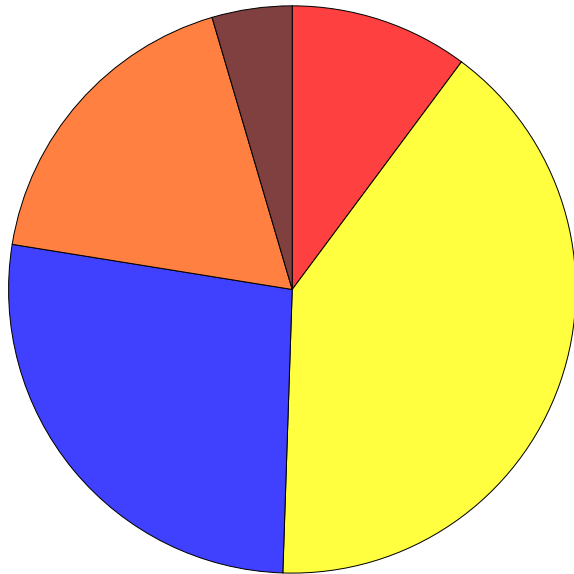


Table 44

	% Total	% Answer	Count
17 or under	0.00%	0.00%	0
18-24	9.83%	10.18%	29
25-44	38.98%	40.35%	115
45-59	26.10%	27.02%	77
Over 60 years	17.29%	17.89%	51
Prefer not to say	4.41%	4.56%	13
[No Response]	3.39%	--	10
Total	100.00%	100.00%	295

Table 45

Gender

Question responses: **282 (95.59%)**

Please specify your gender

Page 107

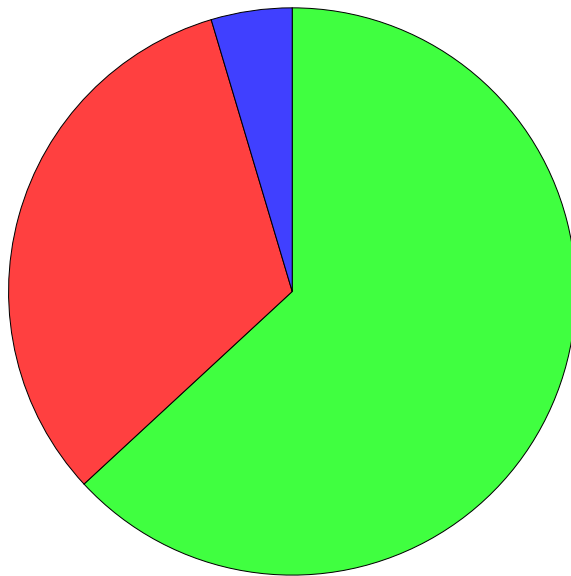


Table 46

	% Total	% Answer	Count
Female	60.34%	63.12%	178
Male	30.85%	32.27%	91
Transgender	0.00%	0.00%	0
Prefer not to say	4.41%	4.61%	13
[No Response]	4.41%	--	13
Total	100.00%	100.00%	295

Table 47

Sexual orientation

Sexual orientation

Question responses: **280 (94.92%)**

How would you define your sexual orientation?

Page 108

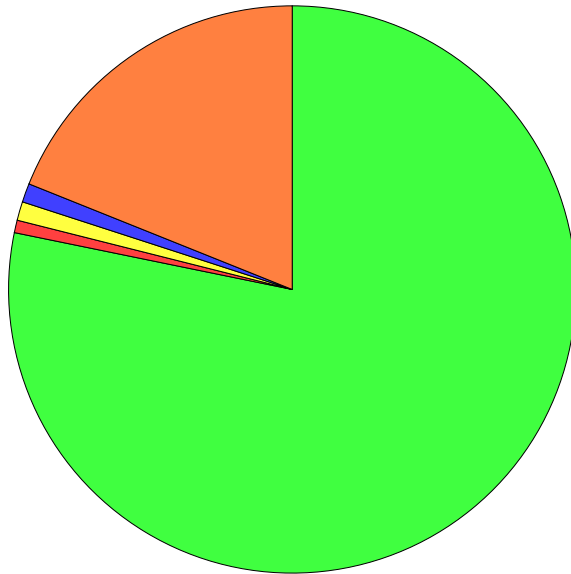


Table 48

	% Total	% Answer	Count
■ Heterosexual	74.24%	78.21%	219
■ Gay	0.68%	0.71%	2
■ Bisexual	1.02%	1.07%	3
■ Lesbian	1.02%	1.07%	3
■ Prefer not to say	17.97%	18.93%	53
■ [No Response]	5.08%	--	15
Total	100.00%	100.00%	295

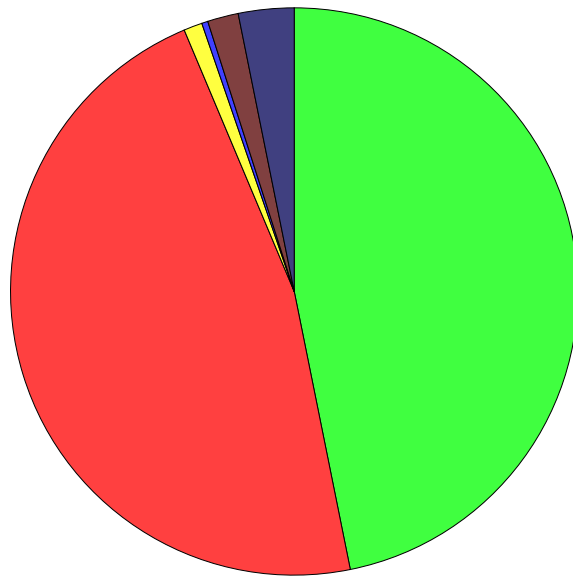
Table 49

Religious belief

Religious belief

Question responses: **284 (96.27%)**

What is your religion?



	% Total	% Answer	Count
■ No religion	45.08%	46.83%	133
■ Christian (including Church of England, Catholic, Protestant and all other Christian denominations)	45.08%	46.83%	133
■ Buddhist	1.02%	1.06%	3
■ Hindu	0.34%	0.35%	1
■ Jewish	0.00%	0.00%	0
■ Muslim	1.69%	1.76%	5
■ Sikh	0.00%	0.00%	0
■ Any other religion	3.05%	3.17%	9
■ [No Response]	3.73%	--	11
Total	100.00%	100.00%	295

Table 51

Table 50

Other religion

Other religion

Question responses: **6 (2.03%)**

If you selected other, please write in your religion below

	% Total	% Answer	Count
■ [Responses]	2.03%	100.00%	6
■ [No Response]	97.97%	--	289
Total	100.00%	100.00%	295

Table 53

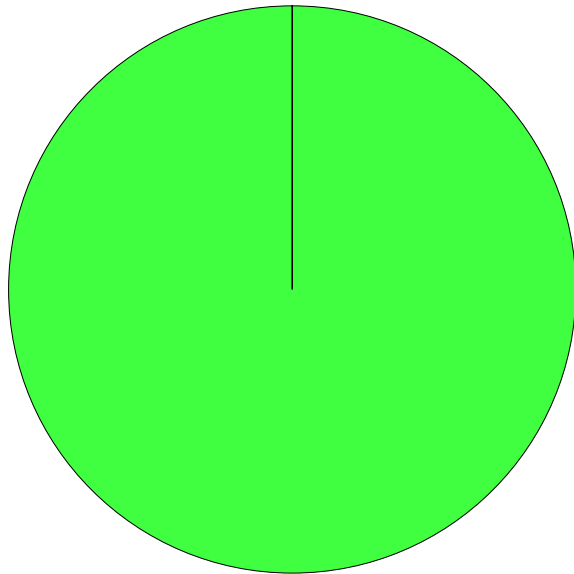


Table 52

Disability

Question responses: **279 (94.58%)**

Do you consider yourself to be a disabled person?

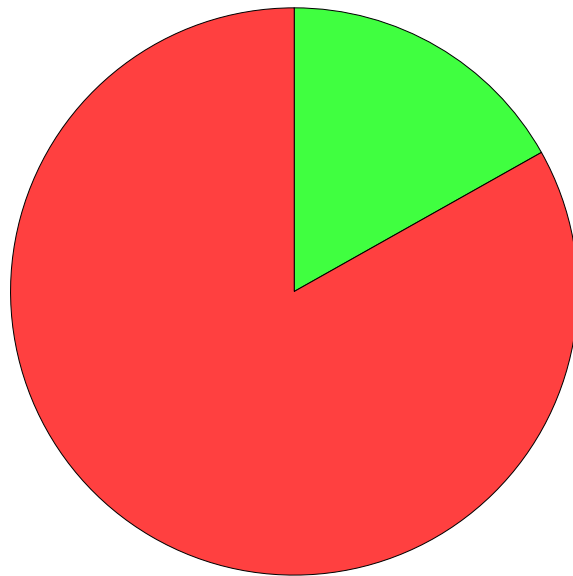


Table 54

	% Total	% Answer	Count
<input type="checkbox"/> Yes	15.93%	16.85%	47
<input type="checkbox"/> No	78.64%	83.15%	232
<input type="checkbox"/> [No Response]	5.42%	--	16
Total	100.00%	100.00%	295

Table 55

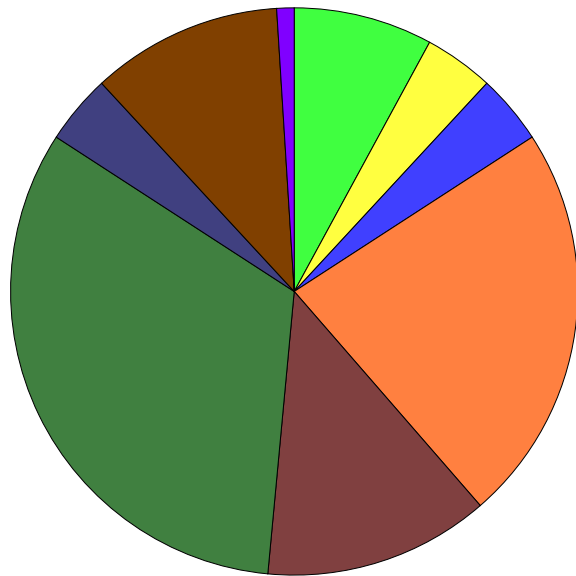
Impairment

Impairment

Question responses: **46 (15.59%)**

If you are disabled, how would you describe your disability? (tick all that apply)

Page 112



	% Total	% Answer	Frequency	Count
Visual impairment	2.29%	7.92%	2.71%	8
Speech impairment	0.00%	0.00%	0.00%	0
Hearing impairment	1.14%	3.96%	1.36%	4
Mobility (a wheelchair user)	1.14%	3.96%	1.36%	4
Mobility (not a wheelchair user)	6.57%	22.77%	7.80%	23
Mental health condition	3.71%	12.87%	4.41%	13
Long term medical condition	9.43%	32.67%	11.19%	33
Learning disability	1.14%	3.96%	1.36%	4
Hidden impairment	3.14%	10.89%	3.73%	11
Other	0.29%	0.99%	0.34%	1
[No Response]	71.14%	--	84.41%	249

Impairment

	% Total	% Answer	Frequency	Count
Total	100.00%	100.00%	0%	350

Table 57

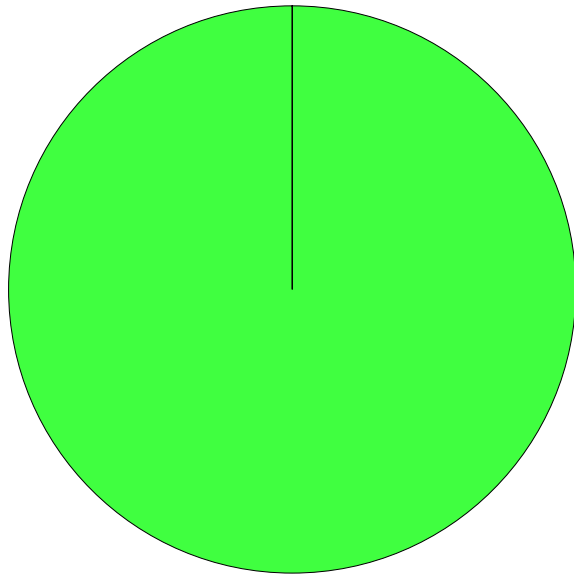
Table 56

Impairment other

Impairment other

Question responses: 1 (0.34%)

Please specify disability



	% Total	% Answer	Count
■ [Responses]	0.34%	100.00%	1
■ [No Response]	99.66%	--	294
Total	100.00%	100.00%	295

Table 59

Table 58

Community and Equality Impact Assessment

As an authority we have made a commitment to apply a systematic screening process to both new policy development or changes to services.

This is to determine whether the proposals are likely to have a significant impact on different groups within our community.

This process has been developed, together with [full guidance \(PDF\)](#), to support officers in meeting our duties under the:

- Equality Act 2010.
- The Best Value Guidance
- The Public Services (Social Value) 2012 Act

In addition the guidance supports officers to consider our commitments set out in the [Thurrock Joint Compact](#) with the voluntary sector.

As well as supporting you to look at whether there is, or will be, a significant impact, the guidance will also consider ways in which you might mitigate this in the future.

About the service or policy development

Name of service or policy	Fixed Term Secure tenancies
Lead Officer	Bali Nahal
Contact Details	bnahal@thurrock.gov.uk

Why is this service or policy development/review needed?

The legislation has changed, making it mandatory for all local authorities to issue Fixed Term Secure Tenancies, starting 1 April 2017.

1. Community impact (this can be used to assess impact on staff although a cumulative impact should be considered).

What impacts will this service or policy development have on communities?
Look at what you know? What does your research tell you?

Consider:

- National and local data sets – for example, [key statistics and ward profiles](#)
- Complaints
- Consultation and service monitoring information
- Voluntary and Community Organisations
- The Equality Act places a specific duty on people with ‘protected characteristics’. The table below details these groups and helps you to consider the impact on these groups.

	Positive	Neutral	Negative	What are the positive and negative impacts?	How will benefits be enhanced and negative impacts minimised or eliminated?
Local communities in general	Y		Y	Communities will be more cautious that their tenancy may not be renewed if the terms and conditions of the tenancy are not adhered to. They may feel that they need to prove they are a good tenant, which will result in a positive impact.	The qualities of good behaviour such as paying rent on time and respecting others in the community will be highlighted within the policy and reiterated when tenancies are given so that tenants are aware of how their behaviour will be measured.

			<p>On the other hand, if tenancies are issued for a shorter timeframe, they may deflect from building sustainable communities. Tenants may feel that they are not able to settle and feel at home due to the possibility of moving in a few years.</p>	<p>It is important that the timeframes for fixed term tenancies do not compromise building sustainable communities. Therefore thought must be given to various groups and their future needs to move. For example a young family may not need to move for a number of years, therefore consideration should be given to maximising tenancies for households with children. On the other hand, an older couple living in a single bedroom property may also not need to move for a number of years, therefore they should be encouraged to settle and enjoy their home without the threat of being moved within a short timeframe.</p>
<p>Age</p>	<p>Y</p>	<p>Y</p>	<p>Older people in larger properties than they need have been left alone to manage their tenancies unless it has been highlighted that they require support. Although this is positive and allows them to build local</p>	<p>The review at the end of the tenancy could assess the size of the property they are living in and also initiate the conversation, if they require support in moving to a smaller property or wish to move to a different</p>

			<p>connections, it can also have a negative impact, in that they are coping in a bigger property than they need and possibly paying higher rent as a result. It could also result in them not needing early intervention of support, which may result in more drastic intervention at crisis point.</p> <p>Younger families, with children of school age could benefit from having a stable home until their children reach 19, which will allow them to embed themselves in the local community and have stability of remaining in the same home.</p>	<p>area.</p>
<p>Disability</p>	<p>Y</p>	<p>Y</p>	<p>There are positive and negative aspects for disabled individuals, however these are similar to other groups without disabilities. For example fixed term tenancies will facilitate a regular review of housing needs and any additional support the local authority can offer. However it will not necessarily be a “home for life” as needs may change</p>	<p>Thurrock needs to be very clear at the beginning of the tenancies what issues will be reviewed and that there may be a possibility that a tenant may need to move either through bad behaviour or changed housing requirements. This will allow for a better management of expectation.</p>

COMMUNITY AND EQUALITY IMPACT ASSESSMENT	
---	--

				over time.	
Gender reassignment		Y			
Marriage and civil partnership		Y			
Pregnancy and maternity		Y			
Race (including Gypsies, Roma and Travellers)		Y			

Religion or belief		Y			
Gender		Y			
Sexual orientation		Y			
Any community issues identified for this location? <i>See above link to ward profiles.</i> If the project is based in a specific location please state where, or whether Borough wide. Please note any detail of relevance e.g. is it an area with high unemployment, or public transport limited?					

2. Consultation.

<p>Provide details of what steps you have taken or plan to take to consult the whole community or specific groups affected by the service or policy development e.g. on-line consultation, focus groups, consultation with representative groups? <i>This is a vital step</i> – see full guidance (PDF).</p>
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • A letter highlighting the consultation has been sent to all current tenants with their rent statement in July 2016 • A message highlighting the consultation has been sent to all current applicants on the housing register in July 2016. • All staff forums have been sent details of the consultation along with the link in July 2016. • The new legislation and consultation has been shared at the Mental Health Forum on 27 July 2016. • The consultation has been highlighted on the Thurrock Council website. • The consultation has been circulated to all Housing staff to gain their views, in light of their experiences on 27 July 2016. • The new legislation and consultation has been shared with the Tenants Excellence panel on 23 August 2016.

COMMUNITY AND EQUALITY IMPACT ASSESSMENT

Provide details of what steps you have taken or plan to take to consult the whole community or specific groups affected by the service or policy development e.g. on-line consultation, focus groups, consultation with representative groups?

This is a vital step – see [full guidance \(PDF\)](#).

- The new legislation and consultation has been shared with members on 29 September 2016

3. Monitoring and Review

How will you review community and equality impact once the service or policy has been implemented?

*These actions should be developed using the information gathered in **Section 1 and 2** and should be picked up in your departmental/service business plans.*

Action	By when?	By who?
The Fixed term Tenancies will be reviewed every time the tenancy comes to an end. In addition the Tenancy Management Team will deal with any issues as and when they happen.	Tenancy Management Team	Ongoing

4. Next steps

It is important the information gathered is used to inform any Council reports that are presented to Cabinet or Overview and Scrutiny committees. This will allow Members to be furnished with all the facts in relation to the impact their decisions will have on different equality groups and the community as a whole.

Take some time to précis your findings below. This can then be added to your report template for sign off by the Community Development and Equalities team at the consultation stage of the report cycle.

Implications/ Customer Impact

Implications/ Customer Impact

There will be a shift in the way social housing is allocated and managed. It will be more needs based, rather than homes issued “for life”. We anticipate more movement within housing stock as a result, however this will be gradual, as all current secure tenants will remain secure. In addition all of those on Introductory tenancies will be given secure tenancies until the new policy comes into effect. For example, if a new tenant is given an Introductory Tenancy before April 2017, they will be granted a secure tenancy when their introductory comes to an end. Those Introductory Tenancies issues after April 2017 will then be given a fixed term tenancy once their year is over.

As this change will only affect new tenants, it will be easier to manage expectation, as they will be clear from the start that the tenancy is only for a fixed period of time Thereafter it will be reviewed as will be highlighted in the policy.

5. Sign off

The information contained in this template should be authorised by the relevant project sponsor or Head of Service who will be responsible for the accuracy of the information now provided and delivery of actions detailed.

Name	Role (e.g. project sponsor, head of service)	Date

This page is intentionally left blank

Work Programme

Committee: Housing Overview & Scrutiny

Year: 2016/2017

Dates of Meeting: 21 July 2016, 06 October 2016, 13 December 2016 & 02 February 2017

Topic	Lead Officer	Requested by Officer/Member
21 July 2016		
Update report – The Housing and Planning Act	Dawn Shephard	Officer
Repairs Working Group Report Include: update on repairs & current contracts	Richard Parkin	Officer
Housing Development Update	Steve Cox/Matthew Essex	Member
06 October 2016		
Homelessness Strategy	Dawn Shephard	Member
<i>Update Report: Transforming Homes</i>	Richard Parkin	Officer
Quarterly Performance Report	Roger Harris/ Richard Parkin	Member
An update on sheltered housing decommissioning	Dawn Shephard	Officer

Work Programme

13 December 2016		
Allocations Policy Review	Dawn Shephard	
02 February 2017		
Date To Be Confirmed		
Improving Energy Efficiency	Richard Parkin	Member

** Shaping the Council Budget Update on themed items as and when required*