

**MEETING**

**HOUSING COMMITTEE**

**DATE AND TIME**

**MONDAY 27<sup>TH</sup> OCTOBER, 2014**

**AT 7.00 PM**

**VENUE**

**HENDON TOWN HALL, THE BURROUGHS, LONDON NW4 4BG**

**TO: MEMBERS OF HOUSING COMMITTEE (Quorum 3)**

Chairman: Councillor Tom Davey  
Vice Chairman: Councillor Lisa Rutter

**Councillors**

Val Duschinsky	Adam Langleben	Shimon Ryde
Ross Houston	Kath McGuirk	Tim Roberts
	Bridget Perry	

**Substitute Members**

Richard Cornelius	Councillor Jim Tierney	Councillor Peter Zinkin
Charlie O-Macauley	Councillor Amy Trevethan	

**You are requested to attend the above meeting for which an agenda is attached.**

**Andrew Nathan – Head of Governance**

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Media Relations contact: Sue Cocker 020 8359 7039

**ASSURANCE GROUP**

## ORDER OF BUSINESS

Item No	Title of Report	Pages
1.	Minutes of the Previous Meeting	1 - 4
2.	Absence of Members	
3.	Declarations of Members Disclosable Pecuniary Interests and Non-Pecuniary Interests	
4.	Public Questions and Comments (if any)	
5.	Members' Items (if any)	
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13.	Any Other Items that the Chairman Decides are Urgent	
14.	<p>Motion to Exclude the Press and Public</p> <p>That under Section 100A (4) of the Local Government Act 1972 the public be excluded from the meeting for the following items of business on the grounds that they involve the likely disclosure of exempt information as defined in paragraph 9 of Part 1 of Schedule 12A of the Act (as amended)</p>	
15.	Empty Properties Compulsory Purchase Orders (1) (Exempt)	255 - 262
16.	Any Other Exempt Items that the Chairman Decides are Urgent	

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## Decisions of the Housing Committee

30 June 2014

Members Present:-

AGENDA ITEM 1

Councillor Tom Davey (Chairman)  
Councillor Lisa Rutter (Vice-Chairman)

Councillor Val Duschinsky  
Councillor Bridget Perry  
Councillor Shimon Ryde  
Councillor Ross Houston

Councillor Adam Langleben  
Councillor Jim Tierney  
Councillor Kath McGuirk  
Councillor Tim Roberts

### 1. ABSENCE OF MEMBERS

All Members were present.

### 2. DECLARATIONS OF MEMBERS DISCLOSABLE PECUNIARY INTERESTS AND NON-PECUNIARY INTERESTS

Councillor Kath McGuirk declared a non-pecuniary interest noting that she once refused a tenancy for a Council residence.

### 3. PUBLIC QUESTIONS AND COMMENTS (IF ANY)

None

### 4. MEMBERS' ITEMS (IF ANY)

The Committee considered five Member's Items which were introduced by the respective Member of the Committee as highlight in agenda item 4.

The Committee noted the circulation of a table response by Officers to the Members' Items.

Following the consideration the committee:

- That Members Item 1.1 be noted and the contents be considered in developing the Housing Strategy
- That Members Item 1.2 be noted and the contents be considered in developing the Housing Strategy
- That Members Item 1.3 be noted. The Committee further noted that there is an item with the Work Programme which will be considered and determined at the meeting due to take place on 22 April 2015.
- That Members Item 1.4 be noted the contents be considered in developing the Housing Strategy

- That Members Item 1.5 be noted the contents be considered in developing the Housing Strategy. The Committee further noted they will receive a Briefing relating to the Stongrove regeneration scheme.
- That the relevant Governance Officer be instructed to publish the tabled responses from Officers. This can be found here - <http://barnet.moderngov.co.uk/ieListDocuments.aspx?CId=699&MId=7935&Ver=4>

## **5. HOUSING COMMITTEE BUSINESS PLANNING**

The Chairman introduced the report and informed the Committed that the Policy and Resources Committee on 10 June 2014 approved the Priorities and Spending Review.

Members considered the reports impact to the Housing Committee in line with its terms of reference.

Following the consideration of the item, the Committee:

Resolved:

- That Housing Committee note the Policy and Resources Committee report as set out in Appendix A
- That Housing Committee note that Policy and Resources Committee are expected to set a savings target for Housing Committee at their meeting on the 21<sup>st</sup> July 2014
- That Housing Committee agreed to receive a report back in the autumn with an agreed commissioning plan and savings proposals for inclusion in the Policy and Resources Committee meeting on 2 December 2014.
- That Housing Committee note the service information pack included in Appendix B which provide some contextual information on budgets, past spend and performance data, contracts, customer and staffing data.

## **6. PROPOSED CHANGES TO HOUSING ALLOCATIONS SCHEME**

The Chairman introduced the report and requested the Committee consider and comment where appropriate.

The Committee noted the submission of the Member Item's which had relevance to this item.

Members considered how the Council allocates housing and the impact to housing association in rented and private sector homes within the Borough.

The Committee having considered the item:

Resolved:

- That the Housing Committee approves the proposed revisions to the Council's Housing Allocations Scheme, subject to the outcome of a public consultation.
- That the Housing Committee notes that final approval for the Scheme will be sought from the Committee on 27 October 2014.

- That the Housing Committee request that the Housing Strategy includes detail of the Housing Allocations Scheme

## **7. COMMITTEE FORWARD WORK PROGRAMME**

The Chairman introduced the Committee's work programme and highlighted the business which will be considered during the municipal year.

Resolved:

- That the Committee note the Work Programme
- That an item be added to the Work Programme to address the Strongrone Regeneration Scheme and provide the Committee with an update.

## **8. ANY OTHER ITEMS THAT THE CHAIRMAN DECIDES ARE URGENT**

There were no urgent Items.

The meeting finished at 8:55pm

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	<h2>Housing Committee</h2> <h3>27 October 2014</h3>
<p style="text-align: center;"><b>Title</b></p>	<p style="text-align: center;"><b>Draft Housing Strategy 2015 to 2025</b></p>
<p style="text-align: center;"><b>Report of</b></p>	<p>Lead Commissioner for Housing and Environment</p>
<p style="text-align: center;"><b>Wards</b></p>	<p>All</p>
<p style="text-align: center;"><b>Status</b></p>	<p>Public</p>
<p style="text-align: center;"><b>Enclosures</b></p>	<p>Appendix 1- draft strategy Appendix 2- evidence base</p>
<p style="text-align: center;"><b>Officer Contact Details</b></p>	<p>Declan Hoare, <a href="mailto:Declan.hoare@barnet.gov.uk">Declan.hoare@barnet.gov.uk</a>, 020 8359 4320 Paul Shipway, <a href="mailto:paul.shipway@barnet.gov.uk">paul.shipway@barnet.gov.uk</a>, 020 8359 4924 Chloe Horner, <a href="mailto:chloe.horner@barnet.gov.uk">chloe.horner@barnet.gov.uk</a>, 020 8359 4775</p>

## Summary

The Council has developed a new draft Housing Strategy to take account of major changes in the housing sector and wider demographic and economic changes. The strategy addresses the challenges of a growing population, increased housing demand, and the impact of austerity, growth and regeneration on the borough. If approved by the Housing Committee, the Council will undertake a public consultation on the aims of the draft strategy with key stakeholders including housing associations, developers, tenants and residents. Housing Committee will then be asked to review the responses to the consultation and approve a final version of the Housing Strategy.

## Recommendations

1. That Housing Committee approves the proposed draft Housing Strategy for public consultation.
2. That Housing Committee authorises officers to commence public consultation from 1 December 2014 to 28 February 2015 inclusive, or on other appropriate dates as soon as possible if these dates cannot be met.

**3. That the results of the consultation be reported back to Housing Committee on 22<sup>nd</sup> April 2015 together with officer recommendations and a revised Strategy if appropriate.**

## **1. WHY THIS REPORT IS NEEDED**

- 1.1 Barnet's last Housing Strategy was approved in 2010 and was updated in 2011 to take account of a range of national policies, including the way affordable and council housing is funded, welfare reform, the introduction of flexible tenancies and more flexibility on how housing applications are dealt with. These changes, which have provided opportunities and challenges, have now been largely implemented, and the Housing Strategy needs to be updated now that the impact of them is better understood.
- 1.2 Barnet continues to face a number of significant challenges in relation to housing, including continuing population growth, increased demand for homes and associated high housing costs, austerity measures that are set to continue for a number of years, and the delivery of significant growth particularly in the West of the borough.
- 1.3 In addition, the London Mayor has produced a new draft London Housing Strategy setting out his ambition to deliver 400,000 new homes across the Capital over the next 10 years.
- 1.4 The growth agenda provides an opportunity to provide new homes in the borough, and the reform of council housing finance has made it possible for the Council to build its first new homes for rent in more than 20 years.
- 1.5 A new draft Housing Strategy has been drafted with the following strategic objectives:
  - Increasing the housing supply,
  - Delivery of homes that people can afford,
  - Sustaining the quality of the private rented sector,
  - Tackling homelessness,
  - Providing suitable housing to support vulnerable people,
  - Delivery of efficient and effective services to residents.
- 1.6 A key step in the development of the new strategy was the compiling of an evidence base of housing market data together with the latest population projections and Census 2011 data. This confirmed that Barnet is a growing and enterprising borough that is generally wealthy and successful but there are a sizeable number of households who find it increasingly difficult to meet the cost of their housing within the borough's boundaries because of the high cost of owner-occupation and private renting.
- 1.7 A stakeholder group was established to review the evidence base and comprised senior officers from partner organisations including a developer, registered provider and a board member of Barnet Homes. As well as reviewing the evidence base, the group went on a number of site visits,

including to Beaufort Park and the development at Kings Cross to understand more about successful regeneration schemes.

- 1.8 Public consultation is proposed during December 2014 to February 2015 to gain wider feedback on the draft housing strategy to ensure that it will help meet the housing challenges that the council and residents face.

## **2. REASONS FOR RECOMMENDATIONS**

- 2.1 The focus of the new strategy is “Quality Housing in Quality Places”. It has been designed to meet the key current housing challenges in the borough. These are how to deal with an increasing population, meeting housing supply and demand, delivering quality services for less money at a time of austerity and managing an ambitious growth and regeneration programme.
- 2.2 With 362,000 residents, Barnet is already the second most populous London Borough, and is set to see more growth, with a projected population increase of 83,000 over the next 30 years. This is a population growth equivalent to the size of Stevenage or Harlow. New homes will be required to help meet the various housing needs of a growing population.
- 2.3 The largest increases are expected among children and the elderly, and a particular challenge will be to provide appropriate housing choices that promote independence for an increasing number of older people who might otherwise be forced into expensive residential care.
- 2.4 Barnet is a popular place in which to live and has high demand for a limited supply of affordable housing. The Council has faced increasing costs of providing temporary accommodation to housing applicants.
- 2.5 There has been a shift in tenure in Barnet. Home ownership has fallen whilst private renting has increased as more people have found it difficult to buy their own home due to higher prices and reduced availability of mortgages. Rents are also rising and are increasingly beyond the reach of low income households which means that some people will need to consider living in more affordable areas outside of the borough.
- 2.6 The Council has had to make significant reductions in its expenditure, and is determined to provide services in a more cost effective way to maintain quality and improve customer satisfaction. The reform of council housing finance provides an opportunity to invest in housing in a way that reduces some of those costs.
- 2.7 Whilst Barnet is a relatively wealthy place, more than 20,000 households have been affected by the Government’s welfare reforms which are designed to help people back into work. The Council has worked in partnership with Barnet Homes and Job Centre Plus to assist households affected by the overall benefit cap move into more affordable accommodation or enter employment.

- 2.8 Housing is a key driver for the Council's growth and regeneration plans where there is the capacity for up to 27,000 new homes to be delivered. The challenge will be to ensure that the new homes are provided in way that enhances the borough by creating quality places and delivers the type of homes that residents need and not just the quantity.

### **3. ALTERNATIVE OPTIONS CONSIDERED AND NOT RECOMMENDED**

- 3.1 The Council could decide to not develop a new housing strategy but this would mean that important decisions on housing investment would not be based on a robust and up-to-date evidence base. It may also be difficult to secure external funding for regeneration schemes if the borough's housing strategy does not reflect the London Mayor's housing objectives described in the new draft London Housing Strategy.

### **4. POST DECISION IMPLEMENTATION**

- 4.1 Following on from approval from Housing Committee a public consultation will take place during December 2014 to February 2015.
- 4.2 Housing Committee will be asked to consider and approve a final version of the strategy in April 2015 which takes into account the outcomes of the consultation exercise. The strategy document contains the actions that will be delivered during implementation in order to achieve each of the objectives.

### **5. IMPLICATIONS OF DECISION**

#### **5.1 Corporate Priorities and Performance**

- 5.1.1 The Council's Corporate Plan 2013/16 includes as a priority outcome "To maintain the right environment for a strong and diverse local economy". Barnet is a popular place in which to live and has high demand for a limited supply of council and housing association housing. The Council has faced increasing costs of providing temporary accommodation to housing applicants. A key performance measure is to reduce the number of households living in the most expensive emergency temporary accommodation to below 500. A further measure is to increase the number of private rented sector lettings available to housing applicants.
- 5.1.2 The spatial expression of the Housing Strategy is provided by the Local Plan. An updated Affordable Housing Supplementary Planning Document (SPD) is currently being drafted. This will set out the Council's approach to securing affordable housing and growth whilst ensuring that we get the right homes in the right places for sustainable vibrant mixed communities. The SPD will be considered by the Policy and Resources Committee after public consultation and will reflect the final draft of the Housing Strategy.
- 5.1.3 Following on from a public consultation, the London Mayor has submitted a

revised draft London Housing Strategy to the London Assembly for consideration. The Mayor's strategy aims to put in place the resources to deliver more than 42,000 homes a year across the Capital. The Mayor also aims to increase opportunities for home ownership, improve the private rented sector and ensure working Londoners have priority for affordable homes to rent. The Greater London Authority is currently working with boroughs to develop Framework Agreements on how new affordable housing will be delivered. Barnet's strategy will have to be in "general conformity" with the London Housing Strategy.

## 5.2 Resources (Finance & Value for Money, Procurement, Staffing, IT, Property, Sustainability)

5.2.1 A national Housing Revenue Account (HRA) subsidy system ended in April 2012 and was replaced with self-financing. The move to self-financing in the HRA was achieved by the Council making a payment of £103m to the Treasury; the payment of negative subsidy being replaced with the cost of servicing this additional debt. The HRA settlement also included the calculation of a notional debt figure that was higher than the actual HRA debt held by Barnet, generating the capacity for additional borrowing headroom of £39m. The Council has developed an investment model to make decisions about how to spend the headroom and the housing strategy will be a key document to shape and support these decisions.

5.2.2 The HRA Business plan has already identified the following priorities for investment which are progressing:

**Existing Stock** - Investment of £32.5m of additional essential expenditure on the council's existing housing stock over the period 2013/14 to 2023/24 to include:

- Accelerated replacement programme for electrical mains following a fire at Upper Fosters in April 2012
- Updated assessment of rewiring requirements for housing stock
- Addition of properties at Ramsey Close into the HRA Business Plan
- Inclusion of additional works on West Hendon estate

**New Homes** – Investment of £7.7m to deliver an initial tranche of 41 new homes on infill sites on HRA land in the borough.

**Extra Care Housing** – Investment of £12.344 million to redevelop the site at Moreton Close, NW7 to provide an Extra Care Housing Scheme for the Council and to pay statutory home loss and disturbance to those residents moving from the existing scheme.

**Leasehold Buybacks** – Investment of £8.773 million to acquire leasehold properties for the Council on the Council's Regeneration Estates from leaseholders who wish to sell in advance of a Compulsory Purchase Order and use these properties as temporary accommodation until they are required by the development partners.

5.2.3 Consultation with Ward Members on potential development opportunities at

Broadfields, Whittings Hill, Northway/Fairway, Moxon Street and Coppetts Road has been approved and following consultation with Ward Members, further consultation with residents will be undertaken prior to the submission of a planning application.

- 5.2.4 Additional priorities are being developed including the development of Integrated Specialist Housing.
- 5.2.5 The introduction of the overall benefit cap (as part of the Government's reform of welfare) from August 2013 means that some households will not be able to afford the rents charged in Barnet and other parts of London for temporary accommodation and private rented sector homes even where these fall within local housing allowance levels. The housing strategy will have to take account of these issues in providing a fair approach in terms of procuring quality accommodation in affordable locations.
- 5.2.6 There will be a financial cost of up-to £4,000 in terms of the public consultation. This will include the services of an independent facilitator and cash incentives for residents attending focus groups. This will be met from existing council budgets.

### **5.3 Legal and Constitutional References**

- 5.3.1 The Local Government Act 2003 makes provision for a local housing authority to have a housing strategy. The Greater London Authority Act 1999, as amended, requires a local housing authority in Greater London to ensure that any local housing strategy is in general conformity with the London Housing Strategy. The term local housing strategy includes any other statement of the local housing authority's policies or proposals relating to housing.
- 5.3.2 Annex A to the Responsibility for Functions Section of the Council's Constitution gives the Housing Committee specific responsibility in relation to the Housing Strategy (incorporating the Homelessness Strategy).

### **5.4 Risk Management**

- 5.4.1 The existing strategy was last updated fully in 2010 and since then there has been a change in government and a number of key housing reforms. There is a risk that it does not take account of changes that have occurred in the wider housing market that has emerged since then and therefore is no longer considered to be fit for purpose and underpin other strategic housing decisions.
- 5.4.2 There is a risk that the existing strategy will not be in "general conformity" with the London Mayor's Housing strategy, which could lead to loss of support from the Mayor in respect of delivering the capital's housing objectives. This could lead to potential difficulties in obtaining funding for the borough's housing plans.

## **5.5 Equalities and Diversity**

- 5.5.1 Pursuant to the Equality Act 2010 (“the Act”), the Council has a duty to have ‘due regard’ to eliminating unlawful discrimination, harassment, victimisation and any other conduct that is prohibited by or under the Act; advancing equality of opportunity between persons with a protected characteristic and those without; and foster good relations between persons with protected characteristics and those without.
- 5.5.2 The ‘protected characteristics’ are age, race, disability, gender reassignment, pregnancy and maternity, religion or belief, sex and sexual orientation. The duty also covers marriage and civil partnership but to a limited extent.
- 5.5.3 An initial high level outline equalities impact assessment has been completed and identified the need for a full equalities impacts assessment which will be completed and reported to back to the Housing Committee when the final draft of the Housing Strategy is submitted for approval.

## **5.6 Consultation and Engagement**

- 5.6.1 A number of partner organisations have already been involved in the development of the strategy through the evidence base review group.
- 5.6.2 Following outline approval by the Housing Committee, a wider public consultation will take place during December 2014 to February 2015. This will include an online survey and independently facilitated focus groups of residents and inviting comments from partner organisations.

## 6. BACKGROUND PAPERS

6.1 Relevant previous decisions are indicated in the table below.

<b>Item</b>	<b>Decision</b>	<b>Link</b>
Cabinet 12 March 2010	Decision item 8 - approved the existing Housing Strategy	<a href="http://barnet.moderngov.co.uk/Data/Cabinet/201004121900/Agenda/Document%207.pdf">http://barnet.moderngov.co.uk/Data/Cabinet/201004121900/Agenda/Document%207.pdf</a>
Cabinet 14 September 2011	Decision item 8 - approved Barnet's approach to social housing reform	<a href="http://barnet.moderngov.co.uk/Data/Cabinet/201109141900/Agenda/Document%204.pdf">http://barnet.moderngov.co.uk/Data/Cabinet/201109141900/Agenda/Document%204.pdf</a>
Cabinet Resources Committee 24 June 2013	Decision Item 6 - Local Authority New Housing Programme	<a href="http://barnet.moderngov.co.uk/documents/s9244/CRC%20LA%20New%20Build%20public.pdf">http://barnet.moderngov.co.uk/documents/s9244/CRC%20LA%20New%20Build%20public.pdf</a>
Assets, Regeneration & Growth Committee 9 July 2014	Decision Item 11 - Strategic Asset Management Plan principles for consultation	<a href="http://barnet.moderngov.co.uk/documents/s16064/Strategic%20Asset%20Management%20Plan%20principles%20for%20consultation.pdf">http://barnet.moderngov.co.uk/documents/s16064/Strategic%20Asset%20Management%20Plan%20principles%20for%20consultation.pdf</a>
Policy and Resources Committee 21 July 2014	Decision Item 10 - Funding for an Extra Care Housing Scheme at Moreton Close, NW7 and Advance Acquisitions of Leasehold properties on Regeneration Estates	<a href="http://barnet.moderngov.co.uk/documents/s16154/Funding%20for%20an%20Extra%20Care%20Housing%20Scheme%20at%20Moreton%20Close%20NW7%20and%20Advance%20Acquisitions%20of%20Leasehold.pdf">http://barnet.moderngov.co.uk/documents/s16154/Funding%20for%20an%20Extra%20Care%20Housing%20Scheme%20at%20Moreton%20Close%20NW7%20and%20Advance%20Acquisitions%20of%20Leasehold.pdf</a>
Assets, Regeneration & Growth Committee 8 September 2014	Decision Item 12 - Barnet Development Pipeline	<a href="http://barnet.moderngov.co.uk/documents/s17356/Development%20Pipeline%20-%20Report.pdf">http://barnet.moderngov.co.uk/documents/s17356/Development%20Pipeline%20-%20Report.pdf</a>



# Housing Strategy 2015 to 2025

# 1. Introduction-Chair of Housing Committee

*To be added to final version*

***Councillor Tom Davey***

***Chair of Housing Committee***

## Housing Strategy 2015- 2025

### Executive Summary

#### Barnet's housing challenge and the Council's approach to meeting it

- The continued supply of good quality housing to accommodate a rapidly growing and changing population is perhaps the **single biggest challenge facing London**. Every one of London's [32] boroughs will need to contribute to meeting it.
- The challenge for Barnet – London's **second most populous borough** – grows ever more acute. Barnet is an attractive and popular borough; with some of the best schools in the country; acres of green open space; and strong transport links. This is why **people want to live in Barnet**. Whilst this is something to be proud of, it also creates a **significant housing challenge**.
- Barnet's current population of 362,000 is expected to grow by 83,000 over the next 30 years – an **increase of 22% per cent**. Within that, the number of children and older people will increase significantly. This means that, not only does Barnet need **more housing**, the **type of housing** required is also changing to reflect the borough's **evolving demographic profile**.
- One of the most effective long-term strategy for meeting demand for housing is to **increase supply** - by **building more homes that people can afford**; making **better use of existing housing stock**; and **bringing empty property back into use**. This lies at the heart of Barnet's Housing Strategy for the next decade.
- The Strategy provides a **blueprint** of how the Council will meet the significant housing challenge facing the borough. The Council will approach the task **responsibly**, protecting what makes the borough so attractive and ensuring that future development is **in keeping with the fabric of the borough**.

#### The scale of Barnet's housing need over the next decade

- Before developing a solution, it is first necessary to understand the **scale of the challenge**. The Council has commissioned a local **Housing Needs Assessment (HNA)** to help determine this.
- Barnet's HNA enables the Council to determine the borough's **overall housing need over the next 10 years** and the **different types of housing tenure** required.
- Barnet's HNA indicates that the borough has a potential need for an additional **27,000 dwellings** over this period.

#### Meeting Barnet's future housing need

- The Council's approach to meeting Barnet's future housing need – as set out in this Housing Strategy – covers a number of strands. Alongside **building new homes**, the Council will focus on **using the borough's existing housing stock – both publicly owned and private dwellings – more effectively** to meet future need.

### *Barnet's major regeneration schemes*

- In building new homes, the Council will focus on areas of the borough **where there is capacity to deliver**. The majority of the borough's growth will be focused on **Brent Cross/Cricklewood, Colindale, and Mill Hill East**, where there is capacity to deliver **20,000 new homes by 2025**.
- The regeneration of **Brent Cross/Cricklewood** will deliver **7,500 new homes** and up to **27,000 new jobs** over the next 20 years. **Colindale** will make the largest housing contribution to the borough over the next 10 years, with approximately **10,000 new homes**, and the regeneration of **Mill Hill East** will provide more than **2,000 new homes** over the next 15 years.

### *Regenerating Barnet's largest estates and building new council homes*

- The council's largest estates **in Grahame Park, West Hendon, Stonegrove/Spur Road and Dollis Valley are being regenerated**. Dilapidated, poor quality housing is being replaced with modern, high-quality mixed-tenure accommodation. The regeneration of Barnet's biggest estates will see 3,000 existing council dwellings replaced with **7,000 mixed tenure homes**.
- The Council has commissioned Barnet Homes – its Arms-Length Management Organisation – to **build 41 new council homes on a number of sites across the borough by 2016**. The first of these were completed in [month] 2014 - the first new council houses in Barnet for over 20 years.

### *Identifying the borough's future development pipeline*

- Alongside housing development already planned and underway, a key part of Barnet's Housing Strategy is to identify the borough's **future development pipeline**. So far, the Council has identified around **60 potential development sites** across the borough, with initial estimates suggesting that the first 15 sites could provide up to **700 new homes**.

### *Bringing empty properties back into use*

- Barnet's Housing Strategy will look at **bringing empty properties back into residential use**. Currently, there are approximately 1,300 homes in Barnet that have been empty for 6 months or more. Where owners wish to bring properties back into use, the Council will provide financial assistance in the form of **Empty Property Grants**.

### **In meeting the borough's future housing need, Barnet Council will:**

- ✓ Focus development in **Brent Cross/Cricklewood, Colindale, and Mill Hill East** where there is capacity to deliver **20,000 new homes by 2025**.
- ✓ Deliver **7,500 new homes** and up to **27,000 new jobs** at **Brent Cross/Cricklewood**.
- ✓ Deliver approximately **10,000 new homes** in **Colindale**.

- ✓ Delivery more than **2,000 new homes** in **Mill Hill East**.
- ✓ **Regenerate the council's biggest estates** in **Grahame Park, West Hendon, Stonegrove/Spur Road** and **Dollis Valley** – replacing 3,000 existing dwellings with **7,000 modern, high quality mixed tenure homes**.
- ✓ Build **41 new council houses** across the borough by 2016.
- ✓ Identify the borough's **future development pipeline**. To date, **60 potential development sites** have been identified, the first 15 of which could provide up to **700 new homes**
- ✓ Assist owners who wish to bring **empty properties** back into residential use through financial assistance in the form of **Empty Property Grants**.

## Delivering homes that people can afford

- **Increasing supply** will help ease the pressure on housing costs over the longer-term. However, **there is a more immediate need to address the issue of a lack of housing – across all tenures - that people can afford.**

### *Affordable housing in new developments*

The Council is revising its **Affordable Housing Supplementary Planning Document**, which guides applicants, agents, developers and planners through the affordable housing delivery mechanism and clarifies Barnet's application of Local Plan and London Plan policy requirements.

### *Rented homes at affordable prices*

- The Council believes that, for most people, including working households on modest incomes, 'affordable' means **rent at Local Housing Allowance (LHA) level** – meaning that residents will qualify for Housing Benefit if their income is low enough to qualify. As a result, the Council will seek to **increase the supply of rented homes at LHA level** by making use of available resources to develop new homes.

### *Simplifying rents policy and reinvesting to build more homes that are affordable*

- There is a **link between the level of rent that is charged for council housing** and the amount of **resource available to invest in the construction of more homes that are affordable.**
- The Council needs to strike the right balance between **setting council rents at a level which is fair** and **generating income to increase the total number of homes that are affordable.**
- In view of this, the Council will **charge an affordable rent at LHA level or 80% of average market rent whichever is lower for all new council homes it builds.** This will generate an additional income, to be **reinvested in building more homes that are affordable.**

- To **ensure consistency in relation to existing properties**, the Council will set **rents at LHA or 80% of the average market rent whichever is lower when empty properties are re-let**. For **existing tenants**, the Council will consult on proposals for increasing rents to LHA or 80% of average market rent whichever is lower. Each additional 1% increase will generate around £550,000 of additional income to be **reinvested in building more homes that are affordable**.

### **In delivering more homes that people can afford, the Council will:**

- ✓ **Increase the supply of housing over the longer-term.**
- ✓ Review its **Affordable Housing Supplementary Planning Document** to ensure affordable housing for rent and sale is delivered as part of new developments.
- ✓ Increase the supply of rented homes at **Local Housing Allowance level**.
- ✓ Strike the right balance between the level of council rents and the amount of resource available for building more homes that are affordable by charging rent at **LHA or 80% of average market rent whichever is lower** for **all new council homes; existing council properties that are re-let** to new tenants and, over time increase, for **existing council tenants**.
- ✓ Additional revenues generated through this change in rents policy will be **reinvested to increase the number of affordable homes across the borough**.

### **Sustaining quality in the private rented sector**

- Everyone wants to live in a home that is of **good quality** and makes them feel safe. As such, Barnet's Housing Strategy will seek to **improve the quality of housing across the borough**.
- In all new developments, the Council is committed to building **high quality new homes** where people want to live. At the same time, there is also a need to tackle the issue of **poor quality housing in the private rented sector**.
- The high demand for homes has seen an increase in the number of **Homes in Multiple-Occupation (HMOs)** – particularly through the conversion of family homes into properties shared by unrelated people which, in some cases, are not well managed.
- The Council will review how HMOs are **regulated** and **crack down on rogue landlords** and sub-standard properties, working directly with landlords and encouraging them to acquire formal accreditation through the **London Landlords Accreditation Scheme**.

### **In order to ensure high quality housing across the borough, the Council will:**

- ✓ Ensure that all new homes are built to **high quality standards**.
- ✓ Review regulations relating to **Homes in Multiple Occupancy**.

- ✓ Crack down on **rogue landlords** and encourage more of the borough's private landlords to acquire formal accreditation through the **London Landlords Accreditation Scheme**.

## Tackling homelessness

- Barnet Council has taken action to **reduce the number of people placed in temporary accommodation** and, in doing so, has successfully **avoided the use of bed and breakfast accommodation**.
- The Council's strategy for reducing the number of residents in temporary accommodation has focused on **increased incentives to private landlords** to increase the number of private lettings to homeless households; a greater focus on **homelessness prevention measures**; sourcing accommodation in **less expensive areas outside of Barnet**; and working in partnership with Job Centre Plus to create a multi-agency **benefits Task Force** to work closely with households affected by welfare reform to minimise the risk of homelessness.

### *Making best use of existing housing stock*

- Subsidised Council housing and Housing Association homes, have become increasingly scarce. In order to make the best use of existing stock, the Council has **changed the way that these homes are allocated** and restricted allocations to those households that are in the highest need.
- Barnet's housing allocations scheme also recognises the contribution that people who are **working** or **volunteering** make to the community by taking this into account.
- In order to **increase the turnover and availability of council homes**, most new tenants now receive a fixed term tenancy of five years,
- A review of the operation of the Barnet's Tenancy Strategy by February 2015 to ensure that its stated objectives are being achieved.

### **In tackling homelessness in Barnet, the Council has:**

- ✓ **Increased incentives to private landlords** to increase the number of private lettings to homeless households.
- ✓ Placed a greater focus on **homelessness prevention measures**.
- ✓ Sourced accommodation in **less expensive areas outside of Barnet**.
- ✓ Partnered with Job Centre Plus to create a multi-agency **Benefits Cap Task Force** to work closely with households affected by welfare reform to minimise the risk of homelessness.
- ✓ Reformed its **Tenancy Strategy** to recognise volunteering and introduce fixed term tenancies of five years for new tenants to **increase the turnover of council homes** and **make more homes available to those that need them**.
- Barnet's Housing Strategy represents a considered and achievable approach to meeting the housing challenge facing the borough over the next decade. The

Council is committed to the successful delivery of this strategy and will ensure that resources are prioritised to ensure success.



## Housing Strategy 2015- 2030

### Introduction

The Council's Corporate Plan identifies that **Barnet is an attractive and successful London Borough where people want to live**, and is **a growing and diverse borough and an enterprising place**.

The popularity of the borough and demographic trends means that we need more homes to accommodate the increasing population. It is important that new housing is provided that complements and improves upon what is an already successful urban environment.

The Council last reviewed the Housing Strategy in 2011 to take account of changes at a national level including the reform of welfare benefits, changes to the way that affordable homes are funded and the introduction of self-financing for council housing. These changes, which have provided opportunities and challenges, have now been largely implemented, and the Housing Strategy needs to be updated now that the impact of them is better understood.

In addition, the London Mayor has prepared a draft London Housing Strategy that has ambitious targets for the delivery of new homes, as well has plans to improve the existing housing stock, and we need to be clear about Barnet's role in relation to London as a whole.

In partnership with key stakeholders, the Council has carried out a review of housing and identified a number of issues that need to be addressed, along with a set of objectives that provide a framework for dealing with these.

High quality housing, excellent schools, attractive green spaces, low levels of crime and good transport connections mean that Barnet is a successful, enterprising and popular place where people want to work and live.

However, we have developed an evidence base that has highlighted a number of issues that need to be addressed, including:

**An increasing population:** with 362,000 residents, Barnet is already the second most populous London Borough, and is set to see more growth, with a projected population increase of 83,000 over the next 30 years.

The largest increases are expected among children and the elderly, and a particular challenge will be to provide appropriate housing choices for an increasing number of older people.

**Increased housing demand:** Increased demand for housing is already evident, with higher house prices and rents and increased levels of homelessness and people in emergency temporary accommodation.

Home ownership has fallen whilst private renting has increased as more people have found it difficult to buy their own home due to higher prices and reduced housing supply at affordable levels. Private renting is set to continue to increase and means that within 10 years half the properties in the borough are likely to be rented.

Rents are also rising and are increasingly beyond the reach of low income households which means that some people will need to consider living in more affordable areas outside of the borough.

**Financial Constraints:** Whilst Barnet is a relatively wealthy place, there are pockets of deprivation. More than 20,000 households have been affected by the Government's welfare reforms which are designed to help people back into employment by making sure that work pays. This means that some households have found it harder to meet their housing costs and the council has worked successfully with its partners, including Job Centre Plus, to help over 1,400 households since April 2013 with a focus on helping people access employment or finding more affordable accommodation.

The Council is required, by reduced funding from central government, to spend considerably less. By the end of 2020 the Council expects to have half the funding it had in 2010 and therefore is determined to provide services in a more cost effective way while seeking to maintain quality and customer satisfaction. The reform of council housing finance provides an opportunity to invest in housing in a way that helps reduce some of these costs as well as providing income.

**The impact of Growth and Regeneration:** Capacity for 27,000 new homes in Barnet has been identified in the Local Plan, and these will be primarily delivered through our growth and regeneration plans. The challenge will be to ensure that the new homes are provided in a way that enhances the borough by creating quality places and delivers the type of homes that we need and not just the quantity.

The council has already done much to address these issues, for example through its plans to deliver new homes at Brent Cross Cricklewood and Mill Hill East through growth and regeneration, and completion of the first new council homes for over 20 years. However, the extent of the housing challenges that face us mean that there are further actions we need to take and options to consider.

High demand for new homes from existing and new residents and rising housing costs mean that we will prioritise **Increasing the Housing Supply**, including the use of our own resources to build new houses, and the **Delivery of homes that people can afford**, including homes for rent at local housing allowance levels and low cost home ownership.

The increased level of private renting means that we will focus on **sustaining quality in the Private Rented Sector**, including supporting good landlords whilst using discretionary powers to control and manage houses in multiple occupation where rogue landlords fail to meet minimum health and safety standards.

We will continue to help those that need assistance by **tackling homelessness**, with a focus on prevention of homelessness as well as making best use of our existing housing stock.

**Providing suitable housing to support vulnerable people**, including older residents, those with disabilities and mental health problems and young people leaving care will be a priority. This is not only because these are people in need of more appropriate housing but also because by providing the right housing we reduce the other care costs for the Council.

We will ensure that housing finances are optimised to maximise the amount of money to invest in delivering new homes, including a review of our rents policy. For council and housing association homes in the borough we will work with Barnet Homes, our Arm's Length Management Organisation (ALMO) to review the housing services they provide to ensure that they are cost effective and more generally fit for the future and therefore, able to deliver our wider objectives and **deliver efficient and effective services to residents**. The Council will also be considering the development of purpose built private rented sector homes which will provide an income stream to the General Fund and help raise standards in the sector.

# 1. Increasing the Housing Supply

## A Growing Borough

Since 2001, Barnet's population has increased by 17% from 315,000 to 362,000, and it is now the second most populous London Borough. As Barnet grows and changes it is becoming more diverse; over a third of the population belongs to a black and ethnic minority group. Census data shows that ethnic minority groups as a percentage of the overall population have increased across all wards between 2001 and 2011 and the percentage of white groups has decreased.

This growth reflects the popularity of Barnet as a place to live, with high quality housing, good transport connections, excellent schools, attractive green spaces and low levels of crime. The population is expected to increase by a further 83,000 by 2041, the equivalent of a town the size of Bath.

Population growth is expected to be spread across all age ranges, but particularly amongst children and older people, which will present challenges for meeting the respective needs of these groups, with a need for more schools, family sized homes and housing options that meet the needs of an aging population.

The council's Local Plan has identified capacity to build 27,000 new homes in the borough. This provides an opportunity to make sure that the on-going housing needs of residents are met, as well as ensuring that the borough remains a vibrant and dynamic place where individuals and businesses can thrive.

## A Framework for Delivery

Barnet's Local Plan was adopted by the Council in 2012 and sets out our approach to ensuring that growth is delivered in a way that enhances the borough over the next 15 years. A key element of the plan is Barnet's three strands approach, which seeks to ensure that growth is focused in areas that need investment, improvement and to conserve the borough's classic interwar suburban environment and protect open spaces, particularly the green belt.

To better understand Barnet's changing population the council commissioned a local Housing Needs Assessment (HNA). Barnet's HNA shows the types of accommodation that will be needed to meet the expected increase in households as well as meeting existing unmet need.

The Barnet HNA estimates that 27,350 new homes will be required between 2015 and 2025, suggesting that housing need may have been underestimated and has possibly reached a level where it exceeds capacity as identified in the Mayor's Strategic Housing Land Availability Assessment (SHLAA) from which a new

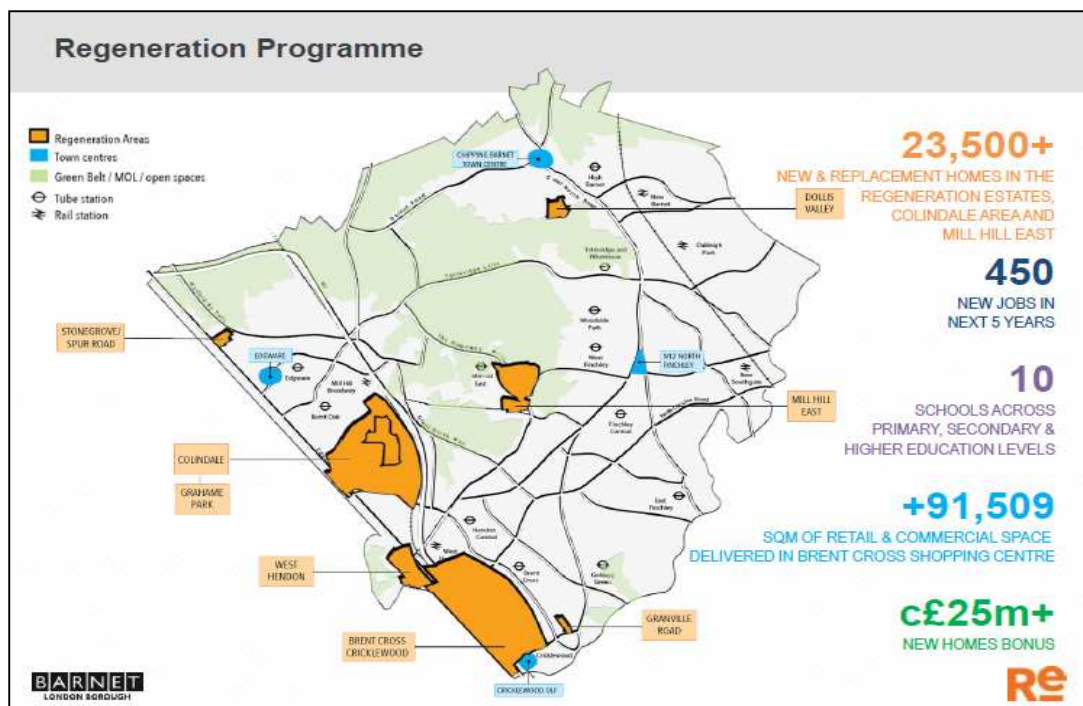
housing target of 23,490 new homes for Barnet between 2015/16 and 2024/25 has been set in Further Alterations to the London Plan.

The outputs from the HNA are summarised in the following table:

	1 bed	2 beds	2 beds shared	3 beds	3 beds shared	4 beds	Total	%
Total Requirement	831	456	786	277	224	161	2735	
Market for Sale	241	79	400	33	144	13	910	33%
Intermediate Ownership	364	193	231	119	56	58	1020	37%
Market Rent	79	102	86	67	12	50	396	14%
Affordable rent	148	82	69	58	13	39	410	15%

The Local Plan 2012 recognised the need for a range of accommodation tenures and sizes to reflect the needs of a changing and growing population, and, taking account of the market’s predisposition to provide one and two bedroom homes, prioritised larger family homes of 3 bedrooms or more across affordable, intermediate and private developments.

### Regeneration and Growth



The majority of the boroughs growth will be focused in Brent Cross/Cricklewood, Colindale and Mill Hill East. These areas have the capacity to deliver up to **20,000 new homes** by 2025/26 as well as opportunities for improvements to public transport and employment growth.

**Brent Cross/Cricklewood** - A long term scheme which will deliver **7,500 new homes** and up to 27,000 jobs over the next 20-30 years. In addition, the scheme will see a

doubling in size of Brent Cross Shopping Centre, improved transport infrastructure and new schools.

**Colindale**- represents an opportunity to deliver sustainable housing growth, a new compact neighbourhood centre in an area well served by improved public transport services and high quality public open space. Colindale will make the single largest housing contribution to the Borough over the next 10-15 years and one of the biggest in North London with approximately 10,000 new homes, of which more than half already have planning permission and significant numbers are under construction or have been completed.

**Mill Hill East**- represents a major development opportunity in the heart of Barnet which will provide more than **2,000 new homes**. Within 15 years the Mill Hill East area will have been transformed through one of the highest quality sustainable developments in North London. Within a green suburban context it will provide new homes and business opportunities with high quality community services, transport and access to open space and leisure facilities.

**Estate regeneration**- focuses on the council's largest estates, Grahame Park, West Hendon, Stonegrove/Spur Road and Dollis Valley, and seeks to replace poor quality mono-tenure estates with high quality and modern mixed-tenure developments. Much of this is achieved through taking advantage of existing low densities which provide the opportunity for a higher number of new homes financed through private sales. Once fully completed, estate regeneration will see 3,000 existing council dwellings replaced with almost 7,000 mixed tenure homes, with existing secure council tenants rehoused in new homes provided by housing associations.

Although hampered by the economic downturn, good progress has been made with the estate regeneration programme. A total of 388 new homes have already been delivered at Stonegrove/Spur Road, with the whole scheme expected to complete by 2018, and 194 new homes have been built at West Hendon. Grahame Park has proved more challenging, but 390 new homes have already been provided with 147 currently on site. Following the appointment of new delivery partners, Countryside Properties and London and Quadrant Housing Association, the first phase of Dollis Valley is now on site with the whole scheme expected to complete by 2018.

We recognise that regeneration can be a disruptive process for residents, particularly those that are living in non-secure accommodation, and will seek to minimise this disruption at the point that tenants are required to move by making use of flexibilities within our allocations scheme and providing advice and support.

We will also consider buying out leaseholders in financial hardship when this will assist in the regeneration process.

### Building new council homes

The reform of council housing finance in 2012 moved the council out of a national subsidy system which required a contribution of more than £10 million a year from council rents, to a position where the Council has enough funding to maintain existing council homes and build new ones. The reinvigorated Right to Buy has also provided additional receipts which the Council can spend on new homes to replace those that have been sold.

The Council has commissioned Barnet Homes the Council's Arm's Length Management Organisation (ALMO) to build 41 new council homes on a number of sites around the borough, the first for over 20 years, and the first 3 houses were completed in March 2014. This initial programme is expected to complete by 2016.



New Council Homes March 2014

In partnership its new joint venture with Capita, R<sup>e</sup>, and with Barnet Homes the Council is currently exploring the potential of council owned land for providing more new homes, including subsidised rent, and the best approach for delivery of these.

### Housing Development Pipeline

In the past, surplus Council land has been sold, often for development. With the established need for more housing especially affordable housing the Council has realised it needs to review its principles for decisions about surplus land and its development. The following principles have been agreed to govern this “development pipeline”:

- The decision whether to develop or sell a site, and what to develop on the site, should be based on assessment of what offers the best financial return to the Council while meeting need for different housing types. This might, for example, involve development of affordable or extra care housing, which offsets the costs of temporary accommodation or residential care respectively.
- While decisions will consider the Net Present Value of different options, the requirements of the Medium Term Financial Strategy may in some cases suggest that revenue savings are afforded a higher priority than Capital receipts.

- The Council will decide whether to develop using Barnet Homes, Re, or a third party developer dependent on the skills and specialisms required, and an assessment of the relative risk and reward of different options. Sites may be considered individually, or grouped into portfolios.

Subject to consultation with Ward Members, the Council has approved an initial list of five sites, including a mix of large and small sites, out of a pipeline of around 60 surplus sites with potential for housing development. These are:

- Land adjacent to Broadfields, Northway/Fairway and Whittings Hill schools.
- Land at Moxon Street High Barnet.
- Land at Coppetts Close, Finchley

In seeking to obtain planning consent the Council can optimise its planning and housing policy objectives rather than rely on the planning process to achieve these having disposed of its sites to a third party developer. This approach will be continued with the remaining 55 surplus general fund sites. Current estimates suggest the first fifteen sites in this pipeline will provide up to 700 new homes.

As well as general fund sites the Council also has Housing Revenue Account sites which it is estimated can provide over 600 additional homes.

Development plans are currently being compiled to build 500 homes in the period up to 2019/20.

### Quality homes and places

Our latest assessment of housing delivery in Barnet shows that 26,000 new homes are expected to be delivered by 2025/26. This significant growth will transform a number of places, particularly in the growth and regeneration areas in the west side of the borough. It is important to ensure that the new homes and places that are provided are of a high quality that complements and enhances Barnet's suburban character.

The Council will seek the highest standards of urban design in order to generate development proposals of landmark quality and create an accessible safe and attractive environment for people who live in, work in or visit Barnet's areas of housing and economic growth.

All new homes are required to meet Lifetime Homes and Lifetime Neighbourhood Standards<sup>1</sup> to provide accessible and adaptable accommodation for everyone, from

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<sup>1</sup> Lifetime Homes, Lifetime Neighbourhoods: A National Strategy for Housing in an Ageing Society – Communities & Local Government Feb 08



young families to older people and individuals with a temporary or permanent physical impairment. It is also a Local Plan requirement that 10% of new homes will be fully wheelchair accessible.

Larger new developments are more successful if they are supported by local facilities at an early stage; Beaufort Park, a mixed tenure development in Colindale, provides a good example of where this approach has created high quality new homes supported from an early point by a boulevard with shops, restaurants and bars, and a landscaped park.



Landscaped park at Beaufort Park

More details about Barnet's approach to ensuring the quality of new homes is set out in the Residential Design Guidance and Sustainable Design and Construction Supplementary Planning Documents adopted in 2013.

### Empty Homes

It is normal for an area to have a number of empty properties that are empty for short periods of time as a result of housing churn and it can be seen as an indicator of a healthy housing market. However some properties remain empty for long periods and over time can start causing problems such as disrepair to neighbouring premises, and acting as a magnet for squatters and fly tipping. It is these properties that are a drain on public sector resources and have an effect on the neighbourhood in relation to perceptions of crime and general sense of well-being.

In October 2013 Barnet had 1,273 properties registered with Council Tax that had been empty for 6 months or more. At 0.91% of the housing stock this is slightly higher than the London average of 0.71%. By September 2014 this figure has risen by 36% of which 533 have been empty for 5 years or more. This figure is slightly misleading as it does not include the 1,811 properties registered as second homes, which experience has proven are often also long term empty properties. There are sometimes legitimate reasons for homes being empty, for example whilst probate is being resolved, however in the majority of cases this is not the case. With the on-going pressure on the housing market it is important that the number of properties remaining empty is kept to a minimum. This is also to the benefit of the property owners as their asset could become an income stream if the property were to be made available for letting.

In order to deal successfully with long term empty properties the Council needs to understand the reason that the property became empty, and why it has remained empty. This strategy is aimed at bringing long term empty properties back into

residential use. This may include long term vacant sites and redundant commercial units where there is the potential for conversion or redevelopment for housing purposes.

The Council will assist empty property owners in bringing their property back into use through a combination of advice, and financial assistance in the form of Empty Property Grants. All Empty Property Grants will be administered in line with the Private Sector Housing Financial Assistance Policy. The Council will gain nomination rights through this funding for Barnet Homes. In cases where the owner will not work with the Council to bring the property back into residential use the appropriate enforcement action will be taken ranging from the service of minor works notices to compulsory purchase of the property. The Council currently has eight properties at varying stages of the compulsory purchase order process. All enforcement action will be completed in line with the London Borough of Barnet Development and Regulatory Services Enforcement Policy.

#### **Achievements:**

- Since April 2012 2,634 new homes have been delivered in the borough. This has included:
  - 2012/13- 469 new homes on the regeneration estates including 212 affordable
  - 2013/14 - 39 new homes on the regeneration estates including 38 affordable
- First new council homes for over 30 years completed at Alexandra Road and tenants moved in during April 2014
- Stonegrove/Spur Road awarded 'Gold' in Q17 Annual Design Awards 2012
- 2013/14 – Amendments to Planning consent agreed for Brent Cross/Cricklewood
- 2013/14 - Planning consent agreed for Phase 1 Dollis Valley and started on site
- 2013/14 – Construction work commenced on two more phases of Stonegrove/Spur Road which will deliver 198 new homes including 41 affordable
- Construction of new primary school under way at Mill Hill East
- 2013/14 – Construction work started on 219 new homes at West Hendon including 74 affordable.
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#### **Targets:**

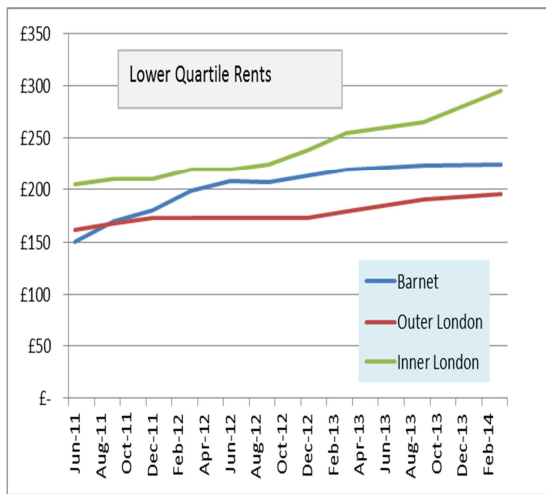
- 462 homes, of which 169 will be affordable, will be completed on the regeneration schemes during 2014/15 and 2015/16.
- 41 new council homes will be delivered by November 2015.
- Further 200 new council homes to be delivered on HRA land by Barnet Homes by 2016/2017
- Re to deliver a first tranche of development of 265 Homes on five sites

- Review of other potential housing infill sites to be used to develop more homes completed by November 2015
- 26,000 new homes will be delivered by 2025/26, including:
  - 5,070 at Brent Cross/ Cricklewood (30% affordable)
  - 10,840 at Colindale (30% affordable)
  - 190 at Dollis Valley (30% affordable)
  - 2260 at Mill Hill East (15% affordable)
  - 650 at Stonegrove Spur Road (45% affordable)
  - 1180 at West Hendon (25% affordable)
  - 130 at Granville Road
  - 400 at North London Business Park (150 units affordable)
- 100 properties returned to residential use annually following council involvement
- Initiate compulsory purchase action on a minimum of four empty properties annually

## 2. Delivery of Homes that people can afford

### Housing Market

House prices in Barnet have remained high and are continuing to increase as, in common with the rest of London, demand for homes outstrips supply. The median house price in the borough is now £405,077, nearly eleven times the median household income of £38,147 which has made home ownership increasingly difficult to access for many people, as evidenced by a fall in owner occupation of 12% between 2001 and 2011, and a corresponding increase in renting privately.



High demand and limited supply has also meant that private rents have increased, with lower quartile rents rising by 50% or £325 a month between June 2011 and March 2014, to become the 4<sup>th</sup> most expensive in outer London. Rental inflation has outstripped housing benefit entitlements making it increasingly difficult for lower income working households to find affordable accommodation in the borough.

Increasing the housing supply in the borough will help to ease the pressure on housing costs in the longer term, and as outlined elsewhere in this document the council has plans that will see 27,000 new homes built over the next 15 years.

The Council recognises that a range of affordable housing is needed across all tenures, and is revising its Affordable Housing Supplementary Planning Document, which guides applicants, agents, developers and planners through the affordable housing delivery mechanism and clarifies Barnet's application of Local Plan and London Plan policy requirements.

### Affordability

#### Rented homes at affordable prices

The Council recognises that different types of affordable housing are needed to meet a range of income levels and types of household across the borough. The rent regime for homes in the public sector, including council and housing association homes has become more complex. Council homes benefit from social rents which on average are £101 a week, or about 31% of the average private rent of £322 a week in Barnet. Housing Association tenants pay on average 25% more than council tenants

and for new homes will be charged affordable rents of up to 80% of market rents. The London Housing Strategy has proposed that two different approaches to affordable rents are used; with discounted rents at 80% of market rents for those not affected by the welfare benefit cap<sup>2</sup>, and capped rents of 50% for those who are affected by the cap.

The council recognises that new homes provided with the aid of grant will need to comply with the regime of affordable rents as described above. However, we think that for many people, including working households on modest incomes, affordable will mean a rent at local housing allowance (LHA) level, which means that they will qualify for support in the form of Housing benefit if their income is low enough to merit this. In view of this the Council will seek to increase the supply of rented homes at LHA level both by making use of its own resources to develop new homes directly and in partnership with others.

We will also explore innovative solutions to increase the supply of affordable rented homes, including the encouragement of institutional investment in the private rented sector and modern new homes designed specifically for renters.

### Rent Policy

As shown above, the average council rent of £101 a week is about one third of average private sector rent, and significantly below the rent levels for new affordable homes at either capped or discounted rents that will be delivered through the London Mayor's housing programme.

Any increase in income will provide money that can be used to support the delivery of new affordable homes, and the council will charge an affordable rent at 65% of the average market rent for any new council homes that it builds. In addition, the council will seek to increase rents for existing homes, by increasing rents for properties that become empty to LHA level or 80% of the average market rent whichever is lower when they are re-let.

For existing council tenants, the council will develop detailed proposals for increasing rents to LHA level or 80% of average market rents whichever is lower over a period of time and consult with tenants on these. It is estimated that each additional 1% increase will generate an income of £550,000 which could be invested in building more affordable homes for local residents.

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<sup>2</sup> The benefit cap limits the total benefits, including Housing Benefit that a household can receive to £500 a week for couples or households with children and £350 a week for single adults.

## Promoting Home ownership

We recognise that the aspiration that the majority of people have to own their own home has become increasingly difficult to achieve, as house prices have increased and access to mortgages has become harder, particularly for first time buyers.

The government has reinvigorated the Right to Buy, which has helped more council tenants in Barnet to purchase their home, as well as providing funds that the council can use to provide new affordable homes for rent. In addition, a number of residents have been able to take advantage of the Help to Buy scheme, and the council will carry out more research to see if there is more that needs to be done to help people access this scheme.

Through the Borough's affordable housing programme, 362 new homes for shared ownership have been delivered in Barnet since April 2011, and the council will continue to work with developers and housing providers to deliver more low cost ownership options as part of its growth and regeneration plans.

We will also explore other means of helping people access home ownership, for example the potential for building smaller more affordable starter homes which benefit from an exemplary design. One such model has been developed by Pocket Homes, whose properties are available to people who have lived and worked in the host borough for at least a year, and whose income is less than £66,000 a year. They are generally 20% cheaper than comparable properties in the area, providing an opportunity for people on middle incomes to access home ownership. A restrictive covenant ensures that Pocket Homes remain affordable in perpetuity.

### Achievements:

- 362 new homes for shared ownership have been delivered in Barnet since April 2011
- 958 new affordable homes for rent delivered in Barnet since April 2011

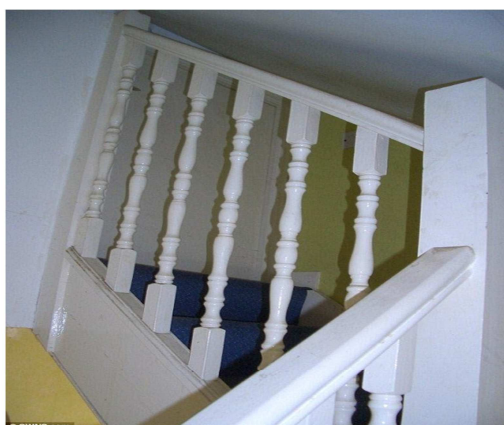
### Targets:

- Develop programme of new private rented sector homes at LHA level
- Establish approach on innovative private rented sector offer
- Develop clear plans for delivery of more low cost home ownership
- Develop local rent policy for council homes for implementation from April 2015

### 3. Sustaining quality in the Private Rented Sector

The role of the private rented sector in meeting the housing needs of the borough has increased significantly over the last decade. Between 2001 and 2011, the number of private rented homes rose from 17% to 26% of homes in the borough. Our analysis of affordability and housing need going forward suggests that the private rented sector will continue to grow over the next ten years by a further 9% to represent 25% of homes in the borough.

The private rented sector provides homes for people in a way that provides flexibility and choice. However, the nature of the market means that there are many small scale landlords often with only one or two properties, which makes it more difficult to ensure a consistent quality across the sector.- In addition, due to the high level of demand for housing, there has been a tendency towards an increase in the number of homes in multiple-occupation (HMOs) in the borough, particularly through the conversion of family homes into properties shared by 3 or more unrelated people, which in some cases are not well managed.



**Illegal conversion which could only be accessed by stooping tackled by Barnet's private sector housing team**

The Council already works with local landlords to raise standards through a landlord forum run by Barnet Homes and by encouraging them to acquire formal accreditation through the London Landlords Accreditation Scheme.

In addition, through services provided by **R<sup>e</sup>**, Barnet works jointly with the Police and other partners to address sub-standard housing conditions in the private sector, including Houses in Multiple Occupation, “beds in sheds” and squats.

Along with more than 100 other Local Authorities the Council has signed up to support *Shelter's* “Evict Rogue Landlords Campaign”<sup>3</sup>.

In order to ensure that the growing private rented sector continues to offer good quality and safe homes, the Council intends to review how HMOs are regulated and consider other options, for example making use of its discretionary powers to introduce Additional Licencing for HMOs across the borough and a planning direction which would mean planning permission would be required for all new HMOs.

<sup>3</sup> [http://england.shelter.org.uk/campaigns/fixing\\_private\\_renting/evict\\_rogue\\_landlords](http://england.shelter.org.uk/campaigns/fixing_private_renting/evict_rogue_landlords)

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**Achievements:**

- 463 landlords accredited through the London Landlord Accreditation Scheme (27% increase since 2011/12)
  - Signed up to Shelter's "Evict Rogue landlords Campaign"
  - 174 tenanted properties were made free from Category 1 hazards<sup>4</sup> following intervention by the Private Sector Housing Team (50% increase since 2011/12)
  - 132 licenced HMOs (50% increase since 2011/12)
- 

**Targets:**

- Review completed of HMO regulation by early 2015 and any agreed changes, for example Additional Licensing, implemented in 2015
  - Decision on whether to issue Article 4 planning directive in place requiring planning permission for all new Houses in Multiple Occupation early in 2015
  - 570 landlords accredited through the London Landlord Accreditation Scheme by 2020
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<sup>4</sup> Housing Health and Safety Rating System



## 4. Tackling Homelessness

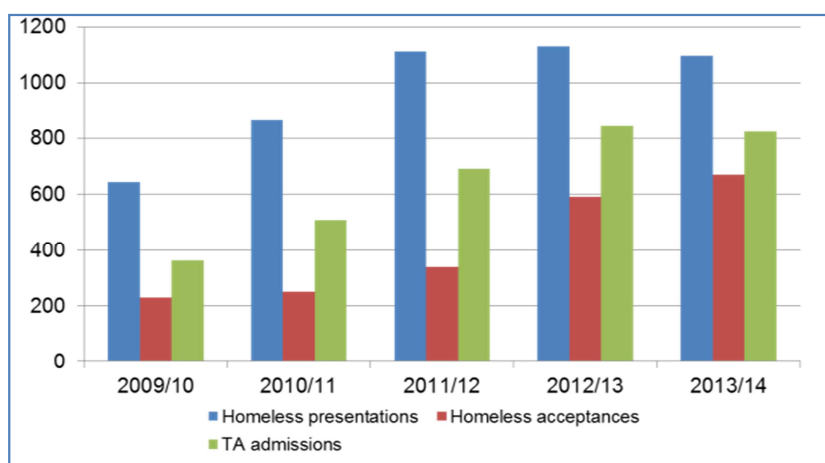
### Temporary Accommodation and Homelessness

The Council, through its Arms- Length Management Organisation (ALMO) Barnet Homes has successfully avoided the use of bed and breakfast accommodation since 2012, although the number of households in emergency self-contained temporary accommodation increased from 204 in April 2011 to over 600 by March 2013. Steps have already been taken to reduce this number which had fallen to 471 by March 2014, including:

- Increased incentives to private sector landlords, so that the number of private lettings to homeless households increased from 133 in 2012/13 to 321 in 2013/14
- A greater focus on homelessness prevention measures, such as youth mediation
- Sourcing accommodation in less expensive areas outside of Barnet
- Formation of welfare benefits task force to work closely with households affected by welfare reform to minimise the risk of homelessness.

Barnet has also embarked on a programme of building new council homes for the first time in over 20 years as described in section 3, and will also explore the possibility of purchasing homes directly in more affordable areas which could be let to households who can no longer afford to remain in the borough.

The number of households presenting as homeless and the number of households being accepted as homeless has increased significantly over the past five years. The number of new temporary accommodation admissions has also risen.



The key reasons for the increased demand on services include:

- Increased housing costs combined with restrictions on housing benefit has resulted in more households moving out of Central London to Outer London boroughs, including Barnet. This is evidenced by a significant increase in the number of households claiming housing benefit in Barnet and a fall in housing benefit claims in Central London.
- The number of households seeking help with their housing has been increasing throughout London because of the high cost of owning or renting a home.

- Private sector rents have increased faster in Barnet than in other parts of London and they are the 4<sup>th</sup> highest out of 16 Outer London boroughs, meaning that more low-income households may approach the Council for assistance with their housing.

Welfare reforms designed to help people into work, have meant that more households have been at risk of losing their home, and the council has worked closely with its partners to work with those affected with a focus on helping them into employment, and we will continue to take this approach as Universal Credit is implemented.

It has become increasingly difficult to procure accommodation in the private sector at Local Housing Allowance rates. This has resulted in a significant increase in the use of emergency temporary accommodation<sup>5</sup>, often at a cost that cannot be fully met through the housing benefit system, resulting in a pressure on the Council's General Fund budget. In 2013/14, 471 such units had to be procured at a cost of £829k (£1.418m including bad debt provision). At the end of May 2014, the average nightly rate for emergency temporary accommodation was £41.36 and average nightly rent that could be charged through the housing benefits system was £36.95 meaning a net average cost to the Council of £4.41 per night per unit.

### **Making best use of existing Housing Stock**

Subsidised housing, including council and housing association homes have become increasingly scarce, and the council has already made changes to the way that these homes are allocated, including restricting the our allocations scheme to those households that are in the highest need and expecting housing applicants to accept the first suitable offer of accommodation they receive. At the same time, our scheme recognises the contribution that people who are working or volunteering make to the community. We are currently consulting on additional changes which include an extension of local connection and will continue to keep the scheme under review.

The Council's Tenancy Strategy has been implemented and most new tenants now receive a fixed term tenancy of five years, with the aim of increasing the turnover of council homes and increasing the availability of council homes for those that need them. We will complete a review of the operation of the Tenancy Strategy by February 2015 to ensure that its stated objectives are being achieved.

#### **Achievements:**

- Let2Barnet private landlord service launched by Barnet Homes in 2013 resulting in an increase in the supply of private rented accommodation for homeless people
- Local placements policy implemented in 2013 to ensure that housing applicants are offered accommodation that is affordable.

<sup>5</sup> In Barnet all emergency temporary accommodation consists of self-contained units which is paid for on a nightly basis

- 3 new council homes were delivered in 2013, the first homes built by the council since 1991.
- Welfare benefits task force has contacted 1,403 households since April 2013. Of these 439 have gained employment and 86 have moved into more affordable accommodation.
- Barnet Homes helped 63 council tenants affected by the under-occupancy reduction to move into smaller homes (including 45 trade downs and 18 mutual exchanges) during 2013/14

**Targets:**

- Develop a detailed Homelessness and Temporary Accommodation action plan by April 2015
- Barnet Homes will increase the number of private lettings to 500 a year by 2015.
- Barnet Homes will host 4 London Landlord Accreditation Scheme landlord development courses per year to increase the number of accredited landlords.
- Barnet Council will work with Barnet Homes, Job Centre Plus and Registered Providers on a local support framework for universal credit to ensure that the potential for homelessness is minimised
- Finalise changes to the Council's Housing Allocations Scheme – February 2015
- Complete review of Tenancy Strategy – February 2015

## 4. Providing suitable housing to support vulnerable people

### Older People

We know that the older population in Barnet is set to increase significantly over the next 30 years. However, older people should not be viewed as a homogenous group and a variety of housing options will be needed to meet their needs and expectations.

National research by the *New Policy Institute* suggests that as people become older, some will decide to move to improve their lifestyle, for example to the coast or even abroad, whilst others will plan ahead and move to a home that anticipates that their existing accommodation may become less suitable as they get older. A third group will only move when there is a crisis, such as an accident or ill health that means that they can no longer cope in their existing home, and are more likely to end up in a care home that is not their preference or best suited to their needs.

- The over 60 population is 64,690 now and is projected to be 109,849 by 2041- an increase of **41%**.
- The over 90s population is set to increase fourfold from under 3,000 in 2011 to almost 12,000 in 2041.
- There will be more over 90 year olds than 85-89 year olds from 2035

Age	2012	2020	Change
65-74	8,608	10,288	+1,680/+20%
75-84	7,976	9,241	+1,265/+16%
85+	4,336	5,653	+1,317/+30%
<b>All 65+</b>	<b>20,920</b>	<b>25,182</b>	<b>+4,262/+20%</b>

**Older People with limiting long term illness**

Whilst many older people will remain independent for longer, it is inevitable that as the older population rises that the number of people requiring care will also

increase, particularly amongst those that live beyond the age of 85, and figures from the Department of Health suggest that the number of people over 65 with limiting long term illnesses, including heart conditions, dementia, and diabetes is likely to increase by over 4,000 by 2020.

The Council would like to make it easier for residents to plan ahead for their housing needs as they approach old age and recognise that as people remain active into their old age that many of them will not require specialist older people's housing. Instead many older people will need homes that are adaptable to their changing needs and close to facilities including local shops and transport, or support to remain in their existing home.

We also know that good housing and local supportive communities contribute positively to enabling older people to live independently for longer and reduce the

factors that contribute towards people requiring social care or residential care - social isolation and loneliness, poor health and breakdown of carer's support. It is important, therefore, that a range of housing options are provided to meet the varied needs of older people, including homes that meet the specific needs of an increasing number of people with learning disabilities amongst this age group.

### New Homes

Barnet's growth and regeneration programme will deliver in excess of 26,000 new homes by 2025/26. Many of these will be suitable for people to grow older in as they are designed to lifetime standards, comply with current energy efficiency standards, are sited close to transport and amenities and offer a range of choices in terms of size and number of bedrooms. Some older people have already taken advantage of the new developments and moved to a newer property which is easier to manage.

### Co-Housing

In April 2013 Planning permission was given for a site in High Barnet to be developed as the UK's first senior co-housing community – OWCH (older women's co-housing). The scheme will be up and running in 2015 and will provide homes for women aged over 50 in 25 flats which they will control and manage. Designed with the help of the women themselves, the scheme will have amenities like a common room, guest room, laundry and a garden as well as one to three bedroomed flats. There will be a mix of owners and social renters and all the women moving in will have been active for some time in planning this development. It means they will know who their neighbours are the security of a friendly group 'signed up to be neighbourly'.

#### Co-housing in a nutshell

Co-housing communities are created and run by their residents. Each household has a self-contained, personal and private home but residents come together to manage their community, share activities, eat together. Co-housing is a way of combating the alienation and isolation many experience today, recreating the neighbourly support of the past.

### Sheltered Housing

There are over 1500 sheltered housing properties in Barnet managed by a range of providers, including private sector housing providers. Over 400 of these are managed by Barnet Homes on behalf of the Council and have very low vacancy levels.

### Supported Housing Options

It is important that the right sort of housing is provided to help older people with a range of support needs requiring help with managing everyday tasks. The Council has identified that there is already a shortfall in supply of supported housing for older people as an alternative to residential care homes, with the former providing a

more flexible approach that can help older people live more independently for longer. Approximately 80 people each year would benefit from a better outcome if they could be placed in supported housing.

There are currently 136 Extra Care Housing (ECH) flats in Barnet all of which are owned and managed by registered providers (RPs) and charitable service providers. An additional 50 homes will be delivered by 2017/8, by Barnet Homes. In addition the council is considering plans to provide 100 specialist integrated homes on a hub and spoke model where accommodation is linked to health and care support and other community facilities to be delivered by 2020 – including 50 homes for sale.

### **Adapted and Accessible Older Properties**

The Care and Repair Service provided by R<sup>e</sup> helps vulnerable residents to live at home in greater warmth, comfort, safety and security. It is the primary source for advice on housing adaptations, repairs and improvements, funding suitable contractors, grant funding streams and other financial assistance (including charity funding) as well as benefit entitlement. Whilst residents can choose to deal with the arrangement of their own adaptation and building works, the majority opt for the supported service provided by Care and Repair which covers minor and major building works to improve quality of life and independence for vulnerable people. The supported service covers all aspects from completing the application form for a Disabled Facilities Grant, to getting estimates and supervising the works through to completion. We will consider how can further expand the service offer for older people requiring assistance with home maintenance.

### **Advice**

It is also important that older people have access to high quality advice, to plan for their older age, particularly if they are thinking about moving for lifestyle reasons or to be nearer their family, or even abroad. We will strengthen the range of advice and information that is available and develop recommendations to improve these, based upon feedback from local residents on their key priorities.

### **Housing for adults with disabilities**

Demand for good quality supported housing is increasing. Supported housing can provide settled accommodation, offer security of tenure and provide increased opportunities for independent living.

In the longer term we wish to stimulate provision to provide a variety of options for housing and support rather than one size fits all. A recently- developed model of supported housing in Barnet is developing a model that separates accommodation

and support arrangements so that individuals moving in select and organise their own support arrangements, maximising choice and control.

In terms of accommodation type, we recognise the need for homes which can offer level access for wheelchair users and those with decreased mobility, and have stipulated that all new homes must meet the Lifetime Homes Standard, and that 10% must be fully wheelchair accessible. In addition, we will provide a number of wheelchair accessible homes on council owned land supported by the Housing Revenue Account Investment Programme, including 9 new build fully accessible wheelchair properties currently planned and a further 5 new wheelchair properties every 2 years. Generally self-contained accommodation is preferable, although we are considering the potential for small shared settings for friendship groups who wish to live together. In terms of provision benefiting specific care groups, Adults and Communities priorities are for:

- People with dementia
- People with learning disabilities
- People with autism including those with Asperger's and complex needs
- People recovering from brain injuries
- People with physical, neurological and sensory disabilities
- People with problems of substance misuse including drugs and alcohol, impacting on mental health
- People with mental health problems.

#### **Winterbourne View**

The Winterbourne View Joint Improvement Programme and Concordat requires local authority housing and social care and health commissioners to work closely together to develop creative solutions to find and develop appropriate housing for people with learning disabilities who are ready to leave hospital.

We will work closely with Adults and Communities to meet the needs of people with learning disabilities who are ready to move from hospital settings to supported accommodation within the community.

The Barnet Joint Strategic Needs Assessment (JSNA) 2011-2015 reports that approximately 1% of the Adult population

has an Autistic Spectrum Condition which, as further stated in the JSNA, equates to 2,600 people in Barnet. The 2013/14 Insight report also noted that in 2012/13 170 social care clients were recorded as having autism as a care need.

According to the 2013/14 Barnet Insight Report, during 2012/13, 57 (35%) service users with autism were living in residential care homes, which suggested that there was a need for more specialist supported housing schemes. Barnet is currently undertaking a project to move eligible service users from residential care to

Speedwell Court, a new local development for people with high functioning Autism-Asperger’s syndrome.

Speedwell Court has 10 self-contained studio flats, where residents can live for up to two years. Currently 9 out of the ten flats are let. The supported living scheme enables service users to gain important life skills for independent living to support their move-on plans. The move-on pathway for service users is for them to transfer to more independent accommodation with access to specialist support if they need it. Barnet currently funds, ‘Working for you’ a short term service for people with Learning Disabilities and Autism.

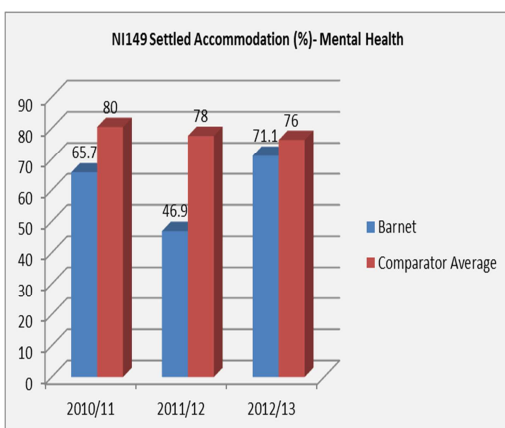
National forecasts show the numbers of young adults with Autism are expected to increase by 2.7% over the next 5 years, with a local increase of 8.7% expected within Barnet. There is therefore a need to have a clearer picture on the needs of people with autism to inform the planning of services.

### Views of the people with learning disabilities (PWLD)

A housing workshop was held with the Learning Disabilities Partnership Board in April 2014. Participants identified their main issues and barriers to moving:

- Lack of choice of accommodation and location, importance of PWLD living close to family, friends and support networks how can this fit with personalisation
- Changes to welfare benefits and increasing costs of housing , affordable properties are often very small
- Need greater access to adaptation services.
- Importance of having accessible and independent information including examples of all the types of housing schemes and options
- Having the right support from family, social worker or key worker to make the right choices - are the right tools available to work through realistic options?
- Making sure we are planning for future needs particularly people with complex needs
- Making sure private landlords understand the needs of PWLD.

### Mental Health



Approximately 40,000 people experience common mental health conditions such as depression and anxiety in Barnet. A further 4000 people experience severe mental health conditions such as schizophrenia and other psychotic disorders. The prevalence of mental illness in Barnet has slightly increased from 0.79% in 2006/07 to 0.94% in 2011/12. The prevalence in Barnet is lower than London but higher than England.



Settled accommodation and inclusion are key protective factors of mental health. The proportion of people with mental health conditions known to the Council in settled accommodation is lower than the average across comparative boroughs<sup>6</sup> so that in 2012/13, 1135 people (71%) with mental health conditions were in settled compared to the benchmark average of 76%.

2013/14 has seen an increase in the numbers of people requiring inpatient admissions as a result of acute mental health crisis resulting in an increase in the requests for residential care placements. In 2013/14, there was a three-fold increase in the numbers of residential placements, (20, compared to 7 in 2012/13) the majority of who could be safely placed in supported housing.

### Young People Leaving Care

The council recognises the responsibilities it has to help young people in care to find and keep appropriate accommodation as they reach adulthood. This means ensuring that young people leaving care are helped to prepare for living independently and supported through the transition from living in a care setting to their own home. Young people in this situation need advice on managing their finances, flexibility about when they move out of care to minimise disruption, for example to their education, and access to accommodation in other areas, for example if they want to go to university in another part of the country.

Barnet Homes, who manage the allocation of homes for the council, works closely with the council's Onwards and Upwards team that provides support for young care leavers, and a clear referral pathway between the two organisations has been established for new referrals. In addition, there is active joint management of cases to ensure that issues that may be hampering a young person from securing or keeping accommodation, such as rent arrears or anti-social behaviour are addressed. A range of housing options are in place for care leavers, including a Foyer, supported housing and shared accommodation, and a training flat has been established where young people can spend time learning how to manage their own home. Barnet Homes has also established the *Get Real Project*, which provides shared accommodation for young people, including care leavers.

In recognition of its corporate parenting role, the council is proposing changes to its Housing Allocations Scheme to give young care leavers more priority for council or housing association homes.

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<sup>6</sup> Comparator Boroughs: Bexley, Brent, Bromley, Croydon, Ealing, Enfield, Harrow, Havering, Hillingdon, Hounslow, Merton, Redbridge, Richmond, Sutton, Wandsworth

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**Achievements:**

- Site identified and funding agreed for new Extra Care Housing Scheme
- Planning permission granted for Co-housing project
- Development of additional Sheltered Housing Plus
- Re-commissioning of housing related floating support services
- Supported Living Housing Scheme established at Speedwell Court
- 220 Disability Facility Grants were approved in 2013/14.

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**Targets:**

- Increase in supported housing options, including provision for people with dementia by 150 units by 2020.
- Promote and expand housing advice offer for older people in 2015
- Work with adults and Communities to produce accessible information for people with learning disabilities
- Increase in the number of adaptations or moves to more suitable accommodation through using the advice service.
- We will reduce the average time for the administration of Disabled Facilities Grant works to 186 days from 2015.
- We will increase the number of people supported to remain in their homes through the Disabled Facilities Grant scheme.
- Work with Adults & Communities to ensure a broad, suitable housing offer is available for people with mental health issues that supports recovery and inclusion.

## 5. Deliver efficient and effective services to residents

### Management of Council Housing Services

Currently Barnet Homes delivers the full housing management services for the 10,000 tenanted and 4,000 leasehold properties owned by the Council. It also provides the housing options and homelessness services to the whole of the borough. It is a private company limited by shares, set up in 2004 as an Arm's Length Management Organisation (ALMO). In February 2012 it became a subsidiary company along with Your Choice Barnet, to The Barnet Group, a local authority trading company, wholly owned by Barnet Council. Your Choice Barnet (Limited) is an adult social care company providing services to adults with learning and physical disabilities.

The ALMO was created to deliver improvements to the condition of the Council's housing stock through the government's Decent Homes programme and to improve services to tenants and leaseholders. Barnet Homes was successful in delivering the Decent Homes programme and improving tenant satisfaction, and in 2010 the Council's Housing Strategy confirmed that the Council wanted to keep the ALMO and explore the potential for Barnet Homes to provide more services. In January 2012 the Council transferred the Housing Needs Service to The Barnet Group, with Barnet Homes responsible for delivering the service.

The Council will work with The Barnet Group to review the current arrangements, to assess value for money and to explore options for the future delivery of services to meet the Council's strategic needs. This will include options for the delivery and management of new homes and a mixed economy of private, social and affordable rents. Revised arrangements will be in place by April 2016.

### Regional Enterprise (R<sup>e</sup>)

R<sup>e</sup>, a joint enterprise between the Council and Capita, was established in October 2013 following a competitive tendering exercise. The objective of this approach is to make use of Capita's private sector expertise to increase the efficiency of and grow the services provided by R<sup>e</sup> to both save the Council money whilst also ensuring that services which are essential to support growth and prosperity in the borough are maintained and improved.

As well as providing planning, environmental health, highways and trading standards services, R<sup>e</sup> also manages services responsible for taking forward the Council's growth and regeneration plans and planning and housing strategies including the Local Plan and Housing Strategy. In addition, as part of the Environmental Health function R<sup>e</sup> delivers regulatory services for the private rented sector, including registration of

Homes in Multiple Occupation, as well as delivery of the council's strategy for bringing empty private sector homes back into use.

### Housing Associations

Housing Associations, also known as Registered Providers, have a key role to play in providing low cost housing in the borough and helping the Council to deliver its wider housing objectives, including our Estate Regeneration programme. Housing Associations currently manage over 7000 homes in Barnet, including for rent and low cost home ownership, and are the main providers of new affordable homes in the borough, with more than 600 homes built since April 2012, exceeding targets set by the Council.

As well as providing new homes, it is important that high quality services are provided to people living in housing association properties, and the Council carries out regular monitoring and benchmarking of the performance being delivered by registered providers.

We have been working proactively with local housing providers to deliver the outcomes of Welfare Reform to ensure a tailored service is provided to all residents who have been affected by the changes to help them get back into work, and we are now working to meet the need for improved employment and training opportunities available in Barnet.

The Council will continue to work closely in partnership with Housing Associations to deliver more affordable homes and maintain high standards of service, including through the Barnet Housing Association Liaison Group which remains an excellent opportunity for housing providers to share experiences, promote good practice and highlight areas for increased partnership working.

#### Achievements

- Housing Needs service transferred to Barnet Homes to provide a unified housing service
- **R<sup>e</sup>**, a joint venture with Capita which will deliver the council's growth and regeneration programme established
- More than 600 new affordable homes delivered by housing associations since April 2012

#### Targets

- The Council will work with Barnet Homes to establish arrangements for the future of homelessness and housing management services beyond 2015/16 by April 2016

## Appendix 1 – Financing the Housing Strategy

### 1. Council Housing and Housing Needs Services

The Council's Medium Term Financial Strategy (MTFS) includes a general fund saving of £300k for 2015/16. A target has been set for a 20% reduction of management costs in the Housing Revenue Account (HRA) for the period from 2016-20. This equates to a baseline adjustment of £4.2 million and work is currently underway to identify how that can be achieved. This savings assumption has been built into the proposals for funding new build and ensuring that use of right to buy receipts is maximised. The table on the next page shows the currently modelled available build budget and the maximum numbers of units capable of being built on HRA land assuming:

1. Current RTB projections
2. Delivery of the Barnet Homes HRA saving of £4.2 million between 2015/16 and 2019/20
3. A rent policy of annually increasing rents 0.5% above CPI plus 1% (the current rent increase cap)
4. Holding HRA reserves at a minimum of £7 million
5. Build cost of £150,000 per unit
6. Accumulated surpluses are achieved at end of each year and are available for subsequent year investment

HOUSING REVENUE ACCOUNT											
	2014/15	2015/16	2016/17	2017/18	2018/19	2019/2020	2020/2021	2021/22	2022/23	2023/24	2024/25
Income	£	£	£	£	£	£	£	£	£	£	£
Dwelling rents	(53,164,530)	(54,168,612)	(54,109,790)	(53,664,026)	(52,570,966)	(52,570,616)	(52,931,902)	(53,669,114)	(53,929,970)	(54,080,819)	(54,995,817)
New Build Dwellings	0	0	(4,504,491)	(4,956,361)	(6,301,029)	(7,879,214)	(9,861,261)	(12,348,971)	(15,119,698)	(18,430,912)	(22,128,153)
Non-dwelling rents	(1,596,622)	(1,689,506)	(1,675,027)	(1,648,791)	(1,603,124)	(1,591,130)	(1,590,099)	(1,600,213)	(1,595,999)	(1,588,537)	(1,603,386)
Tenants Charges for services and facilities	(4,088,289)	(3,858,931)	(3,930,169)	(3,882,849)	(3,844,793)	(3,854,227)	(3,886,731)	(3,941,302)	(3,966,476)	(3,990,929)	(4,052,800)
Leaseholder Charges for Services and Facilities	(2,898,389)	(2,945,732)	(2,983,940)	(2,995,690)	(2,954,934)	(2,998,687)	(3,027,174)	(3,086,575)	(3,137,714)	(3,204,498)	(3,278,110)
<b>Total Income</b>	<b>(61,747,830)</b>	<b>(62,662,781)</b>	<b>(67,203,417)</b>	<b>(67,147,718)</b>	<b>(67,274,846)</b>	<b>(68,893,874)</b>	<b>(71,297,167)</b>	<b>(74,646,176)</b>	<b>(77,749,857)</b>	<b>(81,295,696)</b>	<b>(86,058,266)</b>
<b>Expenditure</b>											
Repairs and Maintenance	7,650,000	7,650,000	7,650,000	7,687,310	7,457,970	7,385,863	7,364,770	7,395,195	7,359,340	7,308,622	7,360,468
Supervision and management											
General	14,207,510	13,127,510	12,166,510	11,574,469	10,918,657	10,276,274	10,467,497	10,673,025	10,871,423	11,072,224	11,297,048
Special	6,756,617	6,756,617	6,756,617	6,986,794	7,161,464	7,340,500	7,524,013	7,712,113	7,904,916	8,102,539	8,305,102
Rents, Rates, taxes and other charges	121,500	121,500	121,500	124,538	127,651	130,842	134,113	137,466	140,903	144,425	148,036
Contribution to capital programme	33,489,000	32,683,000	23,024,000	22,171,000	19,494,000	17,312,130	18,100,739	17,266,245	18,214,464	18,678,109	19,232,713
Impairment write off for HRA commercial properties	820,000	840,500	861,513	883,050	905,127	927,755	950,949	974,722	999,090	1,024,068	1,049,669
Debt Management Costs	7,424,728	6,588,108	8,803,092	8,376,508	8,307,310	8,172,716	8,006,805	7,951,121	7,804,717	7,732,436	7,623,892
Increase in bad debt provision	615,000	615,000	615,000	615,000	615,000	615,000	615,000	615,000	615,000	615,000	615,000
<b>Total Expenditure</b>	<b>71,084,355</b>	<b>68,382,235</b>	<b>59,998,232</b>	<b>58,418,668</b>	<b>54,987,178</b>	<b>52,161,080</b>	<b>53,163,885</b>	<b>52,724,888</b>	<b>53,909,853</b>	<b>54,677,423</b>	<b>55,631,929</b>
<b>Net Cost of HRA Services</b>	<b>9,336,525</b>	<b>5,719,455</b>	<b>(7,205,185)</b>	<b>(8,729,049)</b>	<b>(12,287,668)</b>	<b>(16,732,794)</b>	<b>(18,133,282)</b>	<b>(21,921,288)</b>	<b>(23,840,004)</b>	<b>(26,618,273)</b>	<b>(30,426,337)</b>
Interest and investment income	(80,000)	(80,000)	(80,000)	(80,000)	(80,000)	(80,000)	(80,000)	(80,000)	(80,000)	(80,000)	(80,000)
<b>(Surplus) or deficit for the year on HRA services</b>	<b>9,256,525</b>	<b>5,639,455</b>	<b>(7,285,185)</b>	<b>(8,809,049)</b>	<b>(12,367,668)</b>	<b>(16,812,794)</b>	<b>(18,213,282)</b>	<b>(22,001,288)</b>	<b>(23,920,004)</b>	<b>(26,698,273)</b>	<b>(30,506,337)</b>
Right to buy receipts retained	(6,778,360)	(8,261,540)	(8,261,540)	(8,261,540)	(8,261,540)	(8,261,540)	(8,261,540)	(8,261,540)	(8,261,541)	(8,261,542)	0
<b>(Surplus) or deficit contributing to HRA balances</b>	<b>2,478,165</b>	<b>(2,622,086)</b>	<b>(15,546,726)</b>	<b>(17,070,589)</b>	<b>(20,629,209)</b>	<b>(25,074,334)</b>	<b>(26,474,822)</b>	<b>(30,262,828)</b>	<b>(32,181,545)</b>	<b>(34,959,815)</b>	<b>(30,506,337)</b>
No. of Newbuilds Base Case		412	19	85	88	102	121	125	142	146	155
No. of Newbuilds with 4.2m		0	5	12	18	25	33	36	40	45	49
No. of Newbuilds CPI+1%+0.5%		0	1	4	6	9	11	13	17	22	26
Maximum build total each year.		412	25	101	112	136	165	174	199	213	230
										<b>Total Maximum New Homes – 1,767</b>	

## 2. Delivery of Affordable Housing

Delivery of new council homes will be supported by a combination of HRA headroom, right to buy receipts and GLA grant. The Savills modelling tool shows that in addition to the existing commitments<sup>7</sup>, a new build programme of 500 new council homes over 5 years could be supported subject to the availability of suitable land, as well as two further extra care housing schemes (100 units).

In addition, Barnet Homes have secured £2.47m funding from the GLA 2015/18 affordable housing programme to support building 101 new homes at a total cost of £19.1m.

## 3. Tackling Homelessness

Containing budget pressures associated with the costs of temporary accommodation continues to be a challenge especially with the demand to bring forward early decanting for regeneration. Detailed plans are in place to contain those costs and this will be monitored through existing governance structures.

## 4. Barnet Homes Capital Programme:

Investment to refurbish General Fund hostels and 3 new council homes at Alexandra Road.

2014-15	TOTAL CAPITAL FUNDING £'000					
General Fund	2014-15	2015-16	2016-17	2017-18	2018-19	Total
Alexandra Road <sup>8</sup>	24					24
Hostel Refurbishment Programme	270					270

## 5. Current HRA Capital Programme:

Investment to ensure that council owned housing stock is well maintained and that statutory health and safety obligations are met. Also includes investment to improve Granville Road and deliver 38 new council homes.

2014-15 TO 2018-19	TOTAL CAPITAL FUNDING £'000					
Housing Revenue Account	2014-15	2015-16	2016-17	2017-18	2018-19	Total
Major Works (excl. Granville Rd)	8,519	8,520	8,438	8,101	6,331	39,908
Granville Road	293					293
Regeneration <sup>9</sup>	4,623	2,301	2,506	2,065	1,684	13,181
Misc. - Repairs	1,316	942	2,020	2,073	2,348	8,698
M&E/ GAS	14,101	15,014	8,254	8,079	6,826	52,273
Voids and Lettings	1,980	1,712	1,806	1,853	2,305	9,655
38 New Affordable Homes	6,832					6,832
<b>Totals</b>	<b>37,664</b>	<b>28,488</b>	<b>23,024</b>	<b>22,171</b>	<b>19,493</b>	<b>130,840</b>

<sup>7</sup> Existing Barnet Homes programme for 41 units, Extra Care Housing at Morton Close, Advanced Acquisitions of Leasehold properties on Regeneration Estates

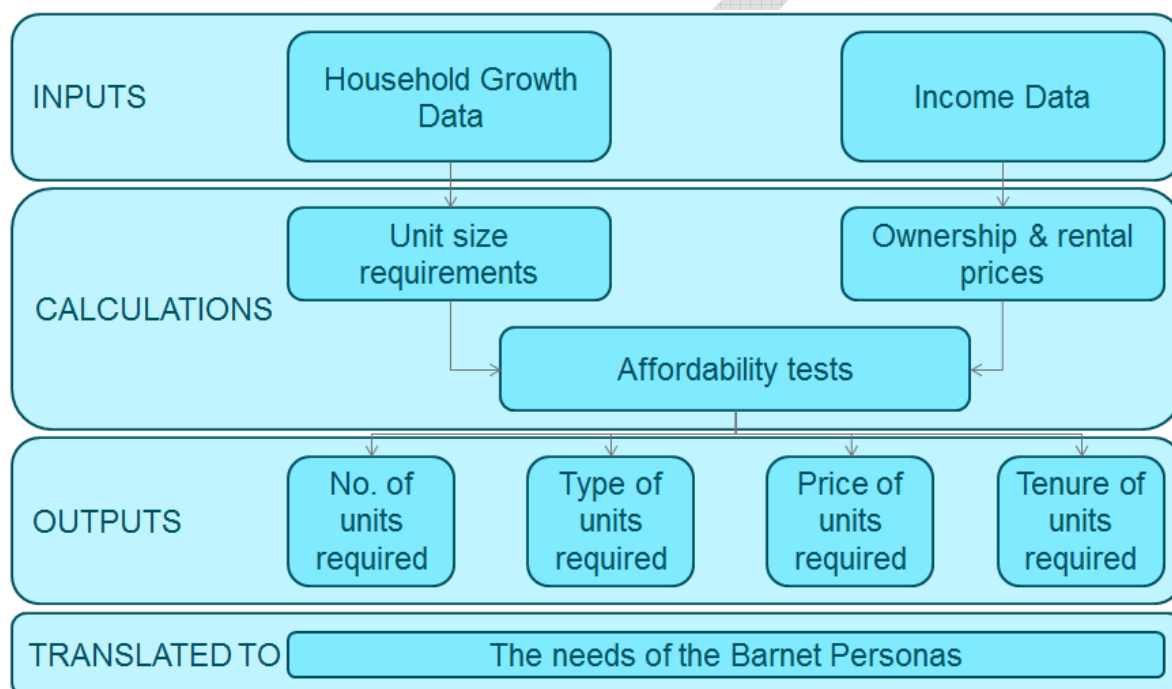
<sup>8</sup> Alexandra Road was appropriated into the General Fund for legal reasons

<sup>9</sup> This expenditure is recoverable at a later date through land receipts

## Appendix 2- Housing Needs Assessment

We know that Barnet’s population is increasing, and it is important to understand the type of homes that will be needed to accommodate this growth. The council have commissioned a Housing Needs Assessment to provide analysis of the expected household growth, existing unmet need and affordability, and provide an estimate of the number, size and tenure mix that will be needed over the next 10 years. The assessment also considers how housing need is distributed across a set of personas that represent the type of households living in the borough.

The approach taken is summarised in the following table.



In addition, affordability was assessed on the basis of Department of Works and Pensions figures for the minimum household income needed after housing costs have been taken into account + 10% as follows, examples of which are:

- £ 6,656 for a single adult
- £11,440 for a couple
- £18,564 for a couple with 2 children

Using the approach, the assessment identified that over the next 10 years a total of 27,350 new homes will be required, and that the majority of households housing need could be met by the private rented sector as follows:



**Barnet Housing Market Assessment 2015/16 – 2024/25**

	1 bed	2 bed	2 Bed Shared	3 Bed	3 Bed shared	4 Bed	Total	Comment
Total Requirement	8309	4555	7864	2768	2240	1614	27350	This is the total number of units needed
80% Market Rent	8309	4555	7864	2768	2240	1614	27350	Households who could afford 80% market rent
Market Rent	7523	3536	7001	2099	2123	1111	23393	Of the total, this many could afford market rent
Shared Ownership	6043	2714	6307	1519	1998	717	19298	Of the total, this many could afford shared ownership
Owner Occupation	2406	785	4002	334	1440	134	9101	Of the total, this many could afford to buy a home with a mortgage

This suggests that over the next ten years, there will be an annual need for 2735 new homes each year. The household projections show that two thirds of the new households in the borough will be couple or single people without children, generating a need for smaller units or accommodation that is suitable for sharing.

In addition, whilst 86% of new households could afford the private rented sector, increasing to 100% at 80% of local market rents, only 33% will be able to afford home ownership at full market rates, although this rises to 71% for shared ownership.

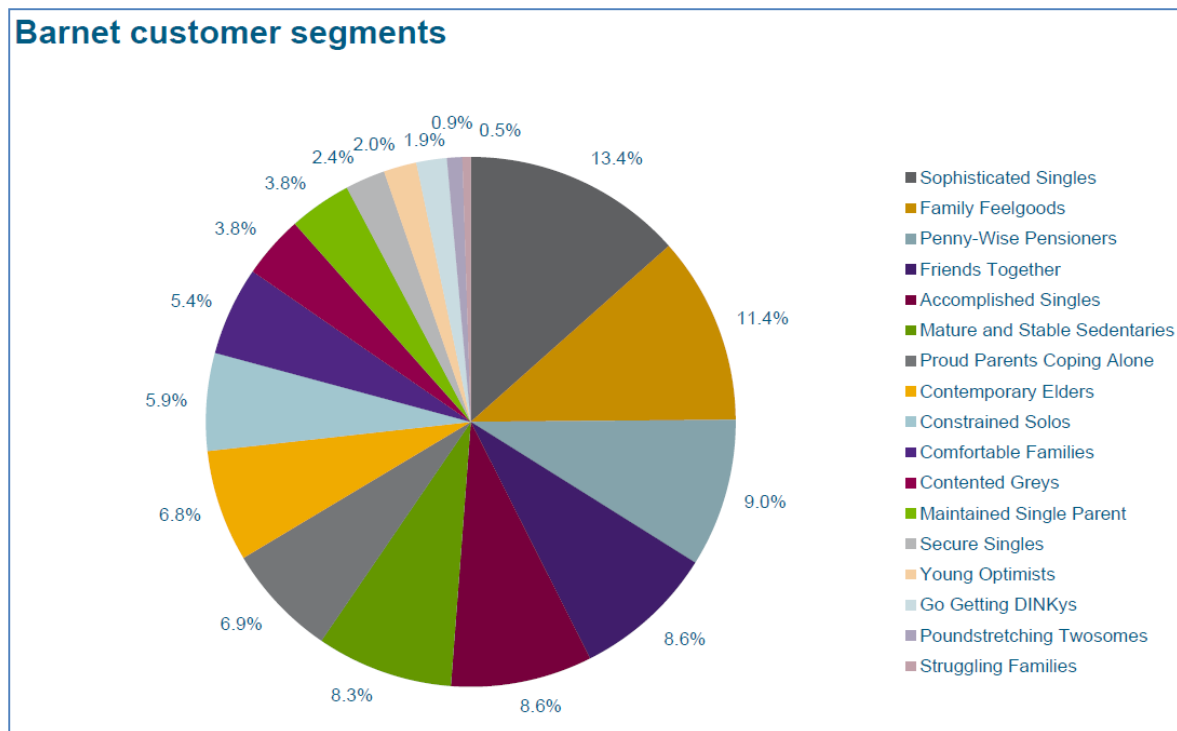
In terms of size, the overall mix of accommodation needed to meet housing need, will be 30% one bedroom homes, 46% two bedroom homes, 18% three bed homes and 6% 4 bed or larger. Within this, the projections show that higher proportions of two and three bedroom homes will be required for those that can afford home ownership.

The above analysis can be used to give the following annual requirement for new homes:

	1 bed	2 beds	2 beds shared	3 beds	3 beds shared	4 beds	Total	%
Total Requirement	831	456	786	277	224	161	2735	
Market for Sale	241	79	400	33	144	13	910	33%
Intermediate Ownership	364	193	231	119	56	58	1020	37%
Market Rent	79	102	86	67	12	50	396	14%
Affordable rent	148	82	69	58	13	39	410	15%

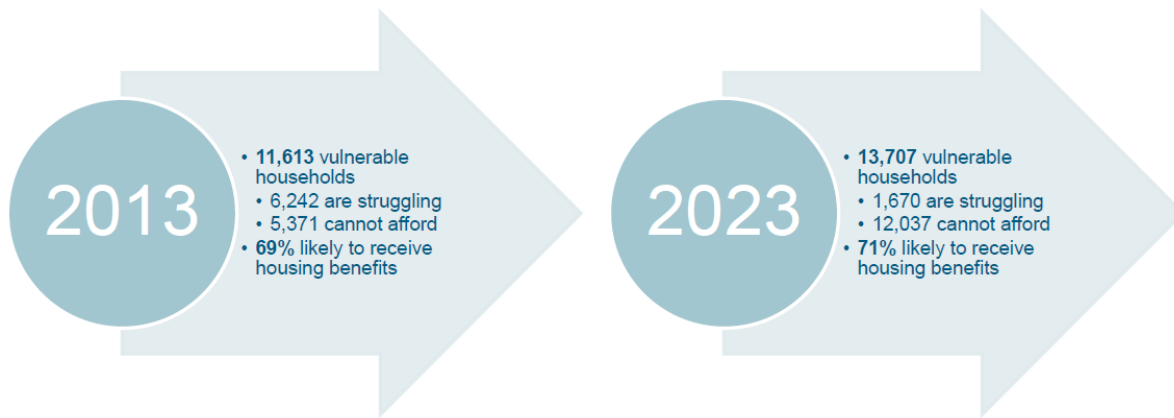
## Barnet Customer Segments and affordability

In addition to the Housing Needs Assessment, we have also carried out a study into the affordability of housing and how this is likely to change over the next 10 years. This study looked across a set of representative personas that have been developed based on Call Credit Cameo data (CAMEO classification system provides detailed customer analysis & customer segmentation).



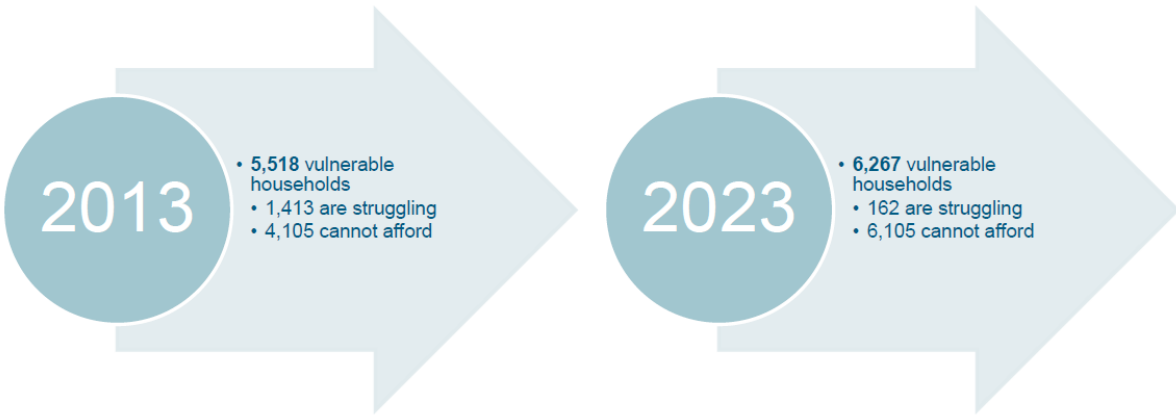
The study considered the types of housing each household could afford at present, and assumes that incomes will increase by 23% and housing costs by 40% over the coming ten years, based on how these have changed during the last few years. This inevitably shows that more people will find struggle to meet their housing costs by 2023.

For rented accommodation, the assessment shows that there are currently an estimated 11,613 households who have difficulties with paying their rent, including 5,371 who have less than the DWP minimum household income once they have paid their rent, suggesting that they cannot afford private rented accommodation. The overall number who are likely to have difficulties with rent payments increases to 13,707 by 2023, but within this 12,037 will be below DWP minimum household incomes once they have paid their rent.



<b>Rent Affordability 2013</b>	30-40k	25-30k	20-25k	15-20k	10-15k	10k
Friends Together					740	444
Comfortable Families	856	578	395			
Mature and Stable Sedentaries			517			
Young Optimists						
Constrained Solos					505	377
Struggling Families				242	57	48
Proud Parents Coping Alone				837	1,046	795
Penny Wise Pensioners						1,390
<b>Rent Affordability 2023</b>						
	37-50k	30-37k	25-30k	18-25k	12-18k	12k
Pound-stretching Twosomes			331	98		
Friends Together					814	489
Comfortable Families	933	630	430			
Mature and Stable Sedentaries			625			
Young Optimists						
Constrained Solos					526	392
Struggling Families				266	63	53
Proud Parents Coping Alone			268	921	1,151	875
Penny Wise Pensioners						1,390
<b>RED=Number who cannot afford rent</b>		<b>Amber = Number Struggling to pay rent</b>				

The number of households that will not afford to keep up with existing mortgage payments will increase by 49% in 2023, to over 6.1k. This is because most household groups that struggle to make their mortgage payments at present will not be able to afford making them at all. It is likely that they were in another lifestyle segment when they bought the house, but in their new circumstances they cannot afford a mortgage.



<b>Mortgage Affordability 2013</b>				
		15-20k	10-15k	10k-
Pound Stretching Twosomes		9		
Friends Together		418	394	161
Young Optimists		263	293	113
Constrained Solos		732	674	450
Proud Parents Coping Alone		529	991	491
<b>Mortgage Affordability 2023</b>				
	25-30k	18-25k	12-18k	12k-
Pound Stretching Twosomes		11		
Friends Together		460	433	177
Young Optimists		274	304	118
Constrained Solos		835	768	513
Proud Parents Coping Alone	162	581	1,090	540
<b>RED=Number who cannot afford mortgage</b>	<b>Amber = Number Struggling to pay mortgage</b>			

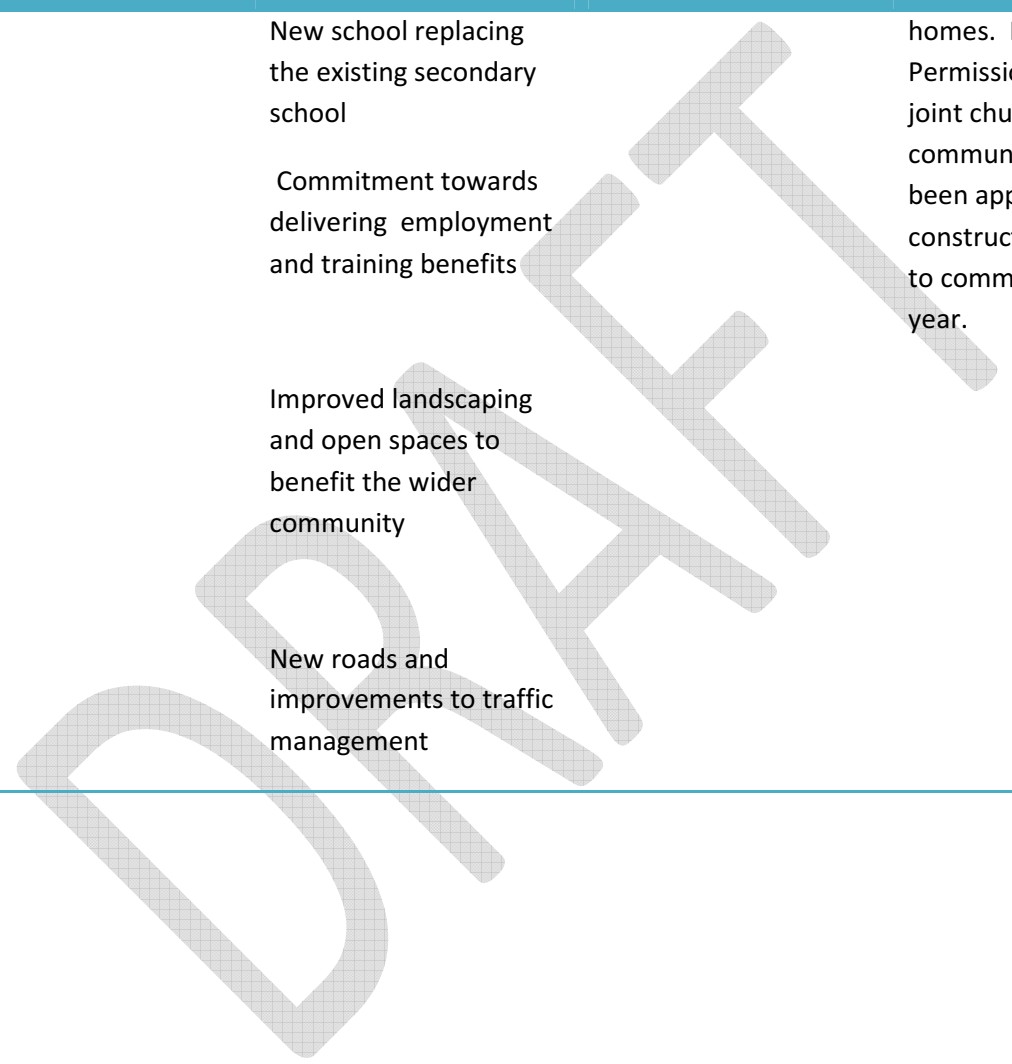
### Appendix 3- Regeneration Schemes in Barnet

Scheme	Housing delivery	Infrastructure delivery	Partners	Status October 14
<b>Brent Cross</b>	Replacing the existing 217 homes with up to 7,500 new homes	BXC North- New Living Bridge and footbridge	BXC North- Hammerson and Standard Life	BXC North- phase 1A an expected start on site is in late 2015 with completion by 2017/18
	BX North- Hammerson is re-providing up 60 new homes-31 social rent 29 private/shared equity	Major Transport improvements  BXC South- new schools and community facilities	RP to be selected by end of 2014  BXC South- Council is undertaking a procurement process to select its preferred development partner for this scheme. Procurement will be concluded in early spring 2015	BXC North- start on site tbc
<b>Dollis Valley</b>	441 existing properties that will/have been demolished,  and replaced with a new 631 unit scheme -	New Community Centre  New Community Nursery School	Countryside & London & Quadrant	Works started 4 <sup>th</sup> Feb 2014 estimated completion within 7 years)  First occupation - Spring

Scheme	Housing delivery	Infrastructure delivery	Partners	Status October 14
	230 social rent 20 intermediate 381 Private Sale			2015
<b>Grahame Park</b>	Replace 1,314 existing homes with 2,977 new homes: 889 social rent, 165 low cost home ownership and 1,923 private units  Stage B is to be reviewed	Barnet College re-location, major highways and infrastructure works, replacement library, Children's Centre and Centre for Independent Living, re-provision of Health Centre and Community Centre. New Heybourne Park	Genesis Housing Association (Choices for Grahame Park)	Phase 0 completed 32 new homes  Phase 0 completed 39 new homes  Phase 1a completed 319 new homes.  Phase 1b(i) – On site due to complete 31 <sup>st</sup> March 2015.  Lanacre Avenue Shift on site and due to complete early 2015.

Scheme	Housing delivery	Infrastructure delivery	Partners	Status October 14
<b>West Hendon</b>	<p>Demolition of existing estate and part of West Hendon Broadway</p> <p>Creation of approximately 2,000 new homes:</p> <p>219 social rent</p> <p>287 low cost home ownership</p> <p>1494 private sale</p>	<p>Creating linkages through from the estate to West Hendon Broadway and Welsh Harp reservoir</p> <p>New education &amp; community facilities as well as retail and commercial space</p> <p>Appropriate landscaping, open space and parking provision</p>	Barratt Metropolitan LLP	Phase 3a is on site and will be completed in April 2015. The whole scheme is due to be completed by 2029.
<b>Stonegrove</b>	Replacing the existing 603 homes with 937 new mixed use housing; comprising of 417 affordable units and 520 private units	Joint Church and Community Centre replacing existing St Peter's Church and hall, including a new community hall	Barratt London Family Mosaic Barnet Homes	Pilot phase delivering 62 new social housing units have been completed. A new school has been completed. 450 homes have been delivered including 314 affordable

Scheme	Housing delivery	Infrastructure delivery	Partners	Status October 14
		<p>New school replacing the existing secondary school</p> <p>Commitment towards delivering employment and training benefits</p> <p>Improved landscaping and open spaces to benefit the wider community</p> <p>New roads and improvements to traffic management</p>		<p>homes. Planning Permission for new joint church and community facility has been approved with construction expected to commence in new year.</p>







# Housing Strategy Evidence Base

June 2014

# Content

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# Population

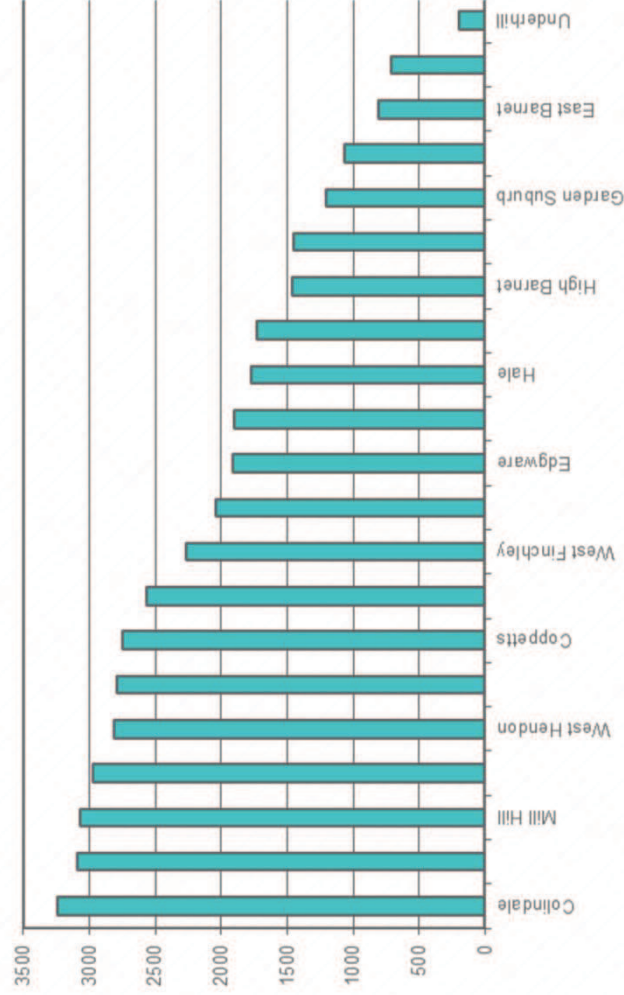


# High rate of population growth between 2001 and 2011 - Growth highest in West of Borough

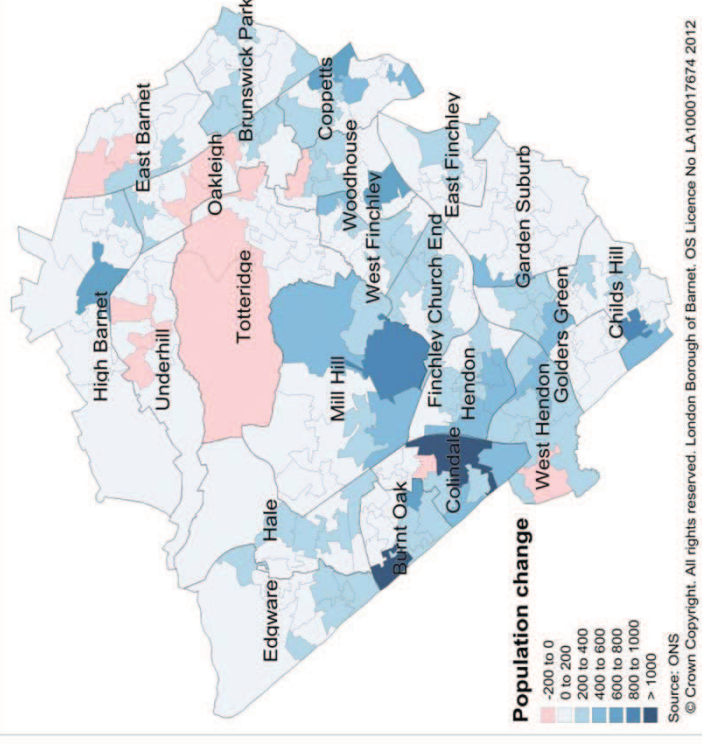
Top 5 wards by population 2001	
Childs Hill	17,261
Golders Green	16,248
Underhill	15,721
Hale	15,663
Woodhouse	15,533

Top 5 wards by population 2011	
Childs Hill	20,049
Golders Green	18,818
Hendon	18,472
Mill Hill	18,451
Burnt Oak	18,257

Change from 2001 to 2011



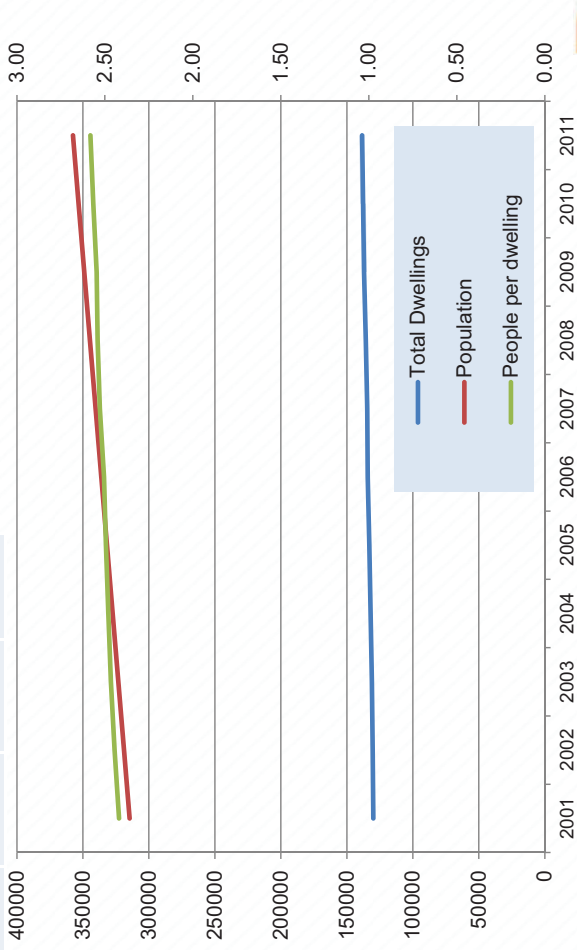
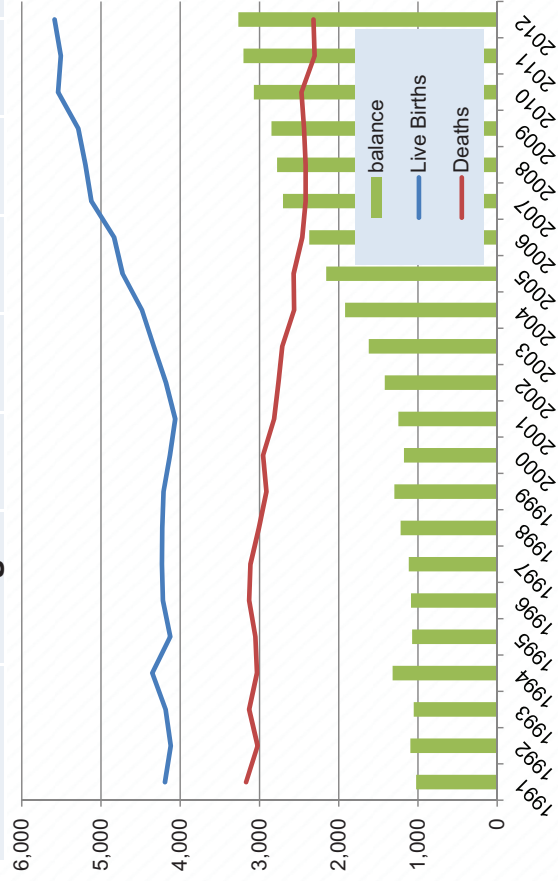
Population change between the 2001 and 2011 censuses, by LSOA



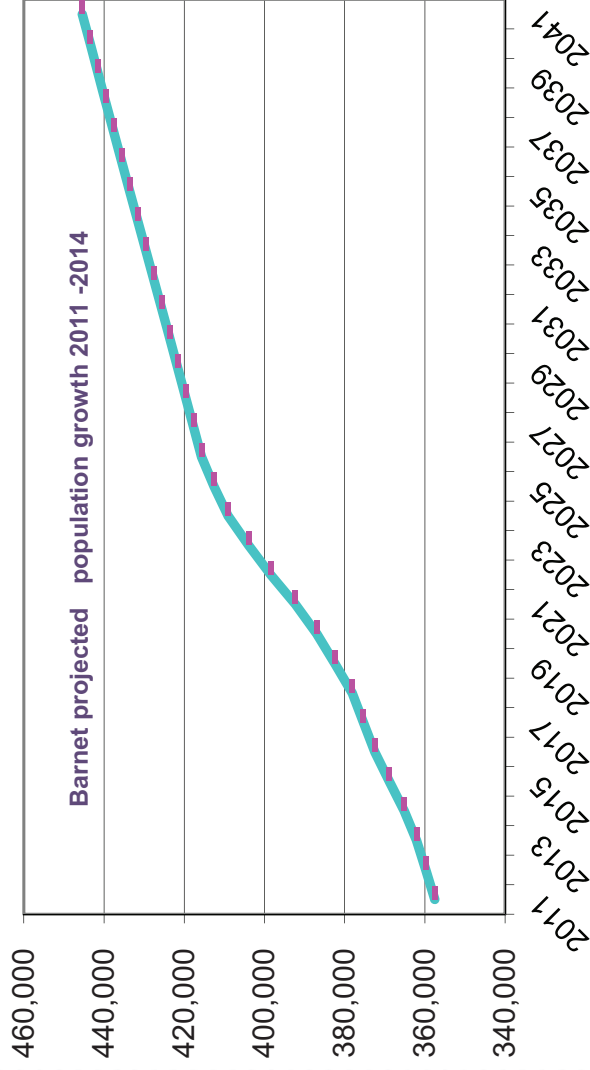
# Growth to date has been driven by high birth rate and international migration

Barnet Migration Figures	2003/4		2004/5		2005/6		2006/7		2007/8		2008/9		2009/10		2010/11		2011/12		Overall
	4	5	6	7	8	9	0	1	2	3	4	5	6	7	8	9	0	1	
International In	6400	8000	6600	8300	7700	7600	7000	8100	8100	6800	66500								
International Out	2800	3200	3500	4200	3200	3900	3700	3300	2900	30700									
<b>Net International</b>	<b>3600</b>	<b>4800</b>	<b>3100</b>	<b>4100</b>	<b>4500</b>	<b>3700</b>	<b>3300</b>	<b>4800</b>	<b>3900</b>	<b>35800</b>									
Internal In	18900	18800	20100	20200	19800	20700	21100	19900	20800	18030									
Internal Out	21900	21200	21600	22300	22400	20100	21100	21300	21600	19350									
<b>Net Internal</b>	<b>-3000</b>	<b>-2400</b>	<b>-1500</b>	<b>-2100</b>	<b>-2600</b>	<b>600</b>	<b>0</b>	<b>-1400</b>	<b>-800</b>	<b>13200</b>									
<b>Net Change</b>	<b>600</b>	<b>2400</b>	<b>1600</b>	<b>2000</b>	<b>1900</b>	<b>4300</b>	<b>3300</b>	<b>3400</b>	<b>3100</b>	<b>22600</b>									

The number of people per dwelling has increased from 2.4 to 2.6 between 2001 and 2011



# Barnet's Population will continue to grow across most age groups



Barnet's population in 2013

**362,065**

Barnet's projected population by 2041

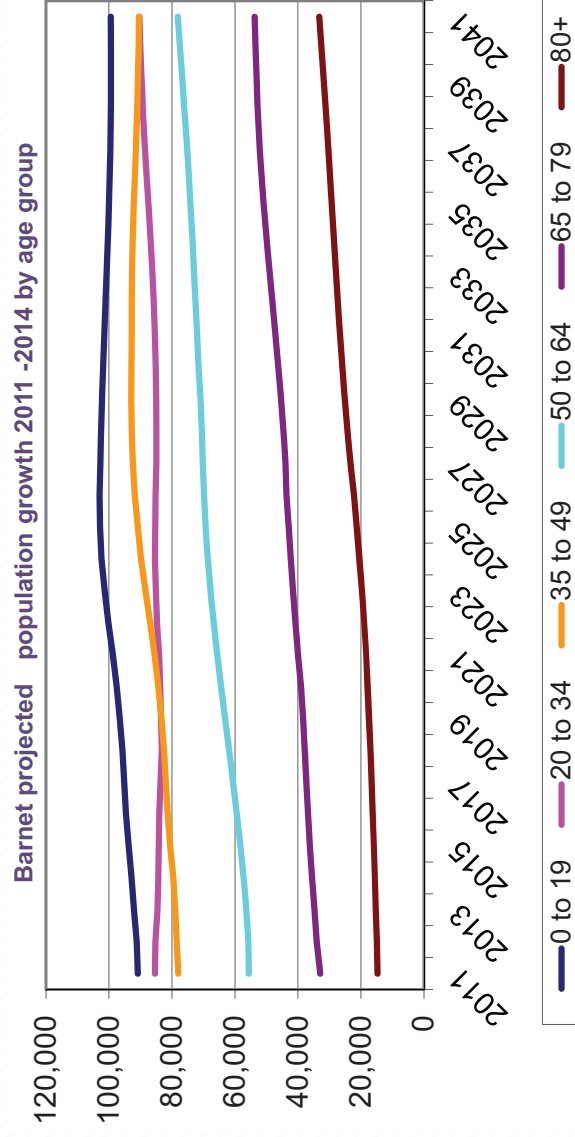
**445,422**

Projected increase in Barnet's population – equivalent to town the size of **Harlow or Stevenage**

**83,357**

**67,400** People aged over 70 in Barnet by 2041 – **double** that of 2013

**73,000** Barnet's school-age population by 2026 – **20%** higher than in 2013



# Ward populations by 2041

**128%** Projected population growth in  
Colindale,  
&  
**98%** Golders Green

.....significant housing growth through regeneration expected in both areas.

Also projected to see relatively large population increases in

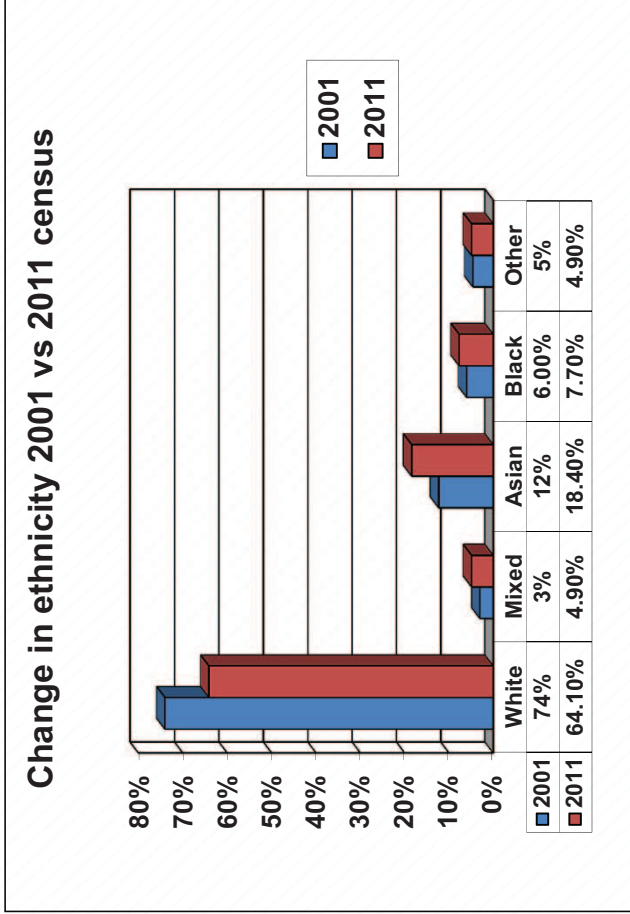
**41%** Mill Hill  
&  
**37%** West Hendon

Ward	2011	2021	2031	2041	% increase
Colindale	17,147	29,197	37,550	39,176	128%
Golders Green	18,872	25,369	35,652	37,285	98%
Mill Hill	18,517	24,051	25,056	26,186	41%
West Hendon	17,448	20,502	22,889	23,940	37%
Edgware	16,781	18,274	19,503	20,480	22%
Childs Hill	20,105	21,422	22,986	24,127	20%
Finchley Church End	15,774	16,745	17,253	18,080	15%
Totteridge	15,212	15,952	16,695	17,495	15%
West Finchley	16,588	17,157	18,071	18,971	14%
Brunswick Park	16,449	16,857	17,775	18,634	13%
East Barnet	16,191	16,550	17,124	17,895	11%
Hendon	18,518	19,157	19,592	20,544	11%
Woodhouse	17,633	18,246	18,727	19,578	11%
High Barnet	15,360	15,761	16,176	16,960	10%
Oakleigh	15,866	15,953	16,710	17,511	10%
Garden Suburb	15,985	16,054	16,562	17,422	9%
Burnt Oak	18,273	18,274	18,981	19,748	8%
East Finchley	16,044	16,238	16,645	17,404	8%
Underhill	15,974	16,123	16,490	17,207	8%
Hale	17,495	17,315	17,772	18,629	6%
Coppetts	17,305	17,080	17,363	18,148	5%
<b>All</b>	<b>357,537</b>	<b>392,277</b>	<b>425,572</b>	<b>445,420</b>	<b>25%</b>

# Barnet has become more diverse

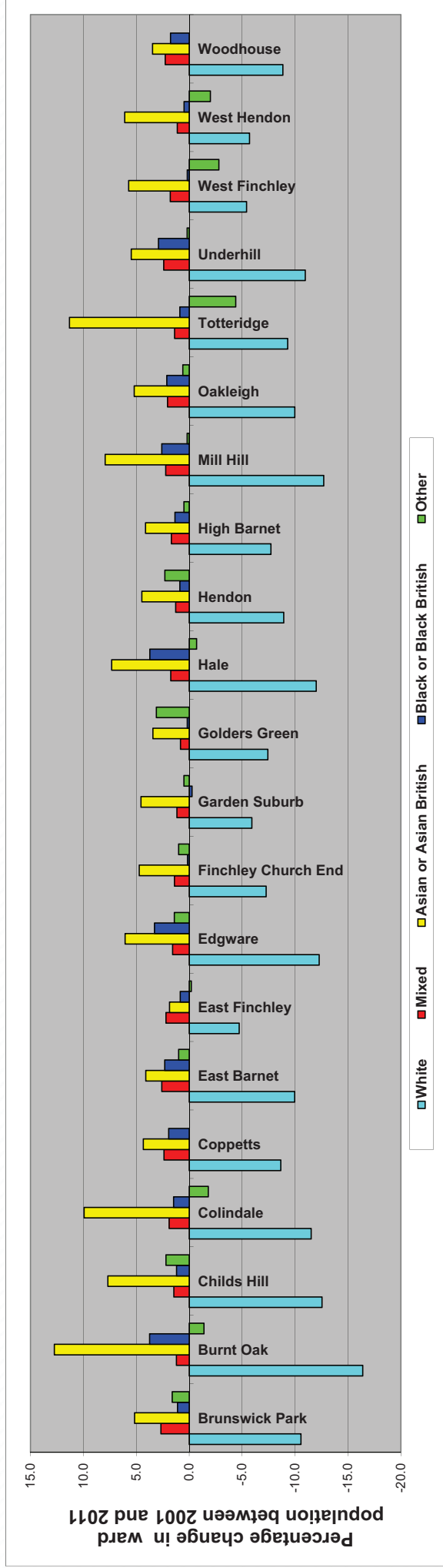
**143** languages other than English spoken by pupils in Barnet schools (January school census 2011)

Barnet is getting more diverse, driven by both more births among BAME communities and an increase of migrants.



Ethnic groups as percentage of population increasing across all wards

White groups as percentage of population falling across all wards.





# Higher concentration of BAME ethnic groups in social housing

Tenure	Total	White	Mixed ethnic group	Asian	Black	Other
Owned outright	82,008	74.5%	2.5%	18.1%	2.2%	2.7%
Owned with a mortgage or loan or shared ownership	124,058	66.5%	4.6%	20.1%	5.0%	3.7%
<b>All owned</b>	<b>206,066</b>	<b>69.7%</b>	<b>3.8%</b>	<b>19.3%</b>	<b>3.9%</b>	<b>3.3%</b>
Rented from Barnet Homes	28,752	53.4%	7.7%	12.6%	19.8%	6.5%
Other Social Rented	18,508	49.9%	8.5%	13.5%	22.2%	5.9%
<b>All Social Rented</b>	<b>47,260</b>	<b>52.0%</b>	<b>8.0%</b>	<b>12.9%</b>	<b>20.7%</b>	<b>6.3%</b>
<b>Private Rented</b>	<b>99,271</b>	<b>57.8%</b>	<b>5.6%</b>	<b>19.8%</b>	<b>9.4%</b>	<b>7.5%</b>
<b>All categories</b>	<b>352,597</b>	<b>64.0%</b>	<b>4.8%</b>	<b>18.6%</b>	<b>7.7%</b>	<b>4.9%</b>

Disproportionately high number of people living in socially rented housing are from BAME ethnicities and in particular Black ethnicities; more than 20% of people identifying themselves as black live in socially rented housing, while only 4% of black people are owner-occupiers.

# The way people live is changing too

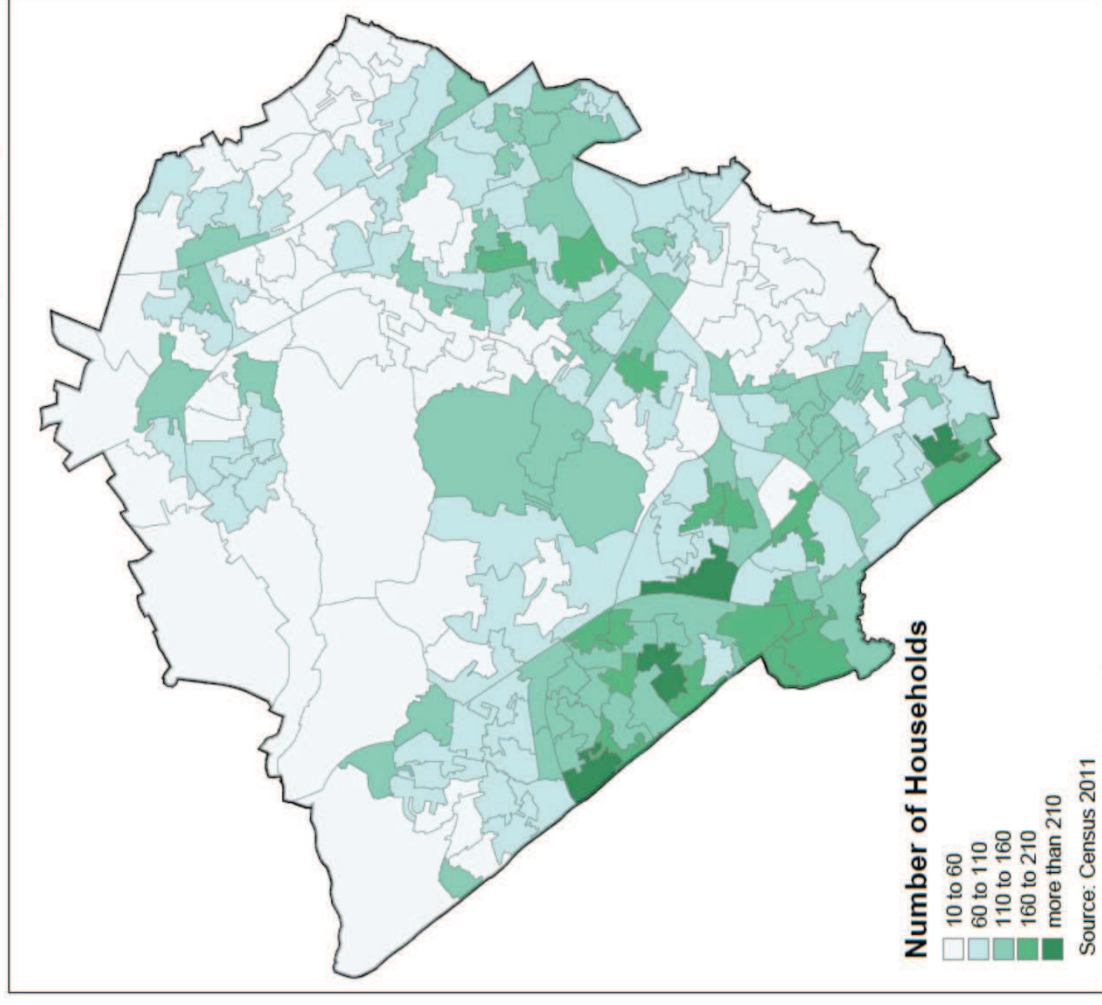
There are **135,900** households in Barnet with an average of 2.6 people per household (*and falling*)

One in three households resides in a *flat* making these the most common type of dwelling

Movement towards smaller, single person households;  
**81,000** individuals living alone.

Lone parent households expected to increase by **82%**

Number of households with more than 1.5 people per bedroom



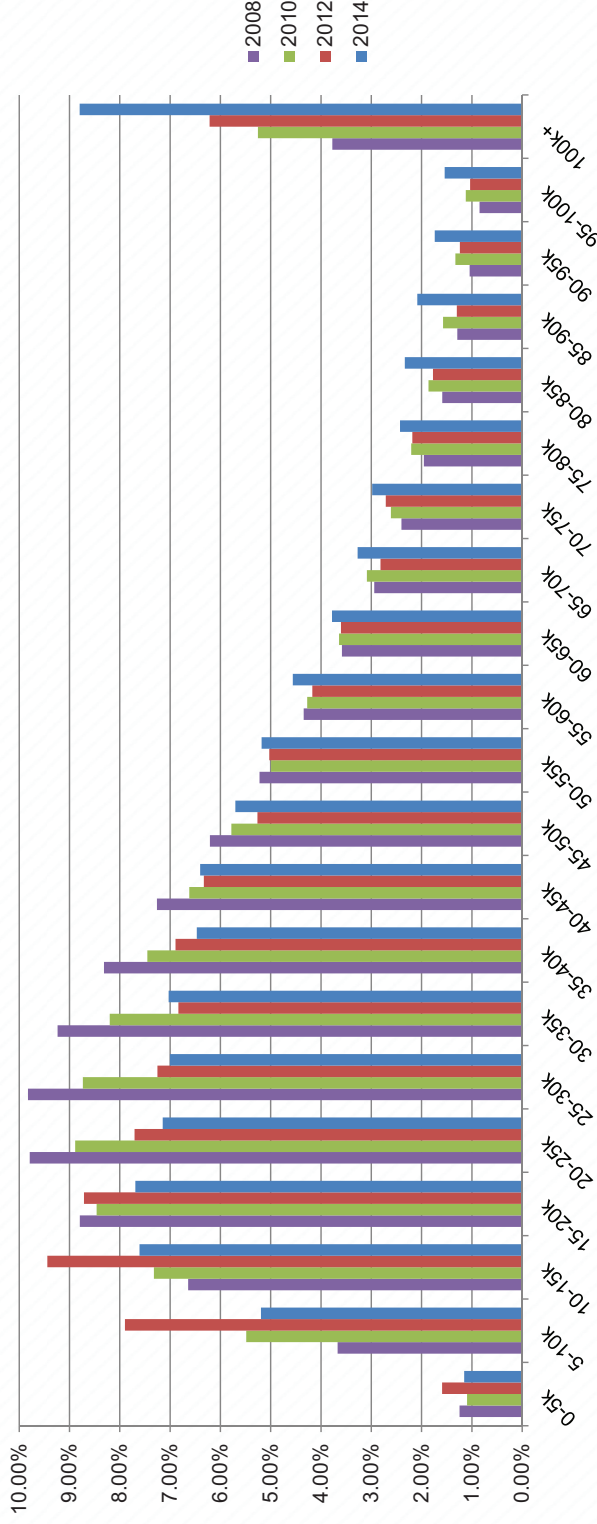
# Economy



[dreamstime.com](http://dreamstime.com)

# A prosperous borough...

Distribution of unequivalised income in £5k bands



The average household income in Barnet was lowest in 2012. The greatest increase since 2012 has been seen in households earning £100k+.

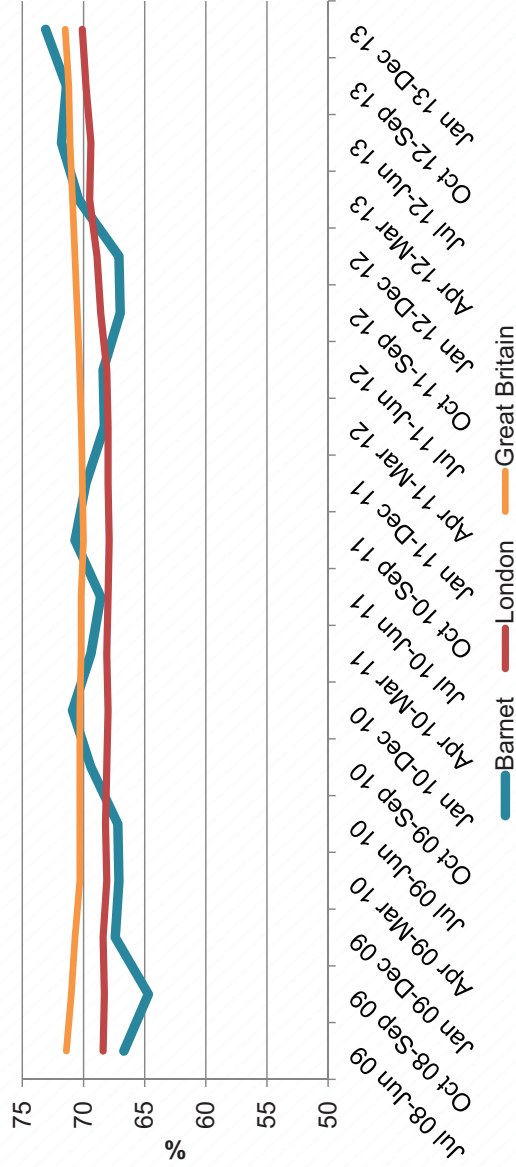
Between 2012 and 2014, Barnet's average household income increased by 14.5%, compared to the Great Britain average which increased by 0.2%.

Nominal Values		2008	2010	2012	2014
Unequivalised*	Barnet	£35,475	£36,213	£35,412	£40,550
	Great Britain	£28,698	£28,445	£28,413	£28,467
Equivalent*	Barnet	£31,454	£32,129	£33,579	£38,147
	Great Britain	£25,486	£26,518	£27,580	£27,805

\*Equivalent income estimates take into account the size and composition of a household and reflect the idea that a larger household would require a higher income than a small household in order to achieve an equivalent standard of living

# Employment

Employment rate- 16 to 64 years

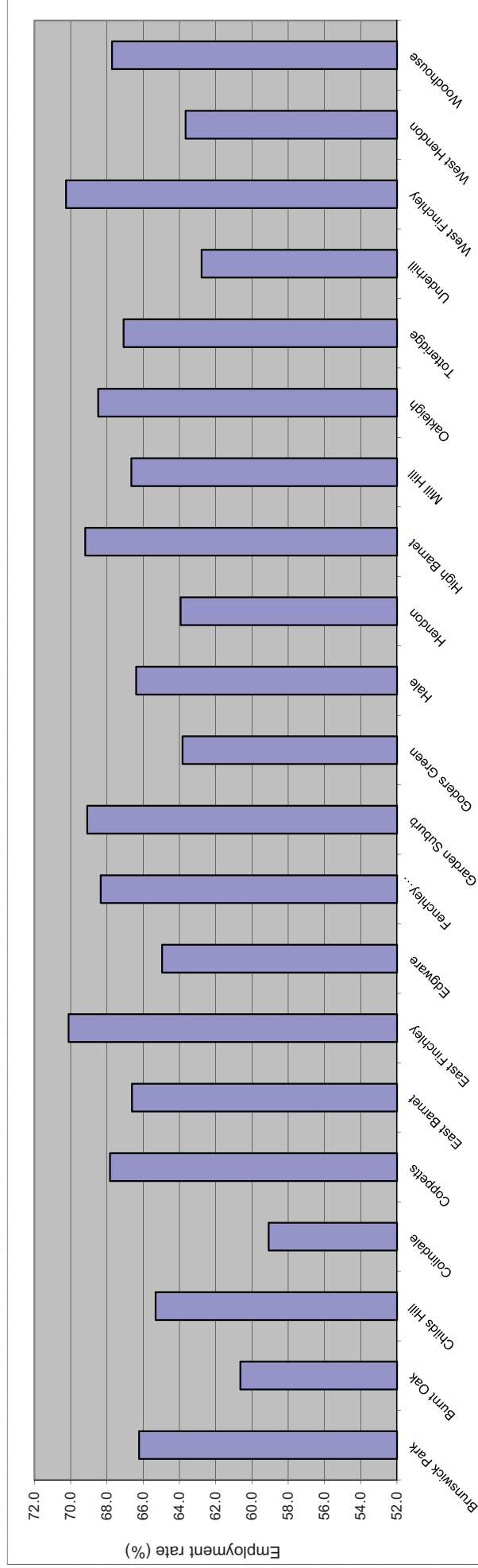


Source: Annual Population Survey, Dec 2013

Employment rates in Barnet have recovered from a dip in 2009

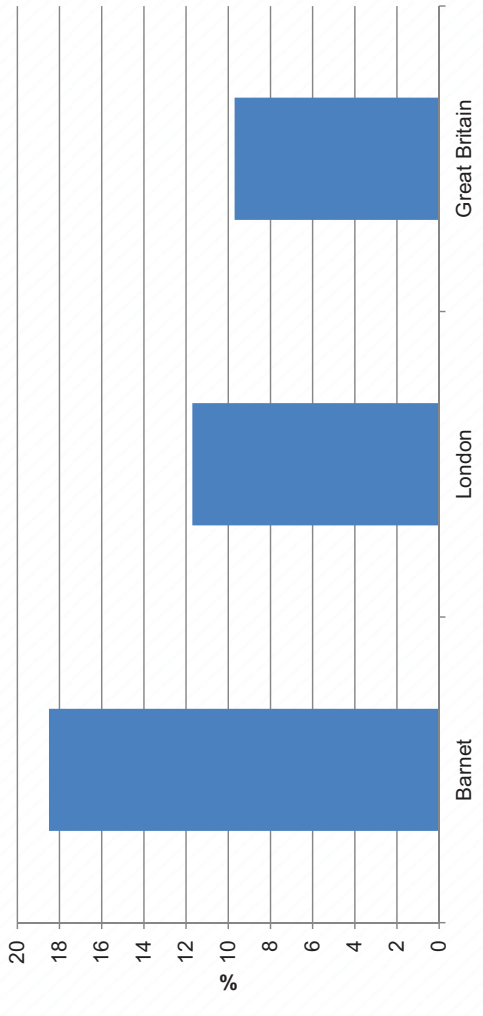
Employment rates in Barnet rose faster than the national average (July 2012 to December 2013)

There is big disparity b/w employment rates of wards – e.g. East Finchley (70%); Colindale (59%)



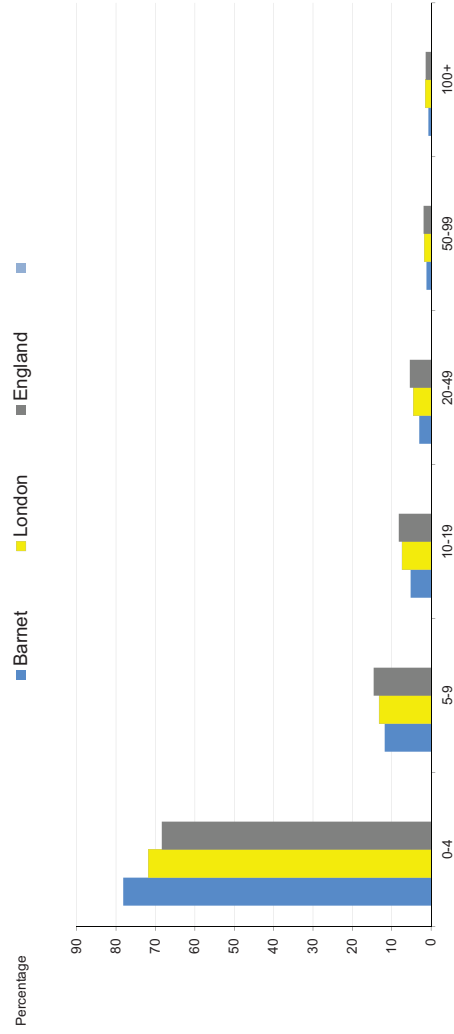
# Employment

% self-employed (16 to 64 years)



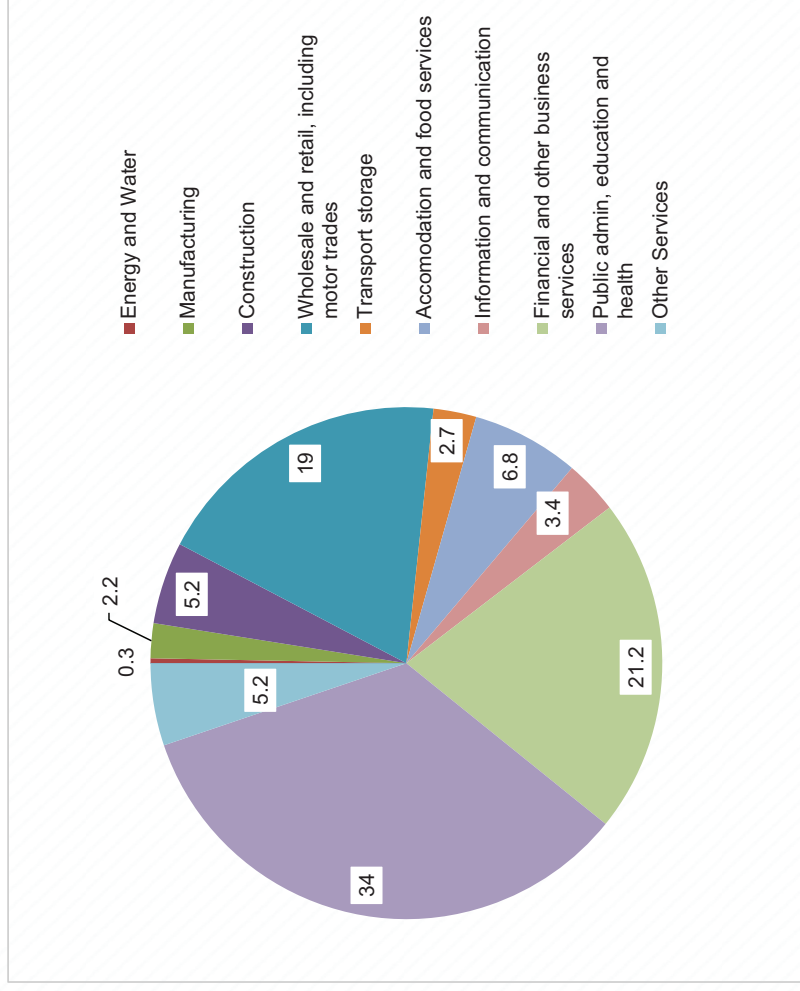
## Second highest rate of self employment in London & small companies as employer

Local units in VAT and/or PAYE based enterprises, March 2012



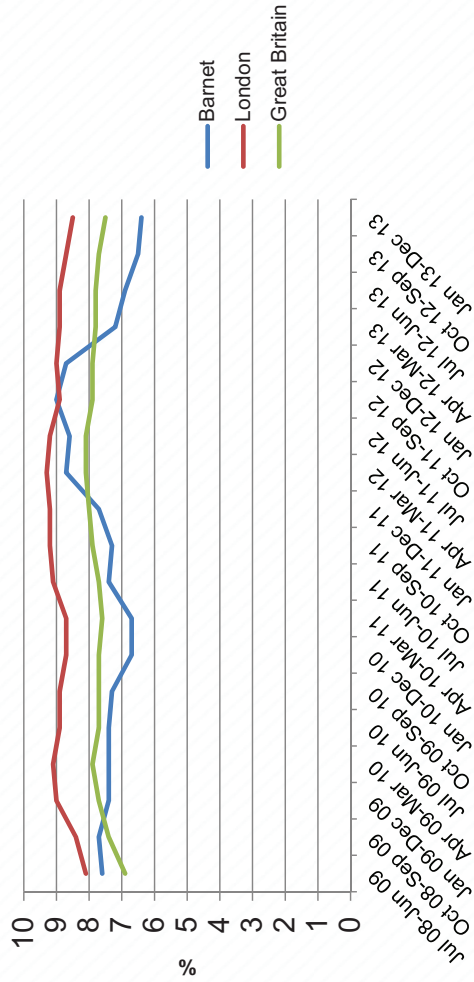
Source: Office for National Statistics

## A high % of the working age population employed in finance and the public sector (inc. Education & Health)

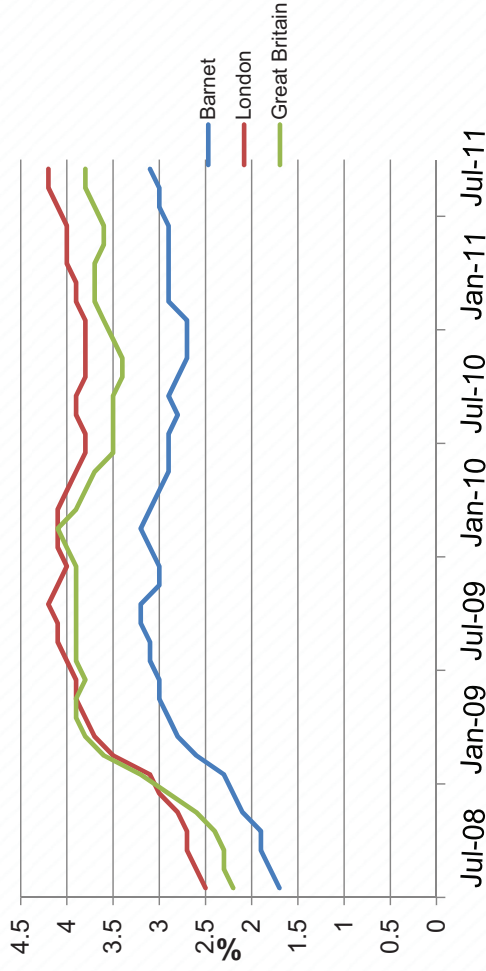


# Unemployment

Unemployment rate as % working age population



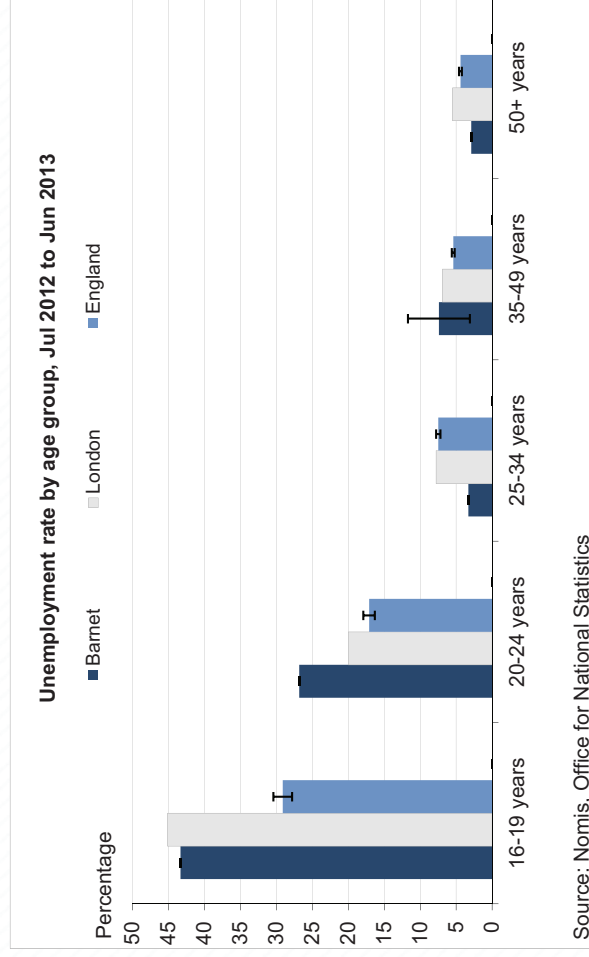
Claimant count rate



Barnet did not escape the effects of the economic downturn.

In the year to June 2012, 8.6% of the local population was believed to be unemployed – before recovering to 6.9% in the year to June 2013 but still up from the equivalent period in 2008 when local unemployment stood at 4.8%

Unemployment highest amongst under 25 age groups



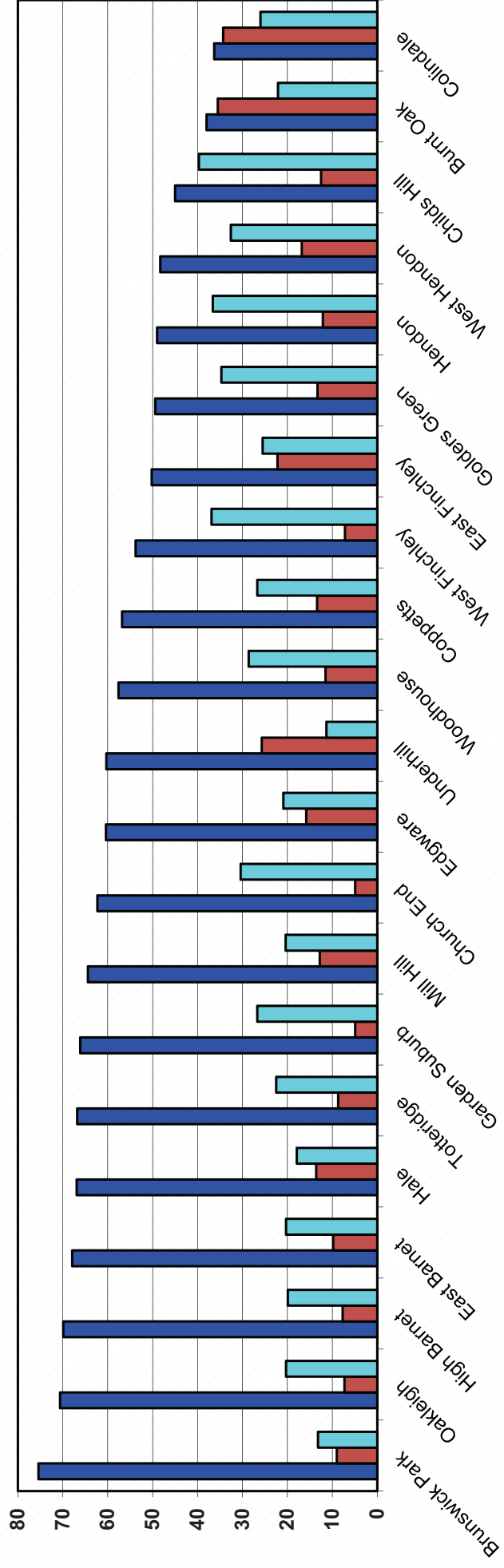
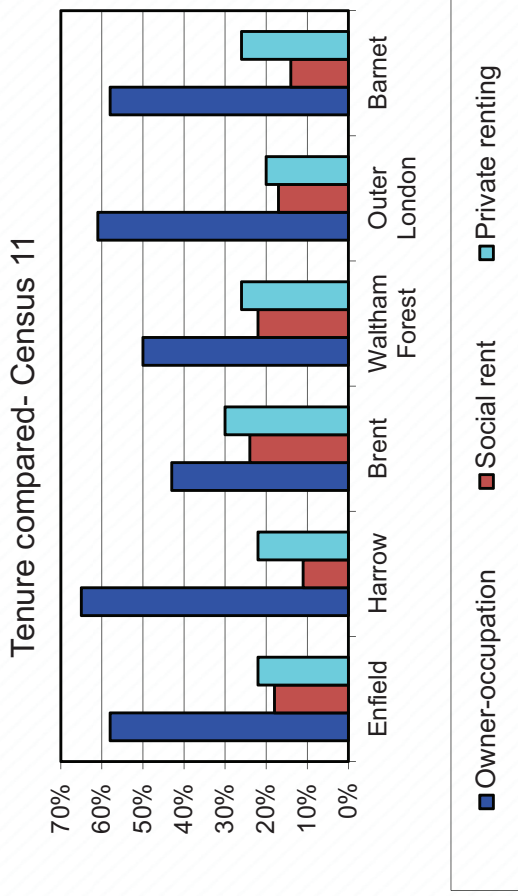
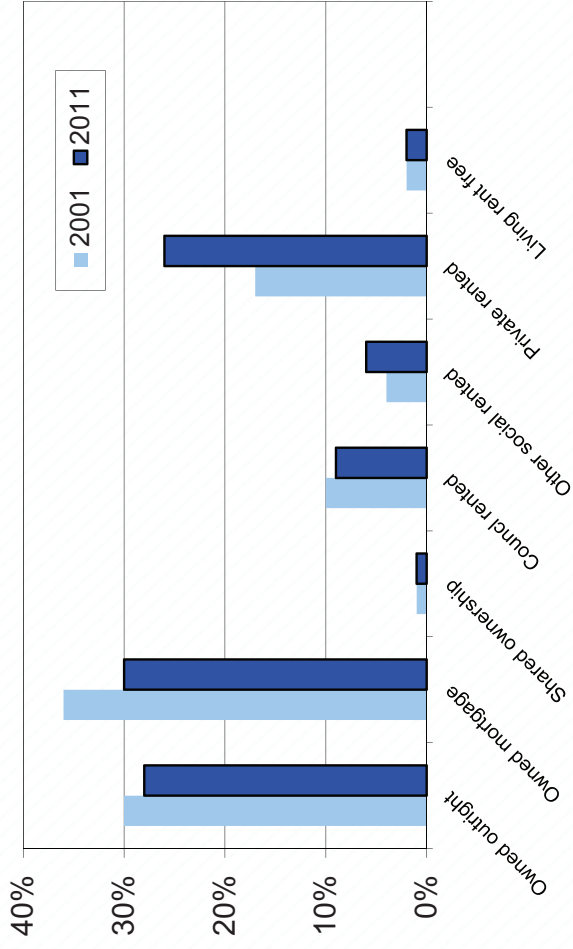
Source: Nomis, Office for National Statistics

# The Housing Market

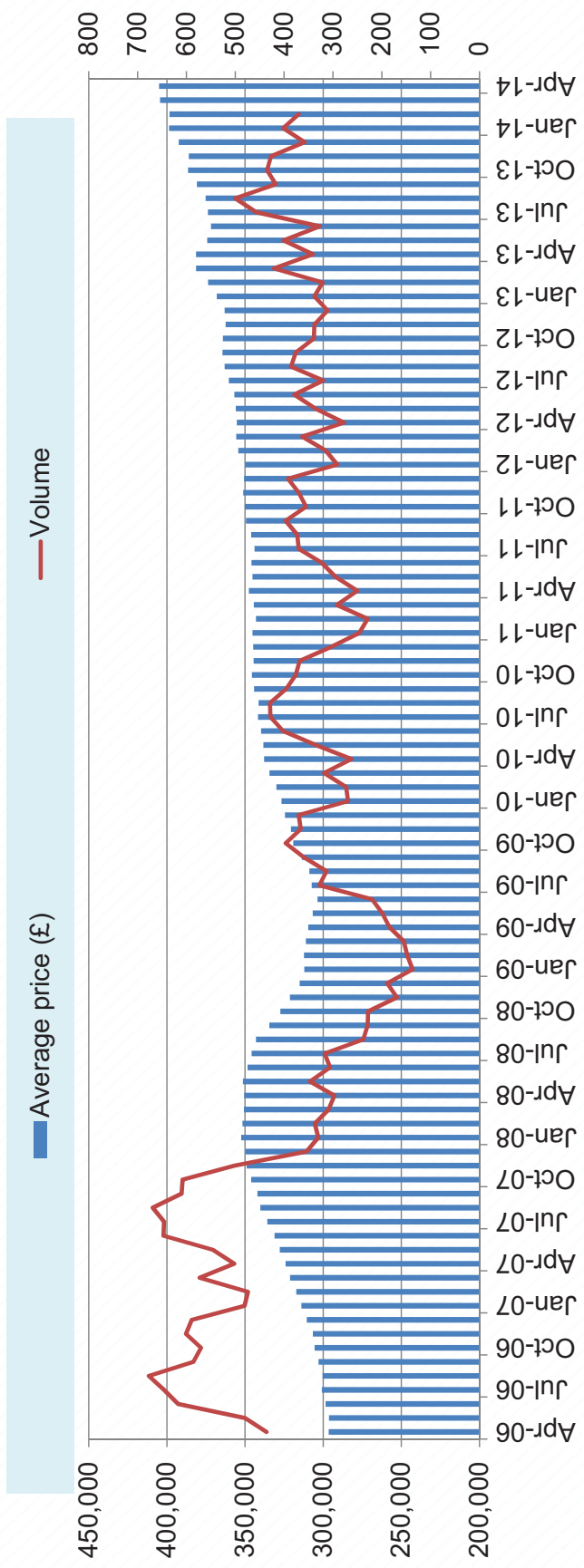




# Private Renting up, Home Ownership down



# House prices in Barnet have recovered but sales volumes have not.....

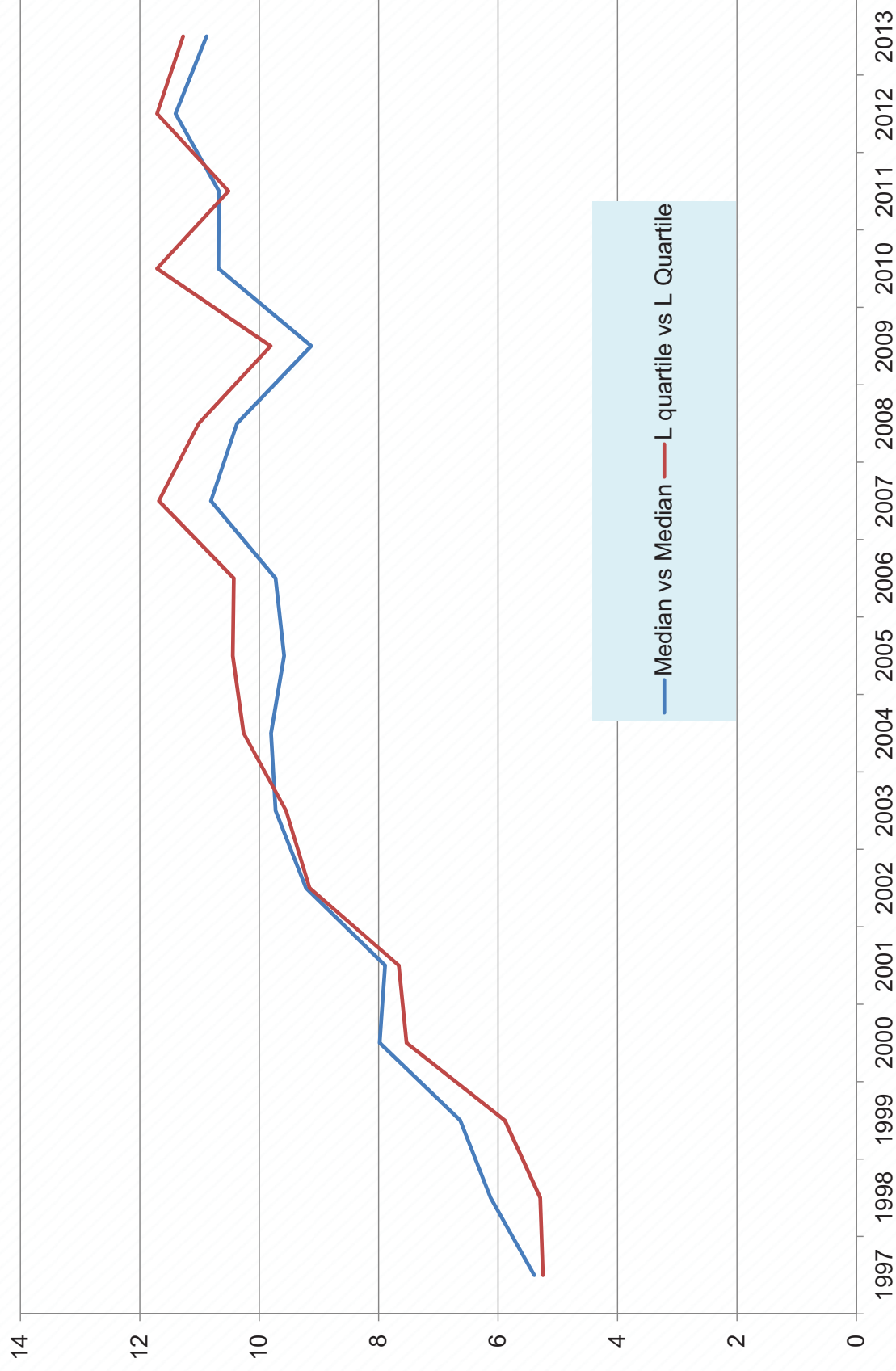


Median house price in Barnet rose by **6.2%** during the year to April 2014. The Barnet median house price in April 2014, **£405,073** is nearly **12X** the Barnet median income.

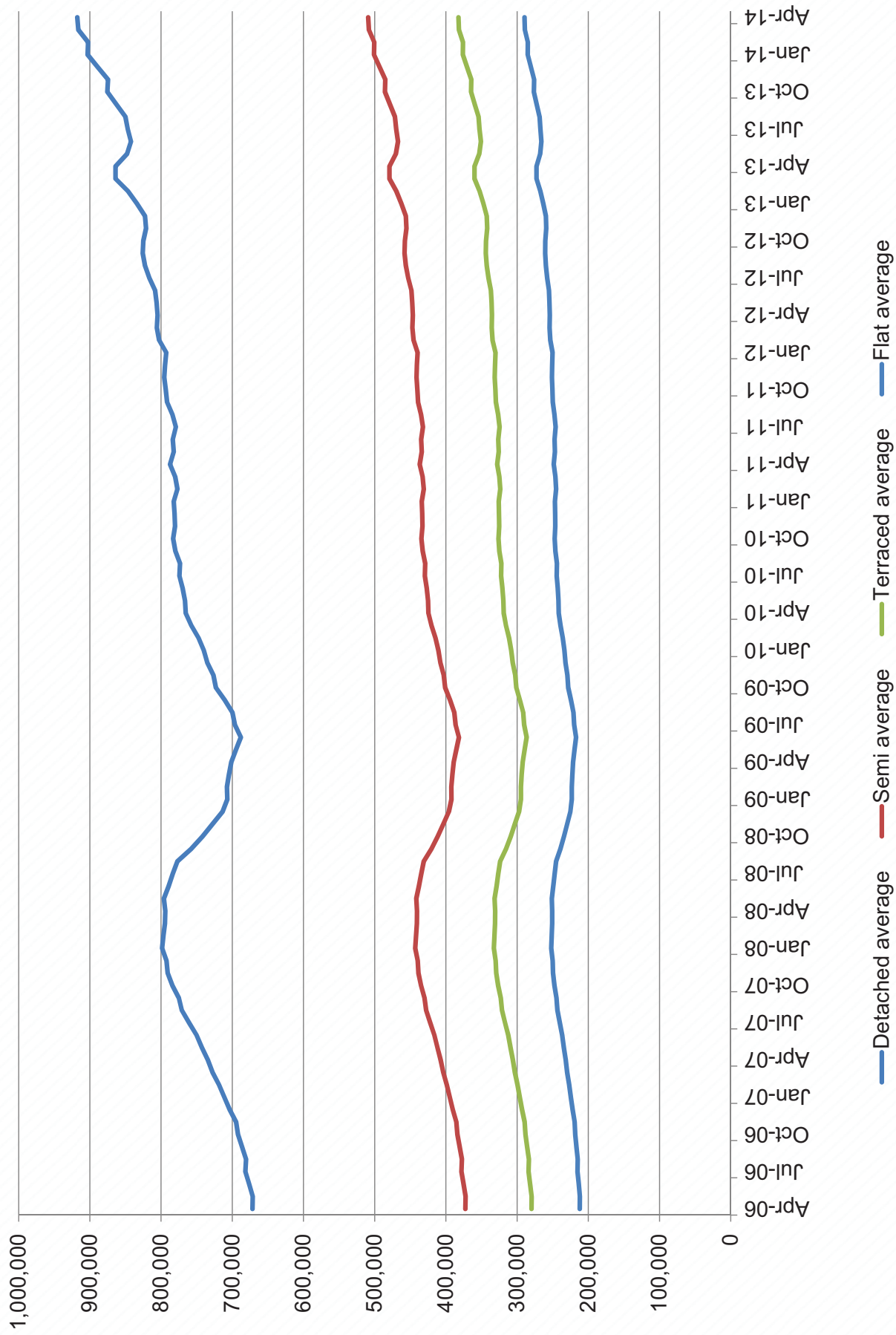
Top 5 wards mean house prices 2012	
Garden Suburb	£1,070,407
Childs Hill	£829,236
Totteridge	£620,502
Golders Green	£536,558
Finchley Church End	£509,322

Bottom 5 wards mean house prices 2012	
West Hendon	£342,540
Coppetts	£341,357
East Barnet	£335,208
Colindale	£266,551
Burnt Oak	£232,425

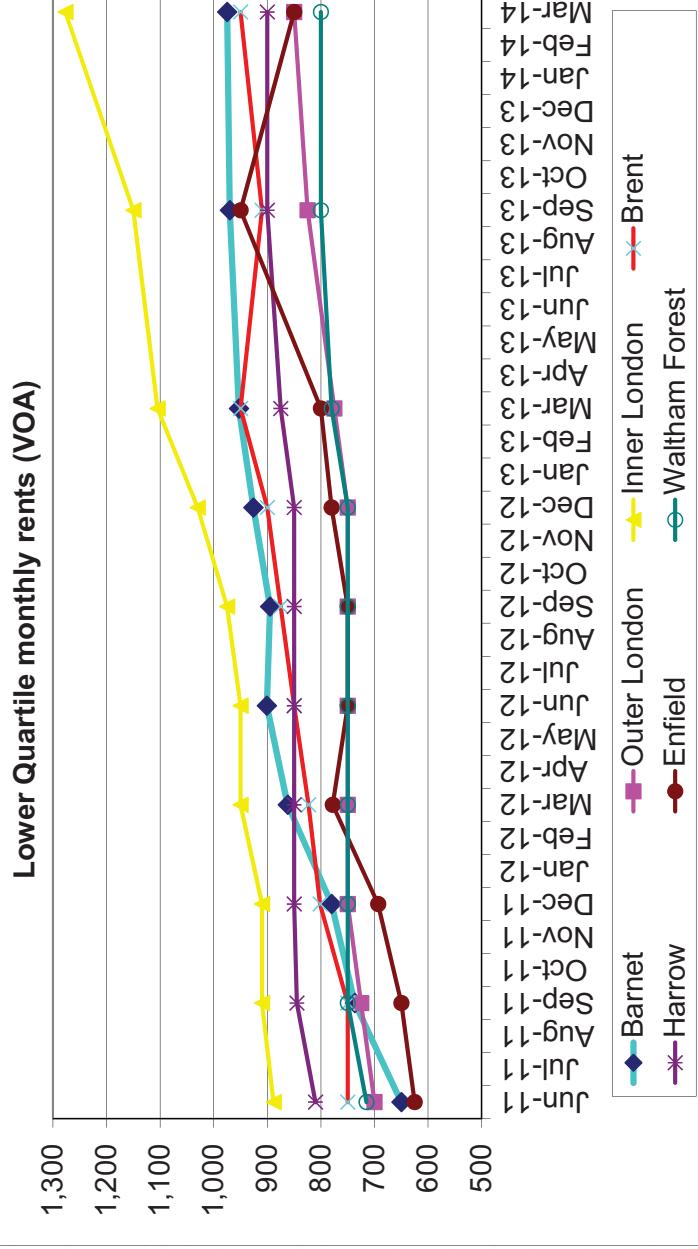
# House price to income ratios in Barnet



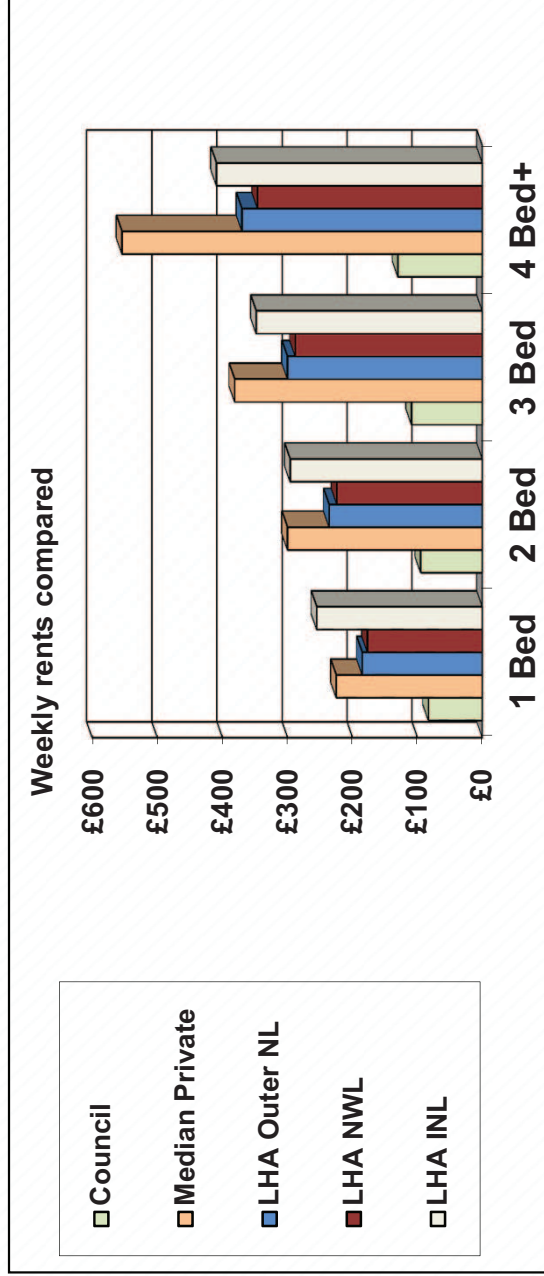
# Average price 'dip' and subsequent 'recovery' reflected across all property sizes..



# Private sector rents have increased faster in Barnet



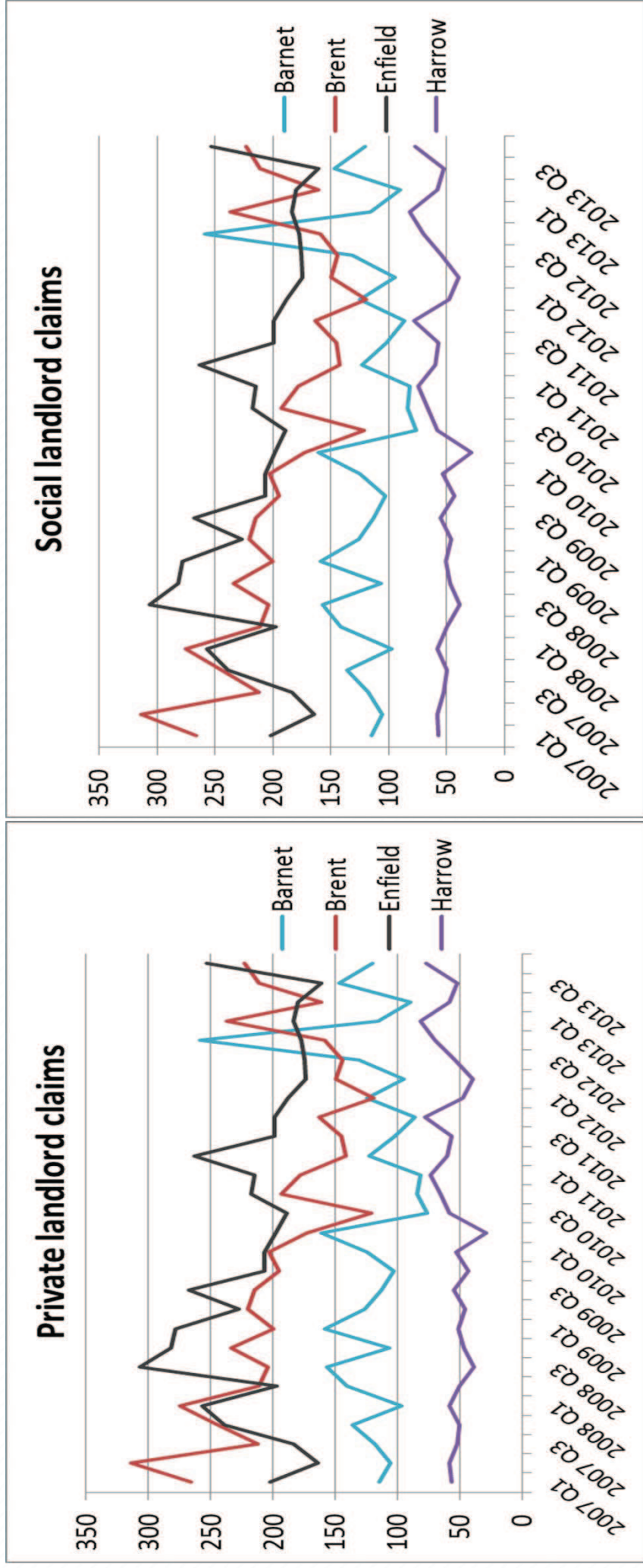
Barnet lower quartile private rents have increased by £325 between June 2011 and March 2014. Barnet was below the average for Outer London and is now the 4<sup>th</sup> most expensive outer London borough



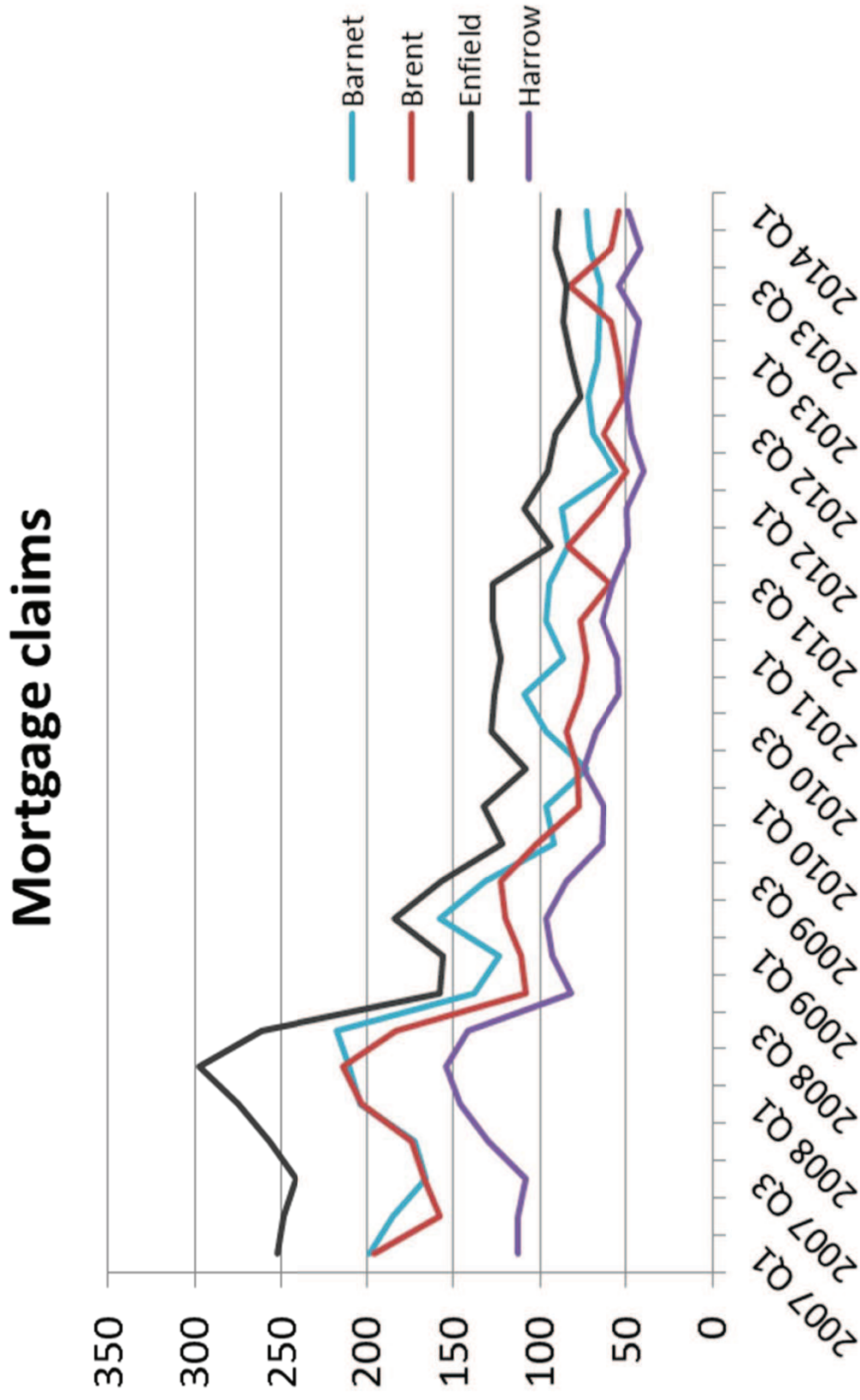
Weekly council rents are approximately 30% of median private sector rents

Median private sector rents are higher than Local housing allowance rates in most areas

# Landlord possession claims similar to neighbouring boroughs



# Mortgage possession rates have fallen

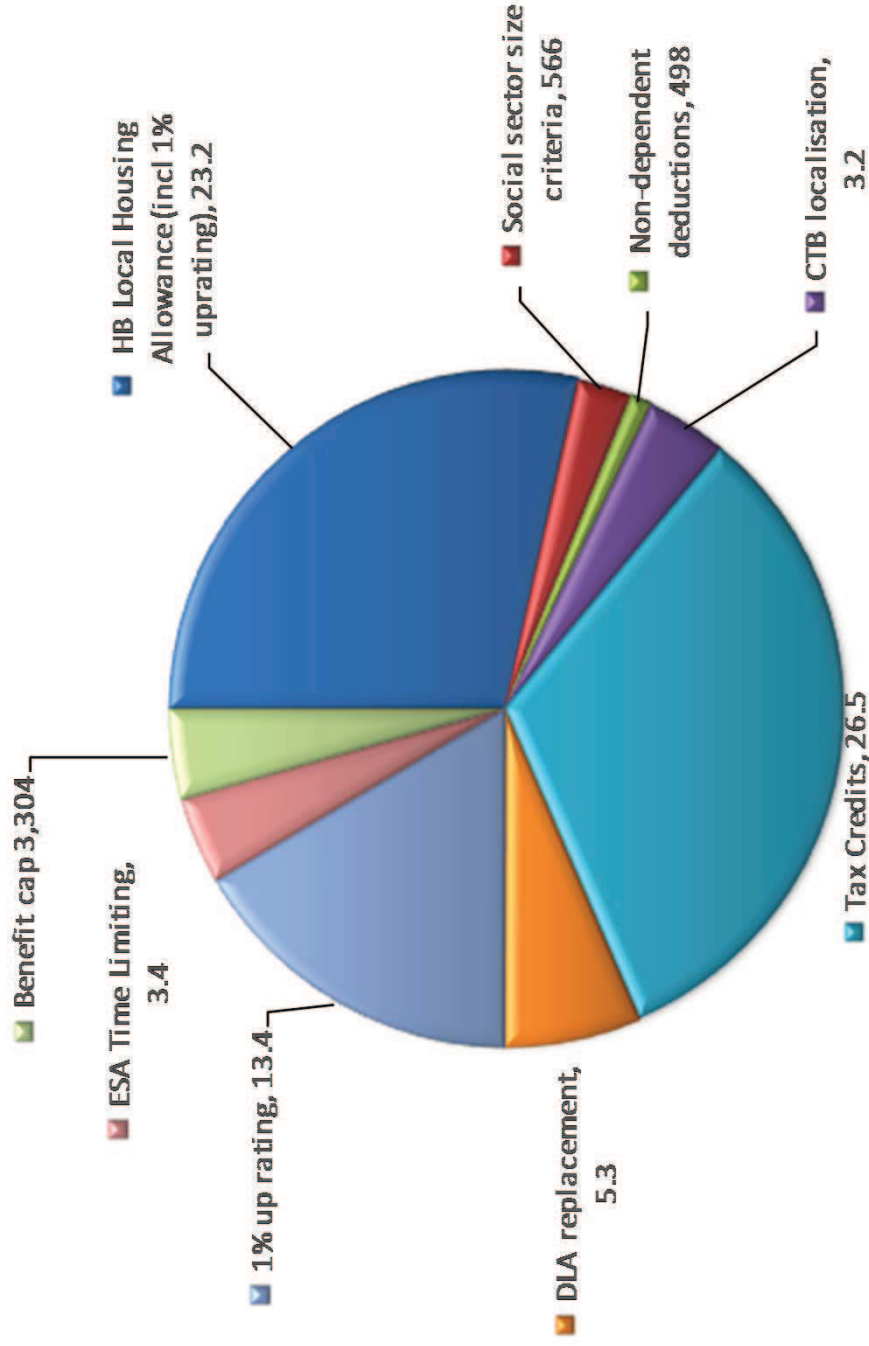






# Broad impact of welfare reforms in Barnet

Welfare reform impacts, 2015/16 (£m)

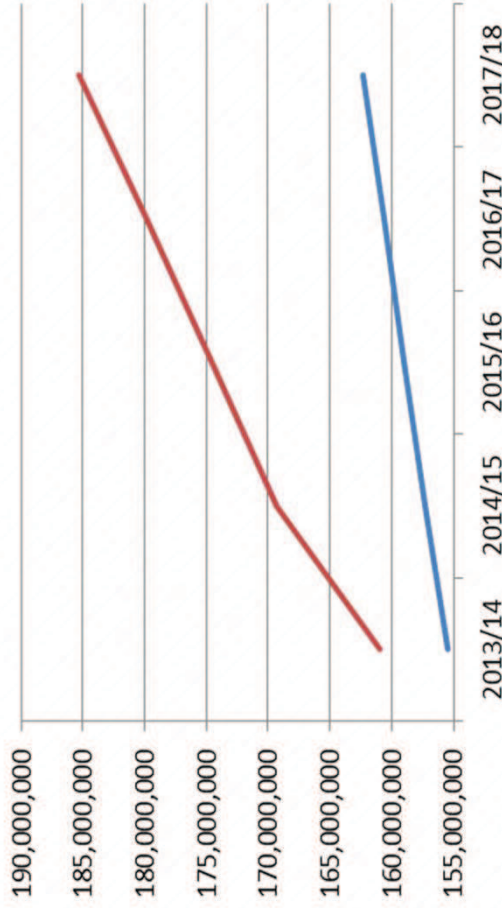
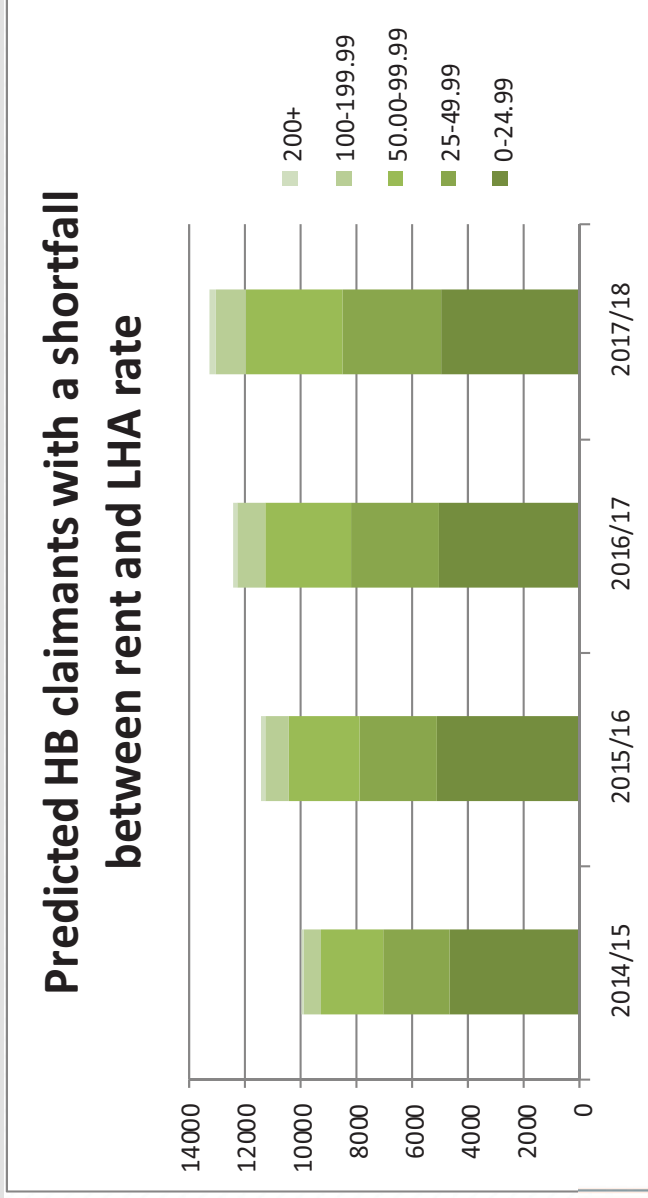


Barnet is in the **top 10%** of **325 English LAs** for 3 key indicators:

- **7<sup>th</sup>** biggest loser for working age households claiming benefit
- **12<sup>th</sup>** biggest loser on spare room subsidy
- **16<sup>th</sup>** biggest loser on HB LHA

# The reality of the housing situation in Barnet makes rent increasingly unaffordable

In Feb 2014 there were **over 9,000** households with a shortfall between their LHA rate and their rent.



Rents rose 9% in Barnet in 2012/13 and LHA rates are set to rise just 4% a year from April '14.( some areas this will be 1%)

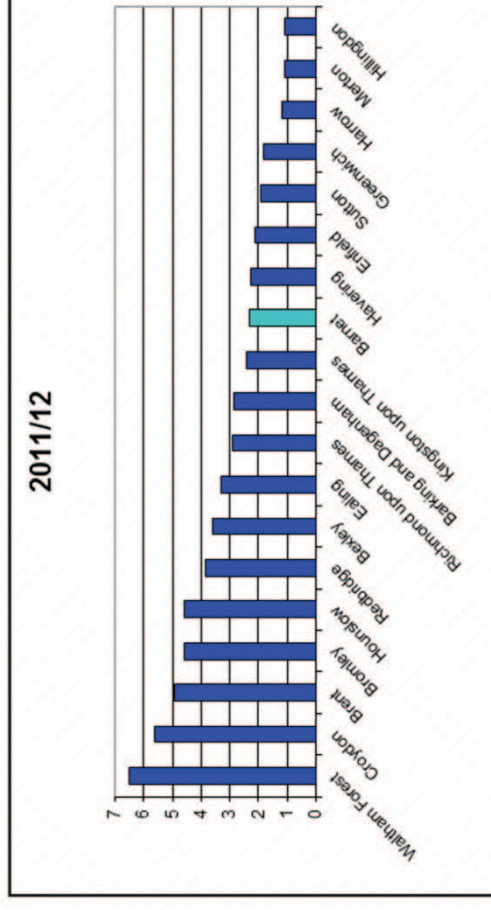
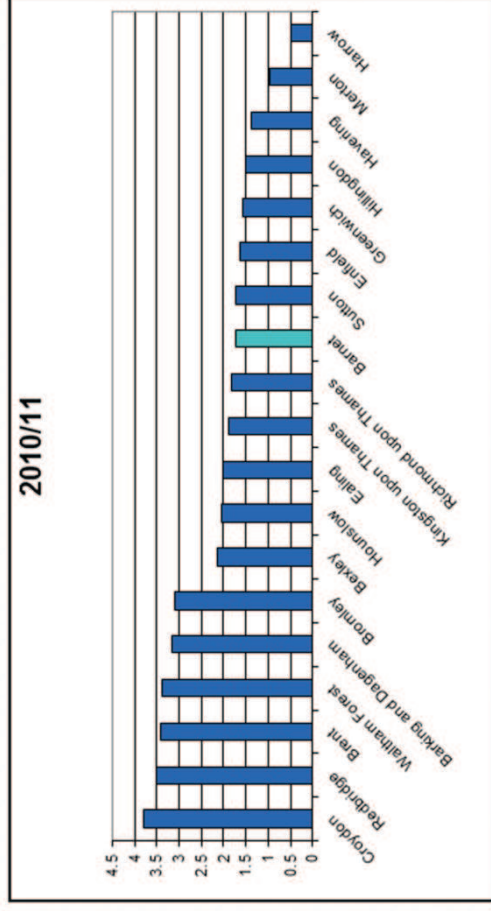
by 2017 **Over 4,000**

households in Barnet could have a shortfall of £50 or more a week

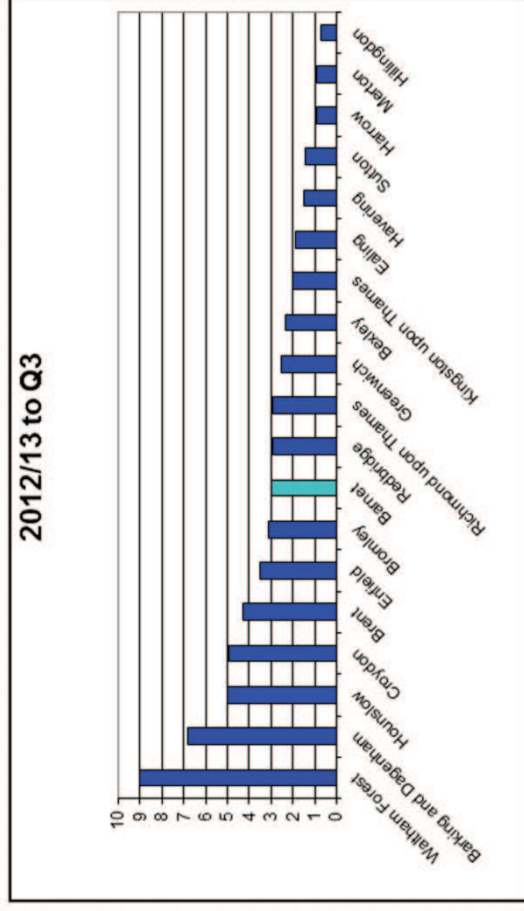
# Homelessness



# Homeless has increased in Barnet

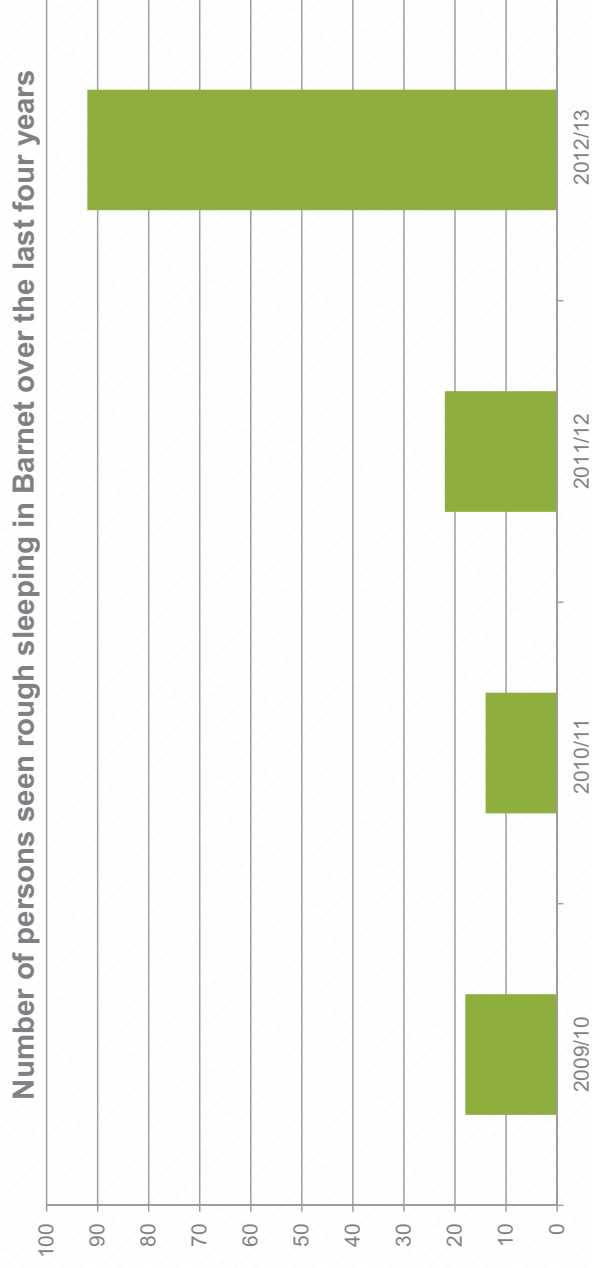


## Homeless acceptances per 1,000 population



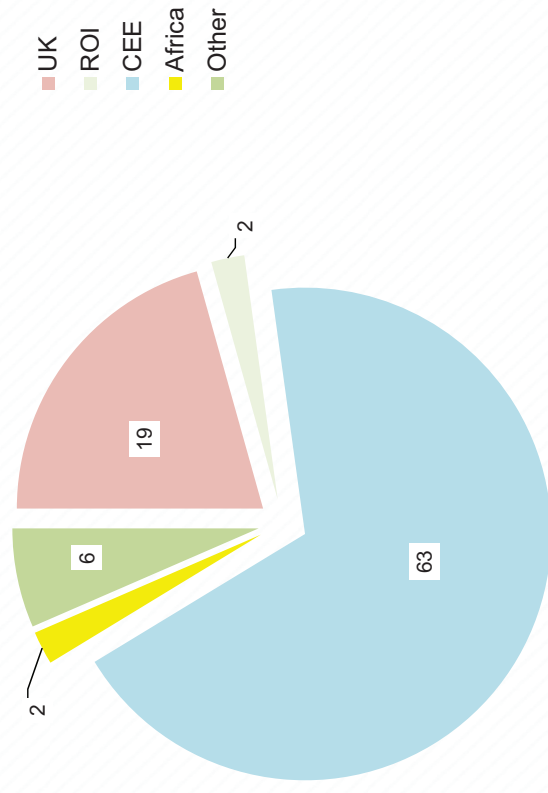
Barnet has gone from rank 11 out of 19 Outer London boroughs in 2010/11 to rank 7 by quarter 3 2012/13. Acceptances in Barnet have risen from 1.7 to 3 per thousand population since 2010.

# Increase in rough sleepers



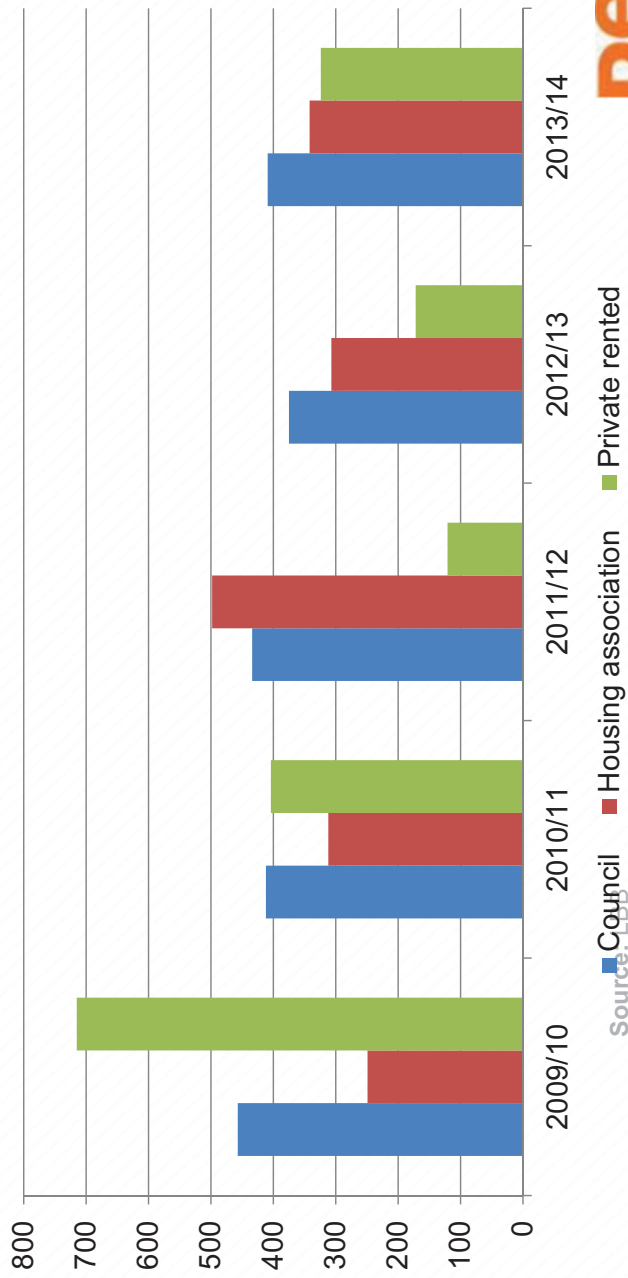
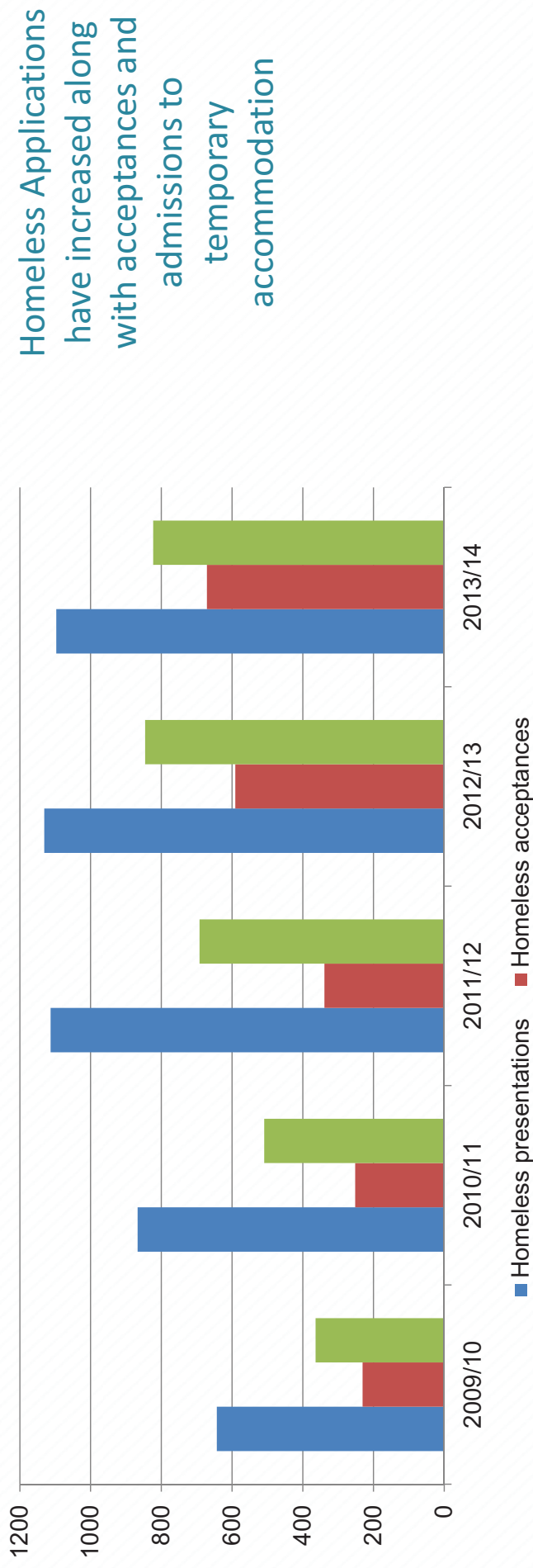
**70** more persons seen sleeping rough in Barnet in 2012/13 than in 2011/12.

Rough sleepers in Barnet by nationality (2012/13)



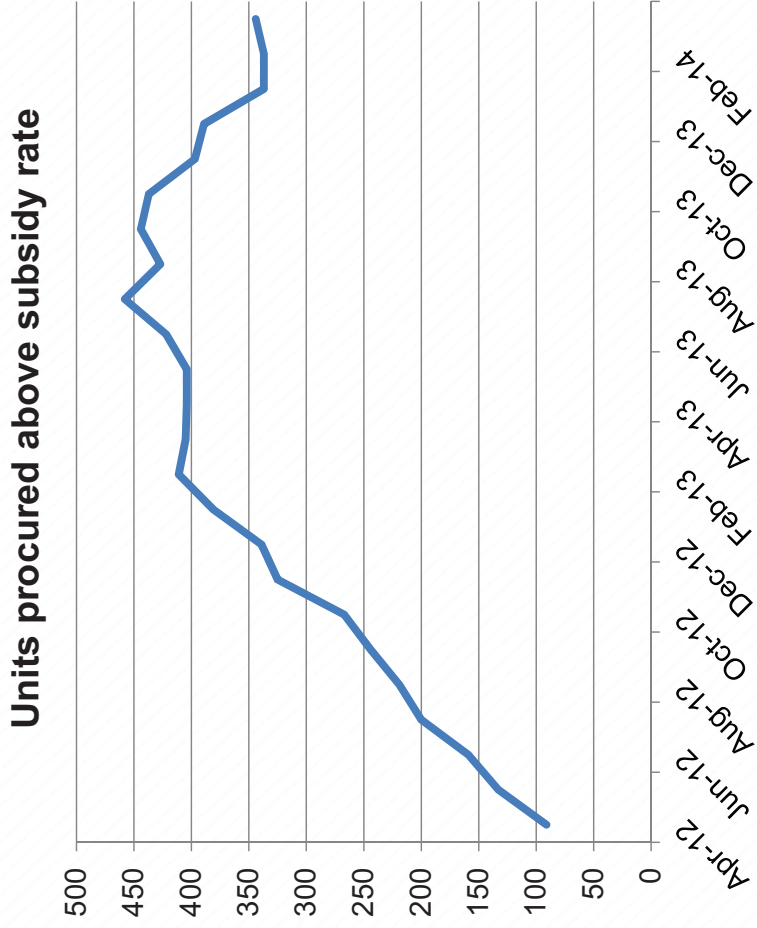
2012/13 increase represents a large group of Romanians seen sleeping rough on two separate nights between Sept 2012 and April 2013.

# Housing supply for homeless people has reduced

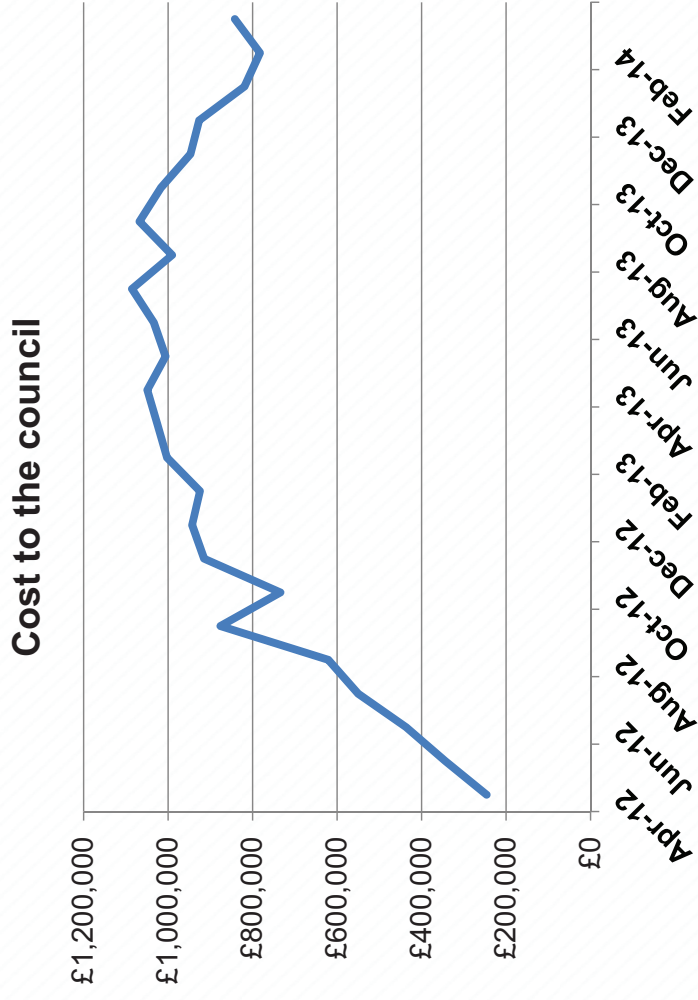
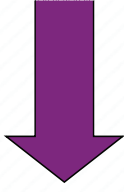


The supply of private rented homes available to housing applicants reduced from 2009/10 but had improved since 2012/13

# This means the cost of temporary housing is rising



Higher private rents means it costs the council more to procure temporary accommodation for homeless families



At the end of last year the council had spent more than £1m above the subsidy level limit

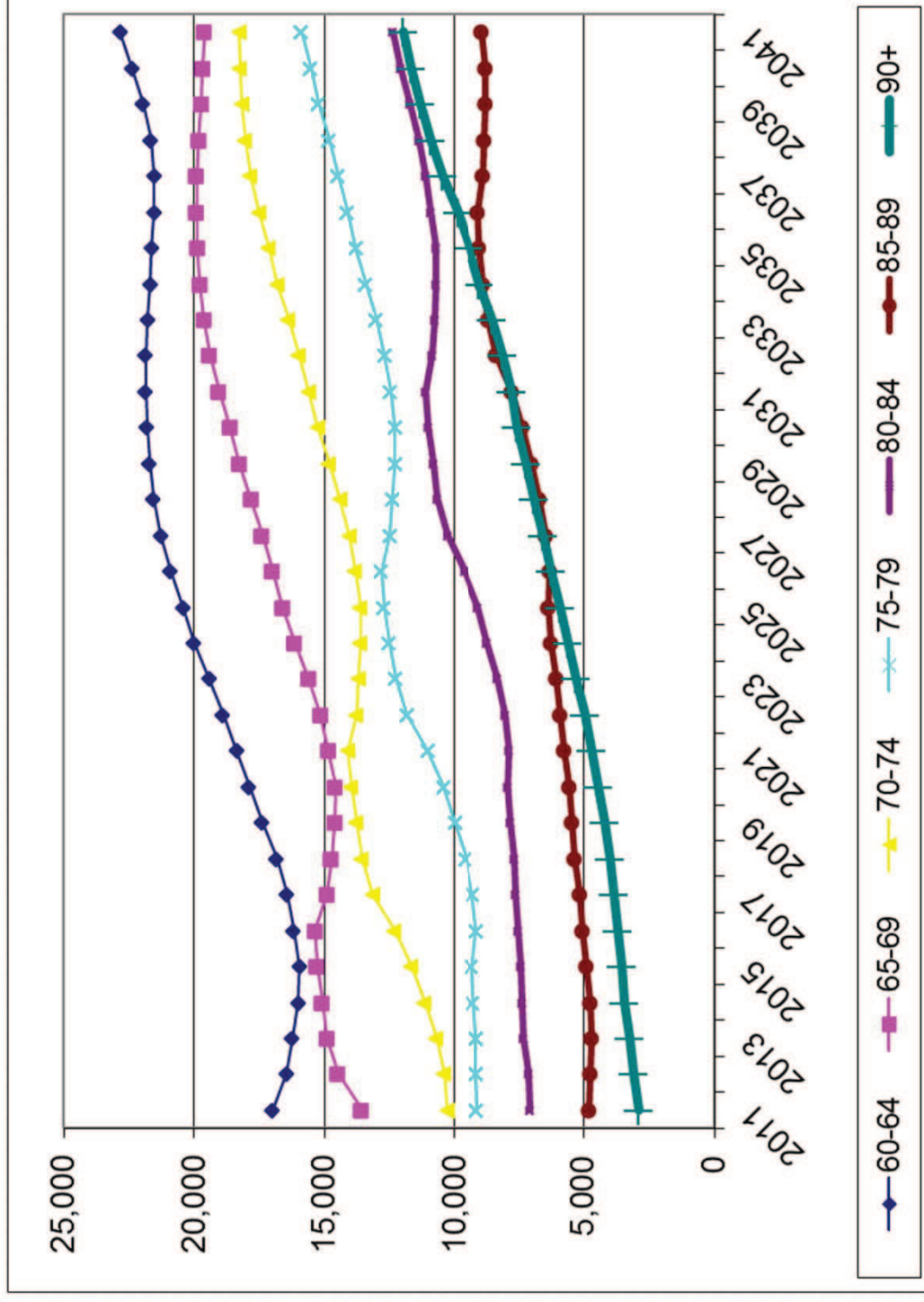


# Older People





# Growing older population



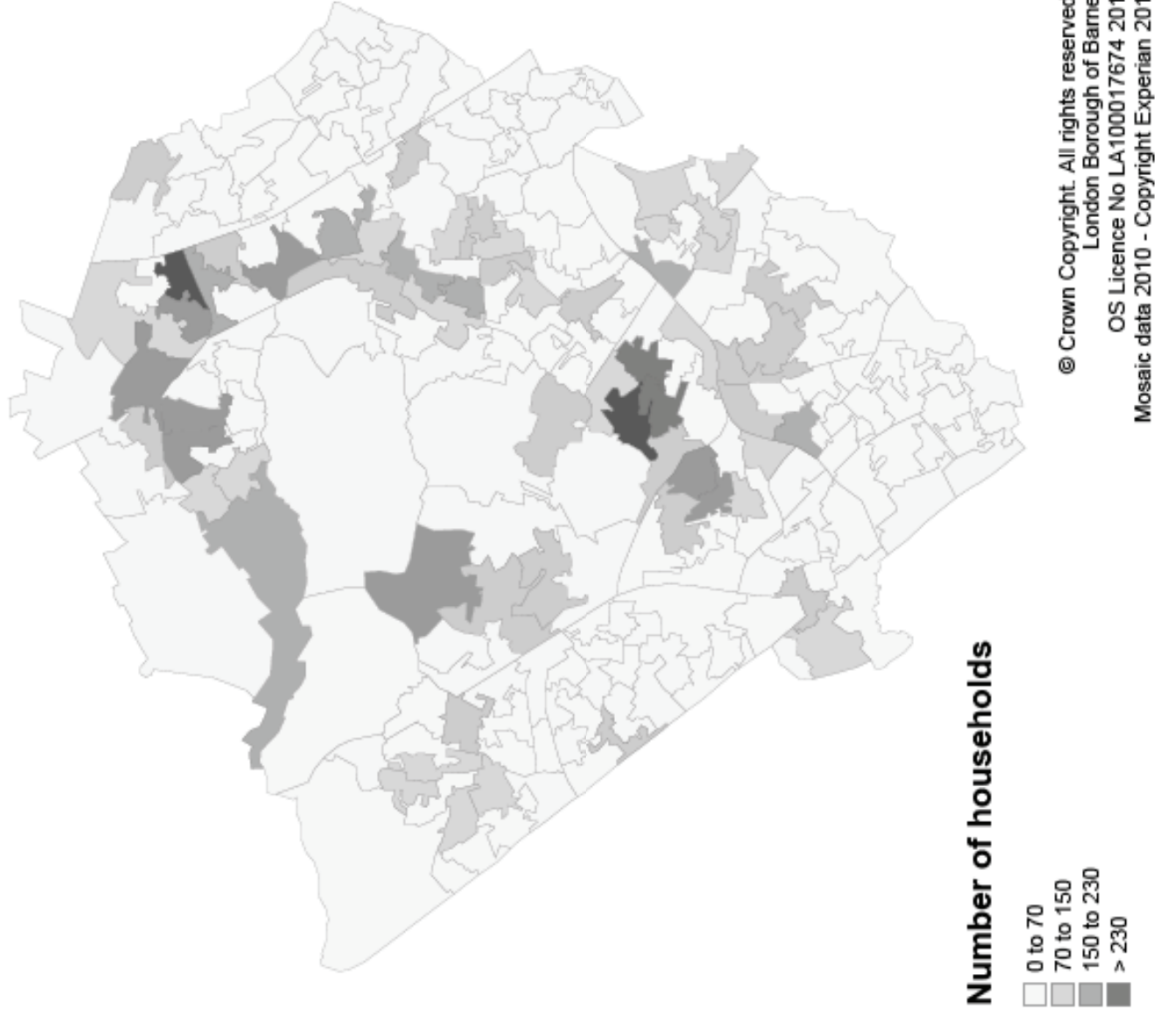
The over 60 population is projected to be 64,690 and is projected to be 109,849 by 2041- an increase of 41%.

The over 90s population is set to increase from under 3,000 in 2011 to almost 12,000 in 2041.

There will be more over 90 year olds than 85-89 year olds from 2035.

# Where older person households are located

According to the Mosaic customer profiling tool two areas that have high numbers of older people are **Totteridge** and in the centre of the borough near **Finchley Church End** and **Mill Hill**.

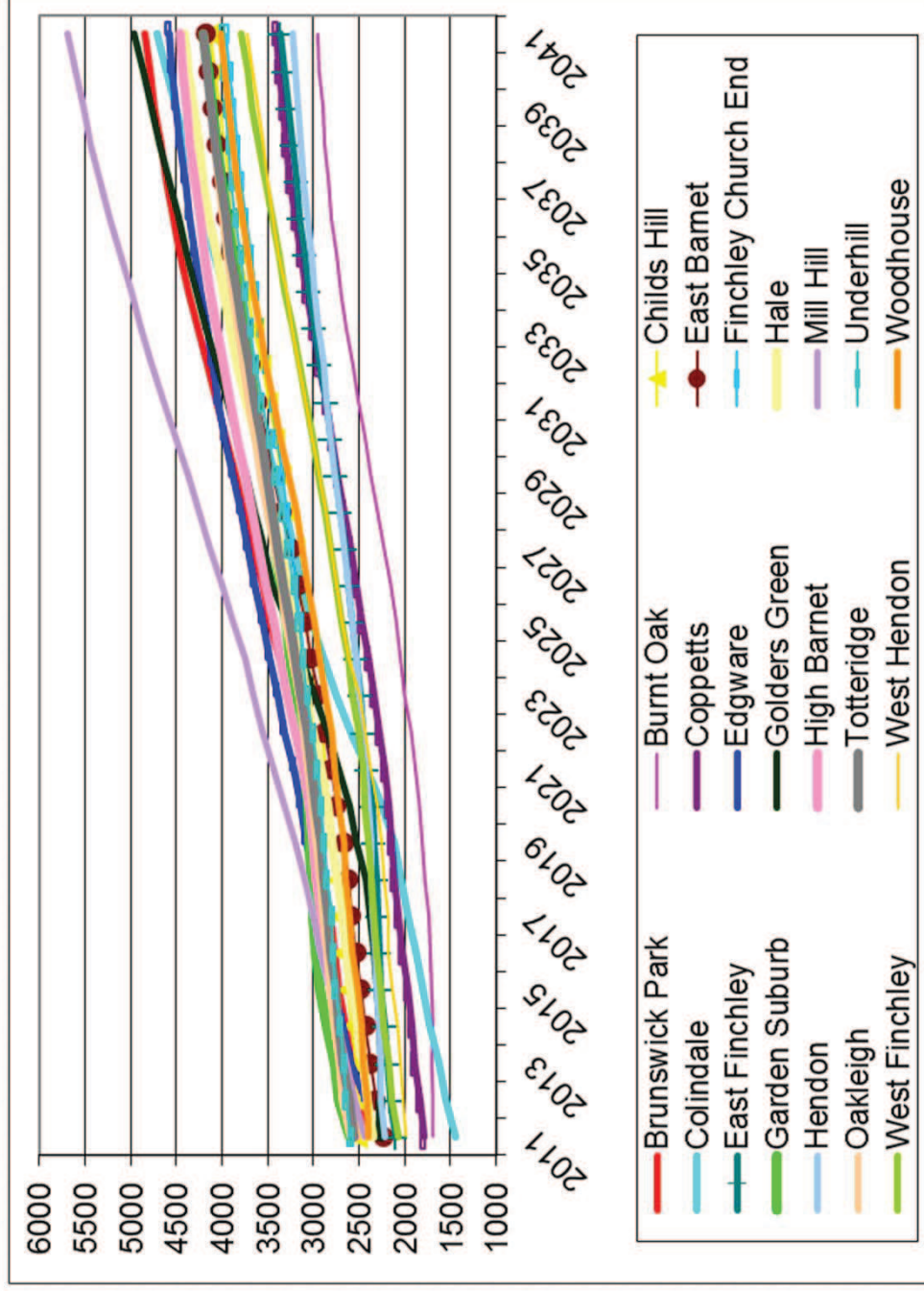


# Town Centre Footfall

	By Age (%)					
	0-20	21-30	31-40	41-50	51-60	over 60
Brent Street	3.9	28.6	20.8	16.4	12.9	17.4
Burnt Oak	5.4	21.1	21.3	18.6	13.5	20
Chipping Barnet	4.3	18.4	17.6	19.8	16.1	23.7
Colindale	4.4	24.9	22.4	18.1	13.2	17.1
Cricklewood	3.6	25.9	23.1	17.6	12.9	16.8
East Finchley	2.3	22.6	22.3	18.4	13.6	20.8
Edgware	5.4	22	21.3	18.6	13.6	19.1
Finchley Church End	2.8	21.4	22.5	18.7	13.6	21.1
Golders Green	3.4	27.4	22.4	16.2	12.9	17.7
Hendon Central	4.2	30.5	22.7	16.3	11.9	14.3
Mill Hill	4.6	18.1	20.3	19.3	14.7	23
New Barnet	2.3	21.6	20.9	20.7	15.3	19.2
North Finchley	3.5	18.9	20.1	19.8	14.9	22.7

Data on mobile phone usage from Telefonica suggests that generally areas in the east of the borough have visits from a higher proportion of older people.

# Growth of older households by ward



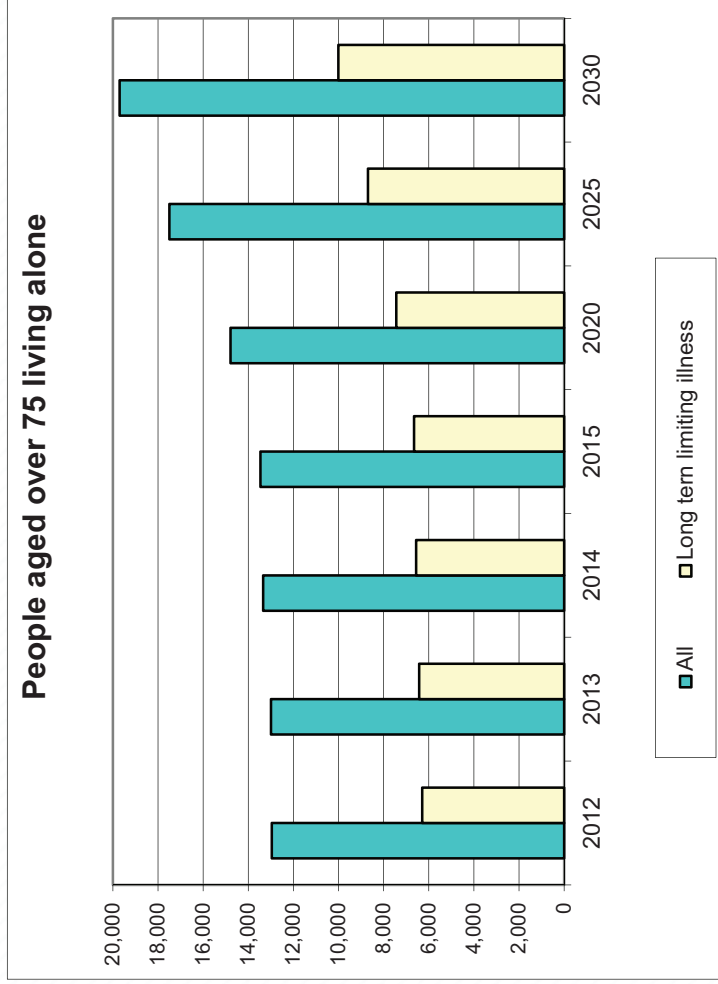
In 2011 the ward with the highest number of people over 65 was **Oakleigh** followed by Finchley Church and Garden Suburb.

All wards are expected to see a growth in the number of older people.

In 2041 the most populous ward for people over 65 will be **Mill Hill**, then **Golders Green** and **Brunswick Park**.

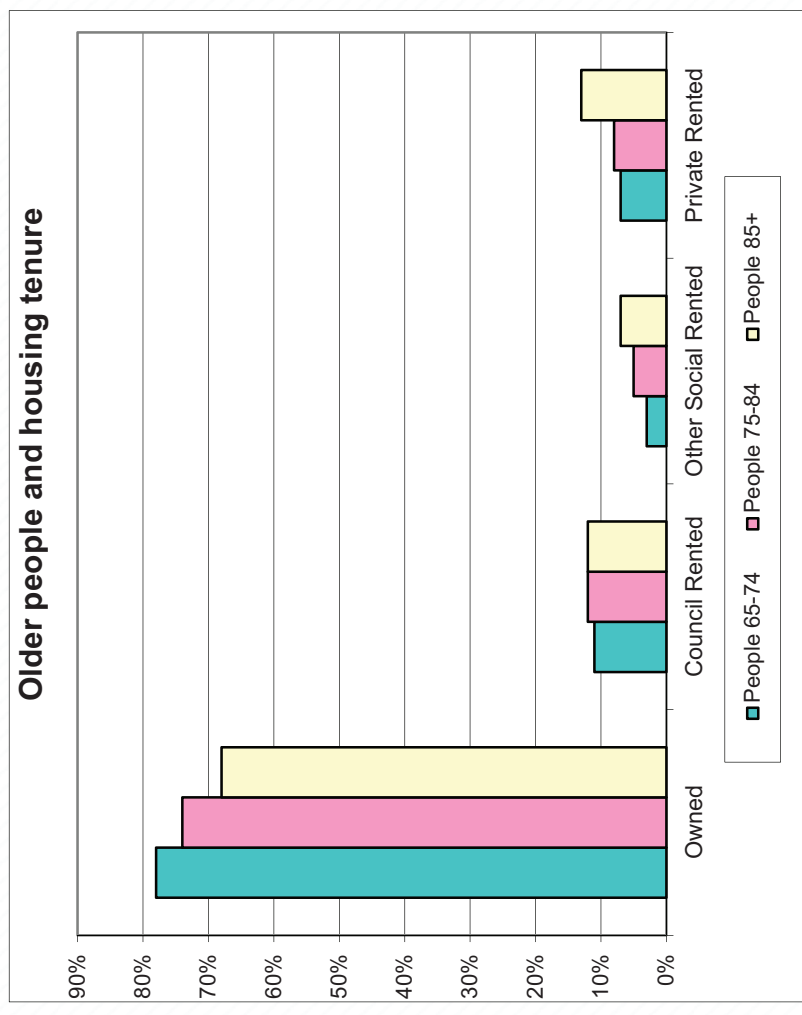
# Older people living alone and tenure

People aged over 75 living alone



The majority of older people own their own home but 12% of the over 75s live in the private rented sector.

Older people and housing tenure



More older people will be living alone in future years, including those with a long term limited illness.

# Chronic and long-term conditions of over 65s

	2010	2015	2020	% Increase
With a limiting long-term illness	20,359	22,593	24,583	21%
With longstanding health condition caused by a stroke	1,101	1,219	1,345	22%
With longstanding health condition caused by a heart attack	2,329	2,576	2,831	22%
With diabetes	5,861	6,514	7,144	22%
With dementia	3,778	4,185	4,743	26%
With depression	4,179	4,624	5,025	20%
Unable to manage a mobility activity on own	9,466	10,409	11,617	23%
Unable to manage a self-care activity on own	16,943	18,608	20,618	22%
Unable to manage a domestic task on own	20,644	22,679	25,159	22%

By 2020, many chronic and long term illnesses are projected to increase by more than 20%.

Over 65s living with dementia will increase by 26%

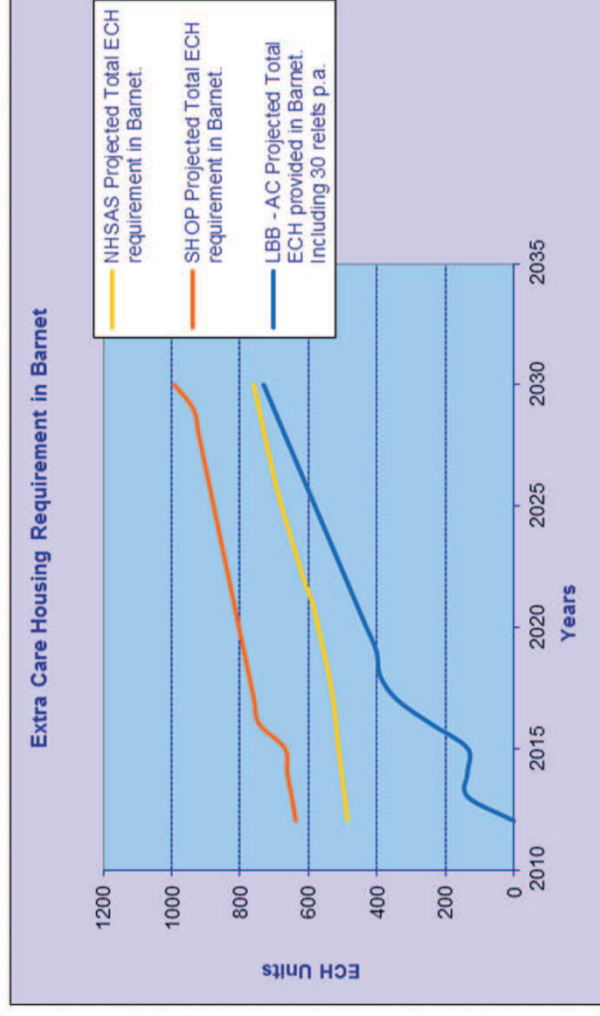
# Older people falling in their home..

	Number of people	As proportion of those falling each year
fall each year	18,083	-
fall twice or more	7,817	43%
attend A/E	2,567	14%
call an ambulance	2,567	14%
sustain a fracture	1,283	7%
sustain fracture to hip	420	2%

Using estimates produced by Department of Health on the number of falls and their consequences for a typical PCT, the following figures were extrapolated for Barnet. Based on a total population of 343,088 and a population aged 65+ of 47,253

# Growing demand for care from an ageing population

	Service Users in 2012	By 2017	By 2022	By 2027
All Users	7525	+732	+1464	+2298
18-64	2663	+190	+270	+352
65-74	813	+105	+124	+178
75-84	1636	+10	+220	+414
85+	2413	+427	+850	+1354
Residential	1078	+111	+230	+362
18-64	354	+25	+39	+51
65-74	88	+11	+13	+19
75-84	211	+1	+28	+53
85+	425	+75	+150	+239
Nursing	363	+42	+93	+148
18-64	28	+2	+4	+5
65-74	38	+5	+6	+8
75-84	102	+1	+14	+26
85+	195	+34	+69	+109



- In 2011/12 roughly two-thirds of Barnet’s social care users are aged 65 or over and a third are aged 85 or over.
- These proportions may well increase as over the next five years there will be 4,459 more residents aged 65 or over (a 9.2% increase) and 1,424 more residents aged over 85 (a 17.7% increase), compared to average growth of only 8.1% expected in the Barnet population as a whole.



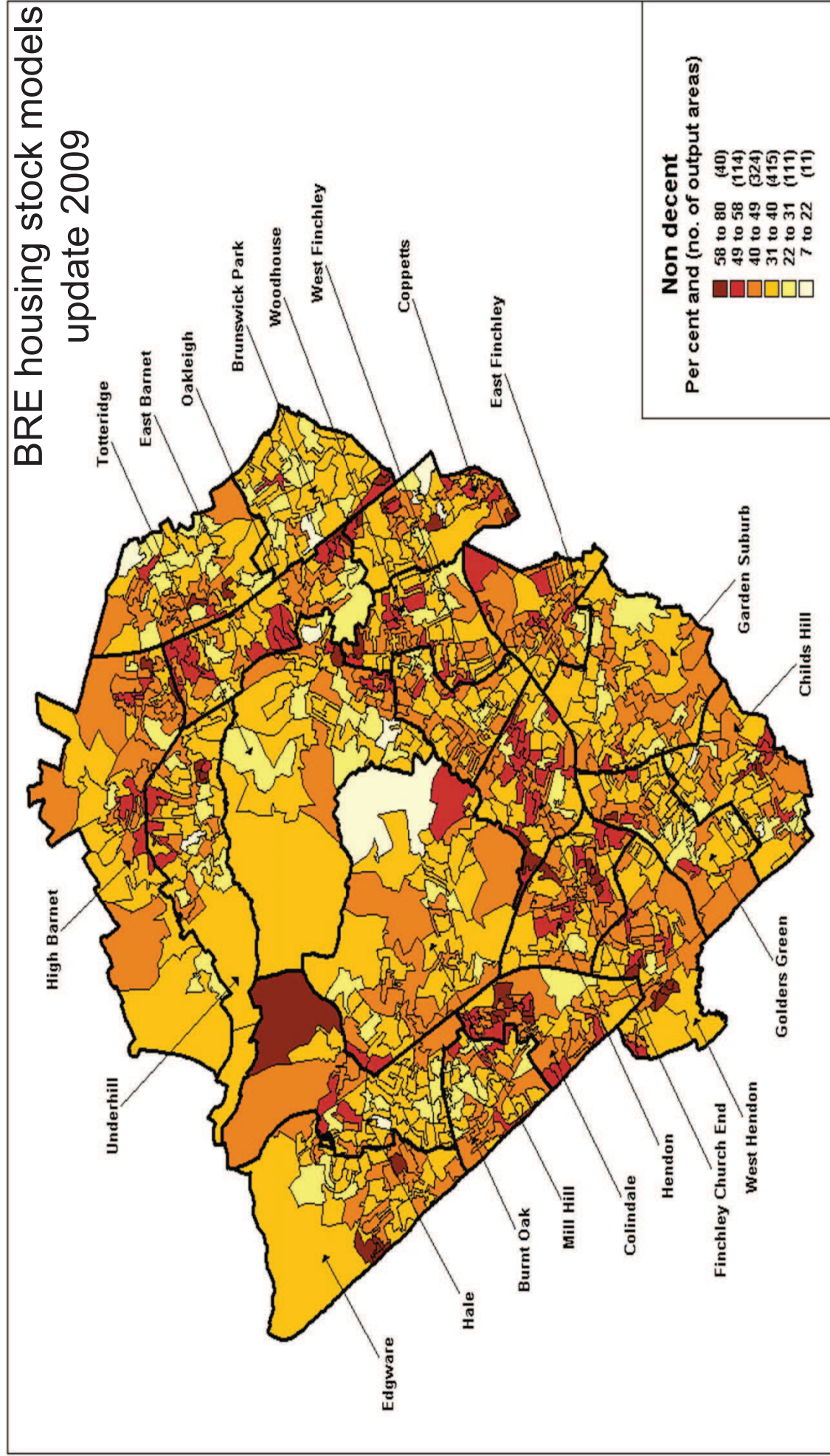


# Stock Condition & Empty Homes



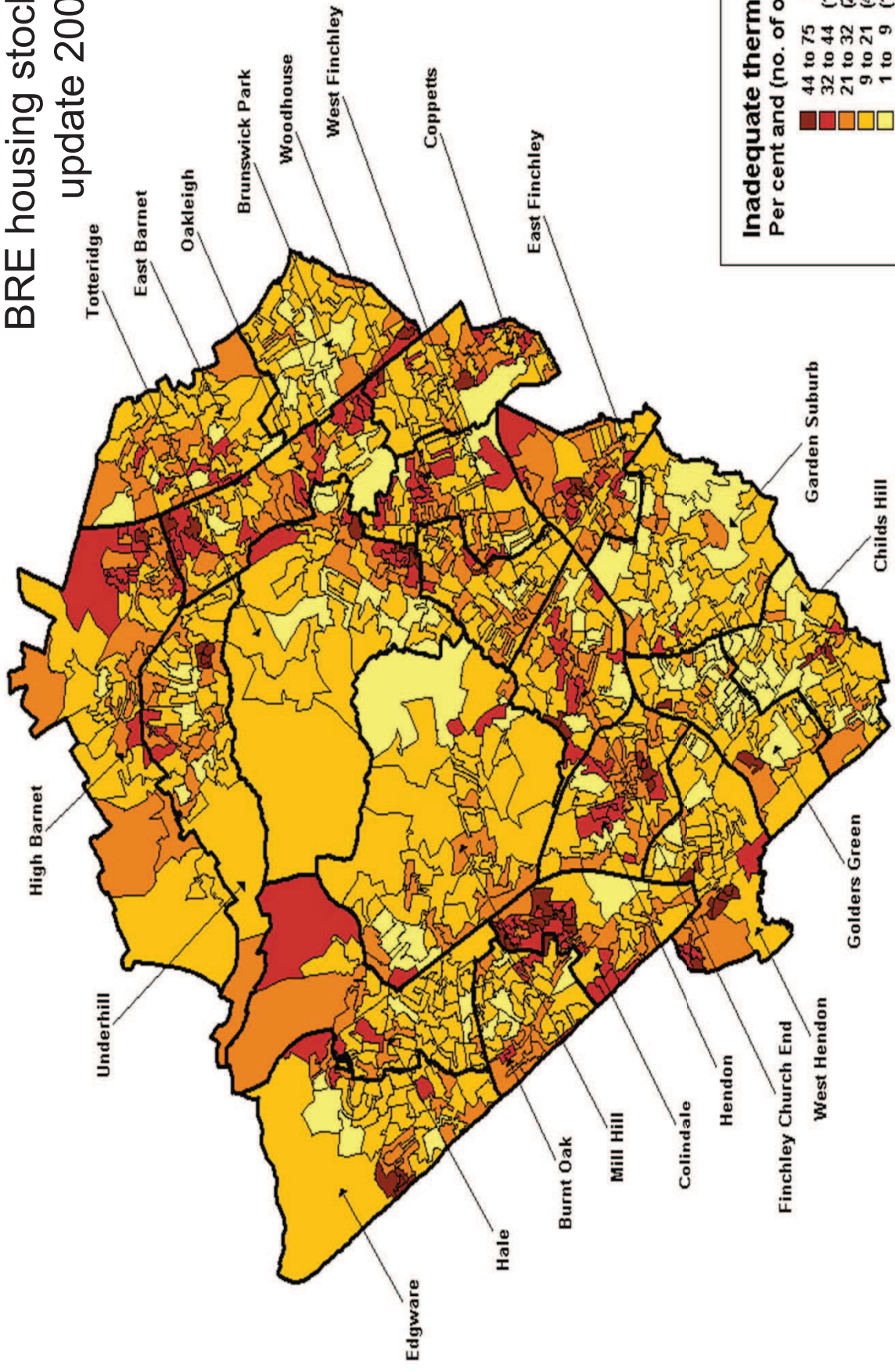
# Non decent homes in the private sector

## BRE housing stock models update 2009



# Inadequate thermal comfort in the private sector

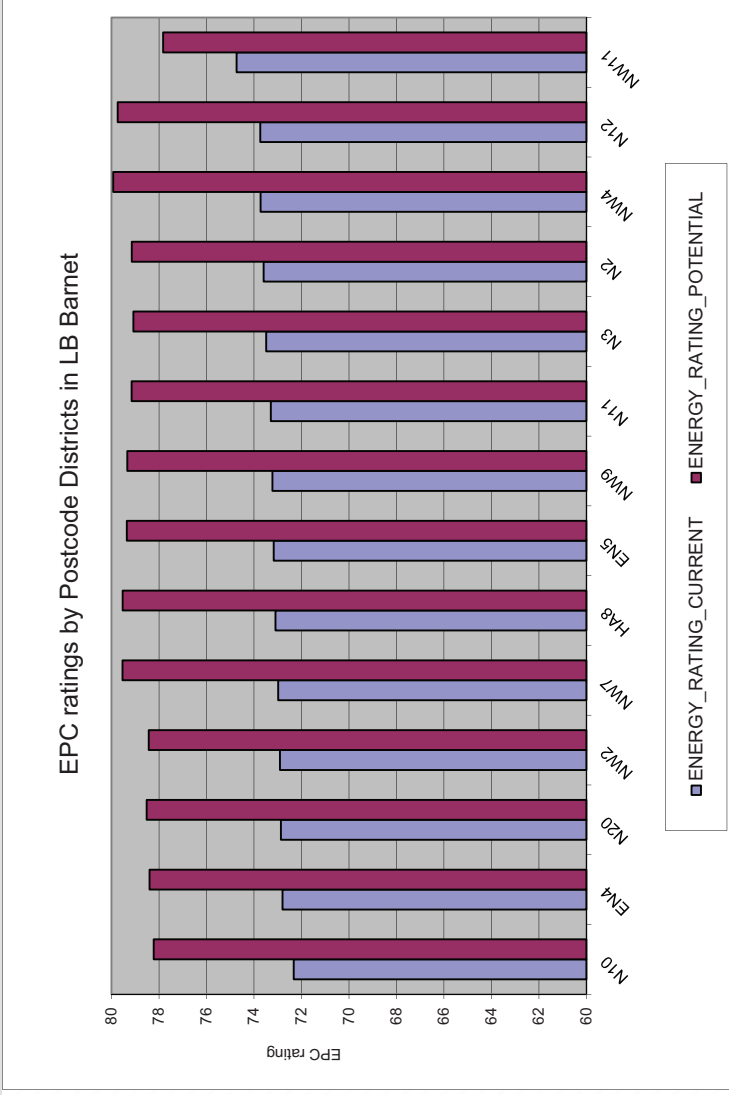
## BRE housing stock models update 2009



**Inadequate thermal comfort**  
Per cent and (no. of output areas)

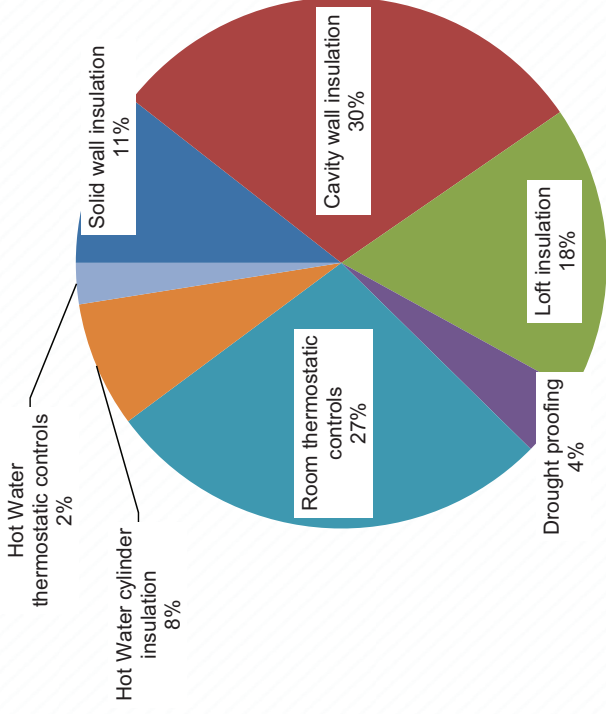
Dark Red	44 to 75	(46)
Red	32 to 44	(122)
Orange	21 to 32	(245)
Light Orange	9 to 21	(485)
Yellow	1 to 9	(117)

# Energy Performance Certificates



The EPC data suggests most residential properties in Barnet are within 10 percentage points of their full energy performance potential.

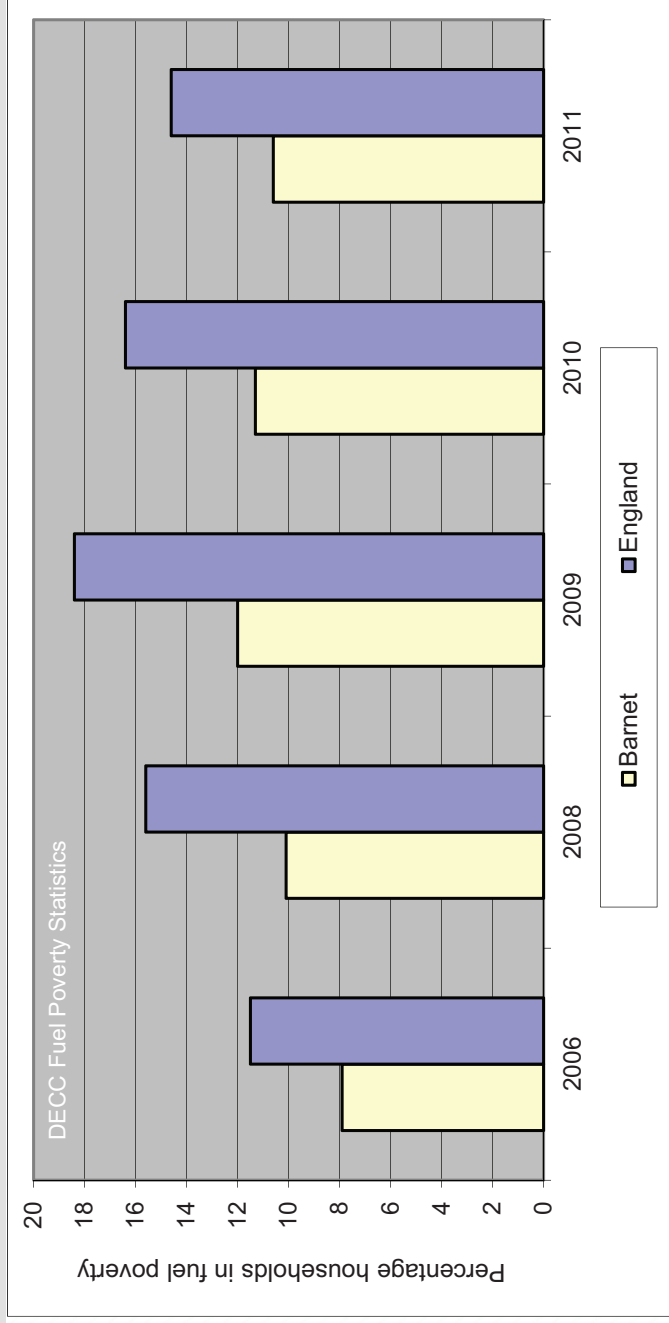
## Primary EP improvement recommended



The most cited EP improvements are cavity wall insulation and room thermostatic control installation.

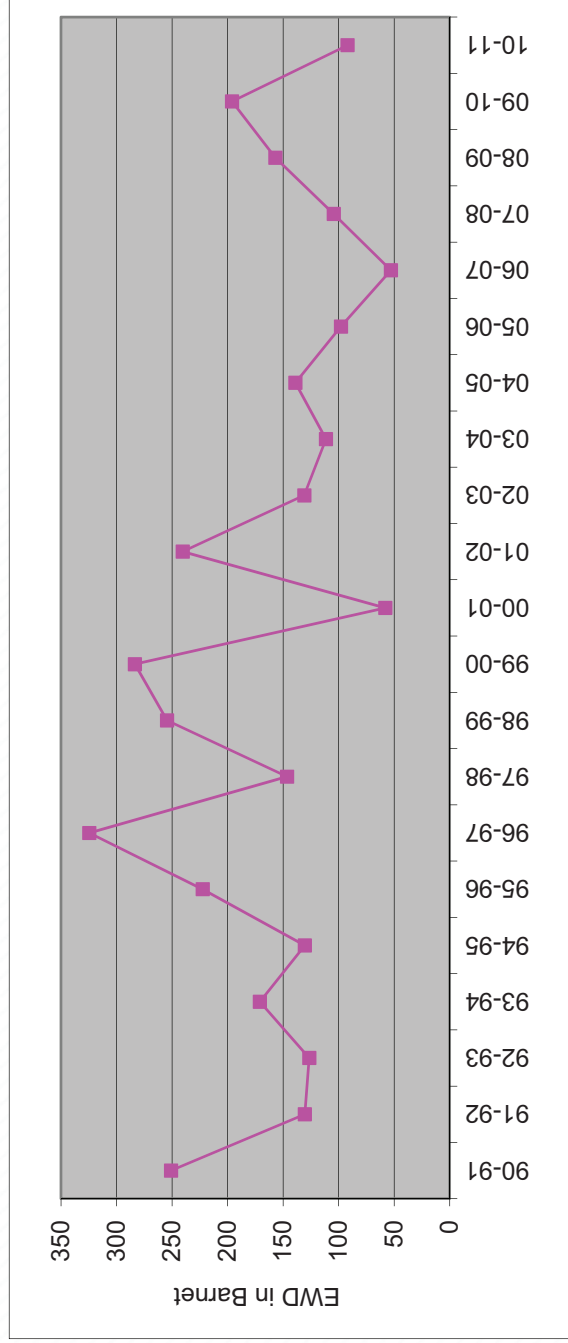
Post Code	N10	EN4	N20	NW2	NW7	HA8	EN5	NW9	N11	N3	N2	NW4	N12	NW11
EPC rated properties	132	334	317	347	461	654	781	553	435	587	496	723	806	630

# Fuel poverty & excess winter deaths



In 2011 **10.6%** of Barnet's households, or **13,628** homes, were fuel poor.

This is, however, still 4 percentage points lower than the average for England as a whole.

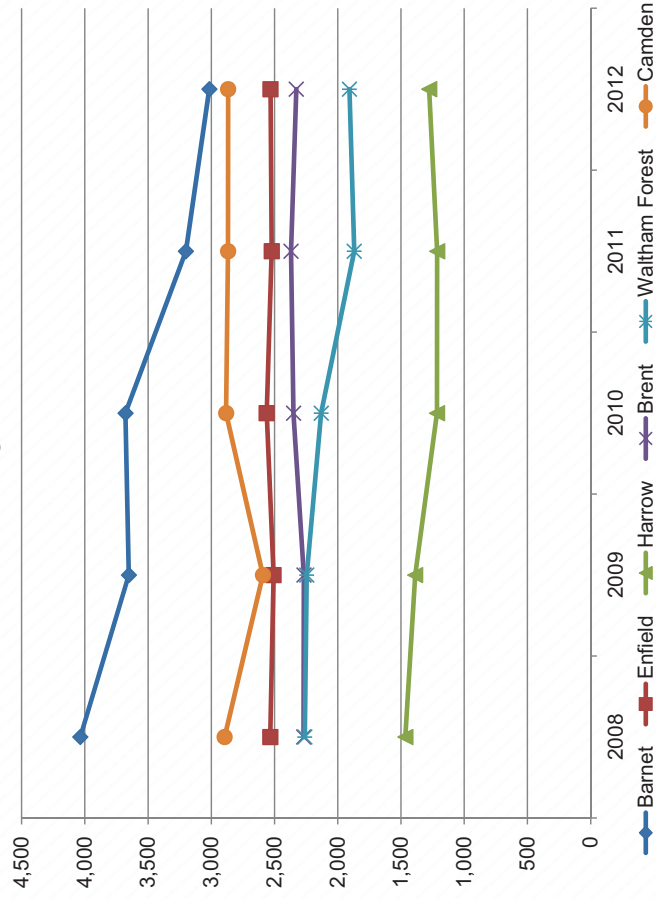


The level of excess cold hazards is considered an issue given the increasing numbers of older residents in Barnet.

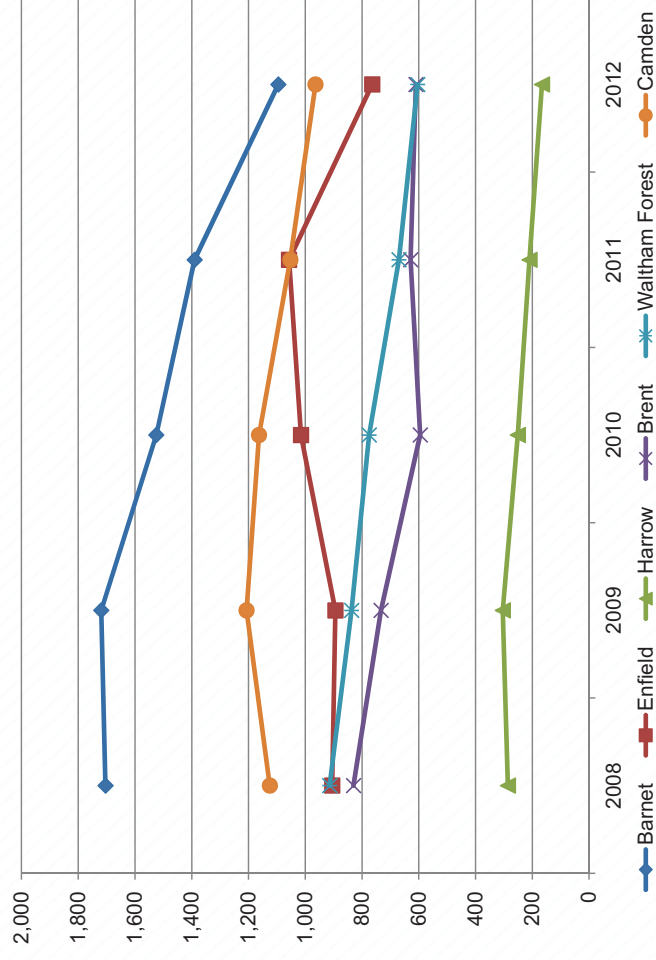
On average there are **125** EWD every year in Barnet over period 2001 – 2011

# More vacant dwellings than in neighbouring boroughs

All vacant dwellings 2008 to 2012



Long term vacant dwellings 2008 to 2012



# Long-term empty property survey 2012

Occupancy Status	Number	%
Being Demolished	2	0.16%
Occupied following previous advice from Environmental Health	48	4%
Reoccupied	205	16%
Second property	1	0.08%
Occupied following notice by Environmental Health	1	0.08%
Other reason	1	0.08%
Still empty (at least 12 months)	985	79%
Total properties inspected	1,243	



# Housing Supply & Demand

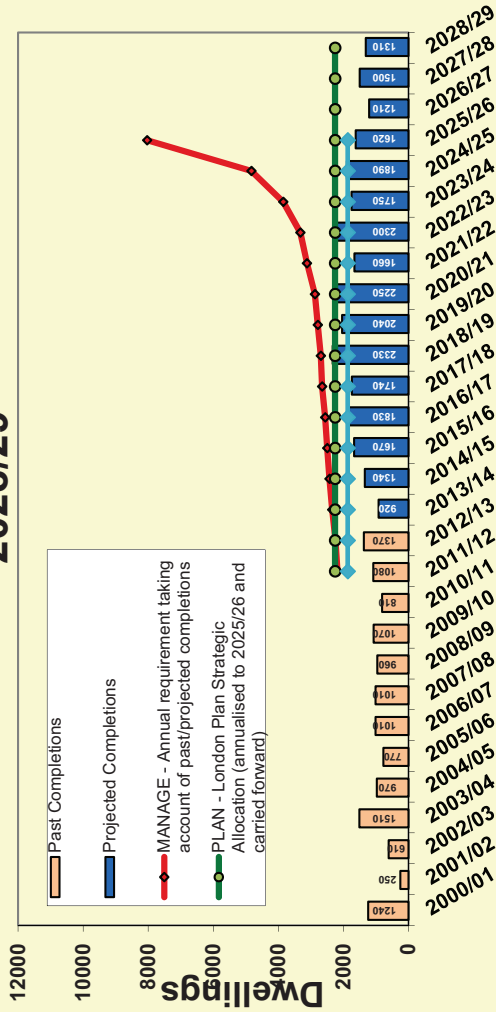


# Delivery- high capacity to deliver new homes

Delivery	London Plan Target for new homes	% of LP Target	% of Population
Barnet	10,635	31.51%	18.20%
Camden	2,500	7.41%	13.20%
Enfield	2,760	8.18%	16.00%
Hackney	5,775	17.11%	12.70%
Haringey	4,100	12.15%	13.20%
Islington	4,610	13.66%	12.20%
Westminster	3,375	10.00%	14.60%

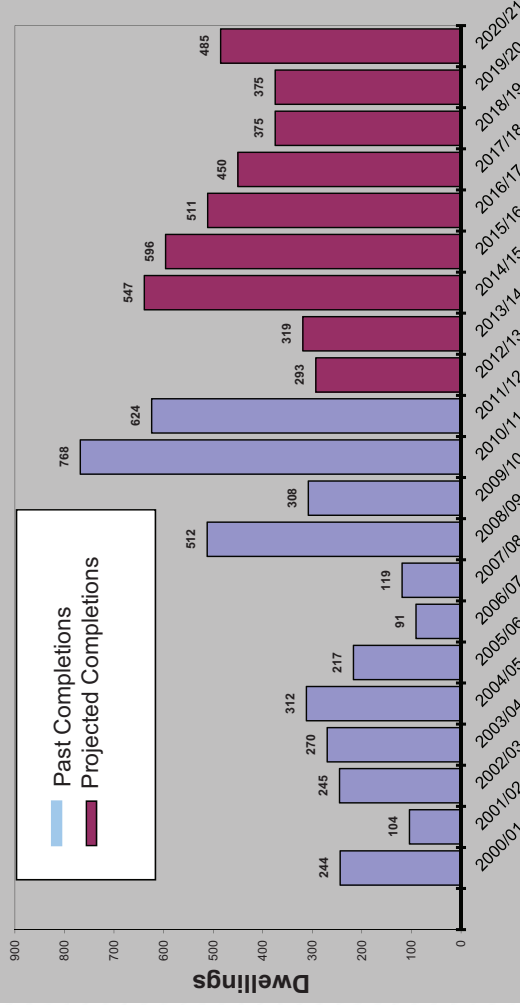
# Barnet Housing trajectories

## Barnet Housing Trajectory 2011/12 - 2028/29



Capacity for more than 27,300 additional housing by 2028/29

## Barnet's Affordable Housing Trajectory - 2011/12



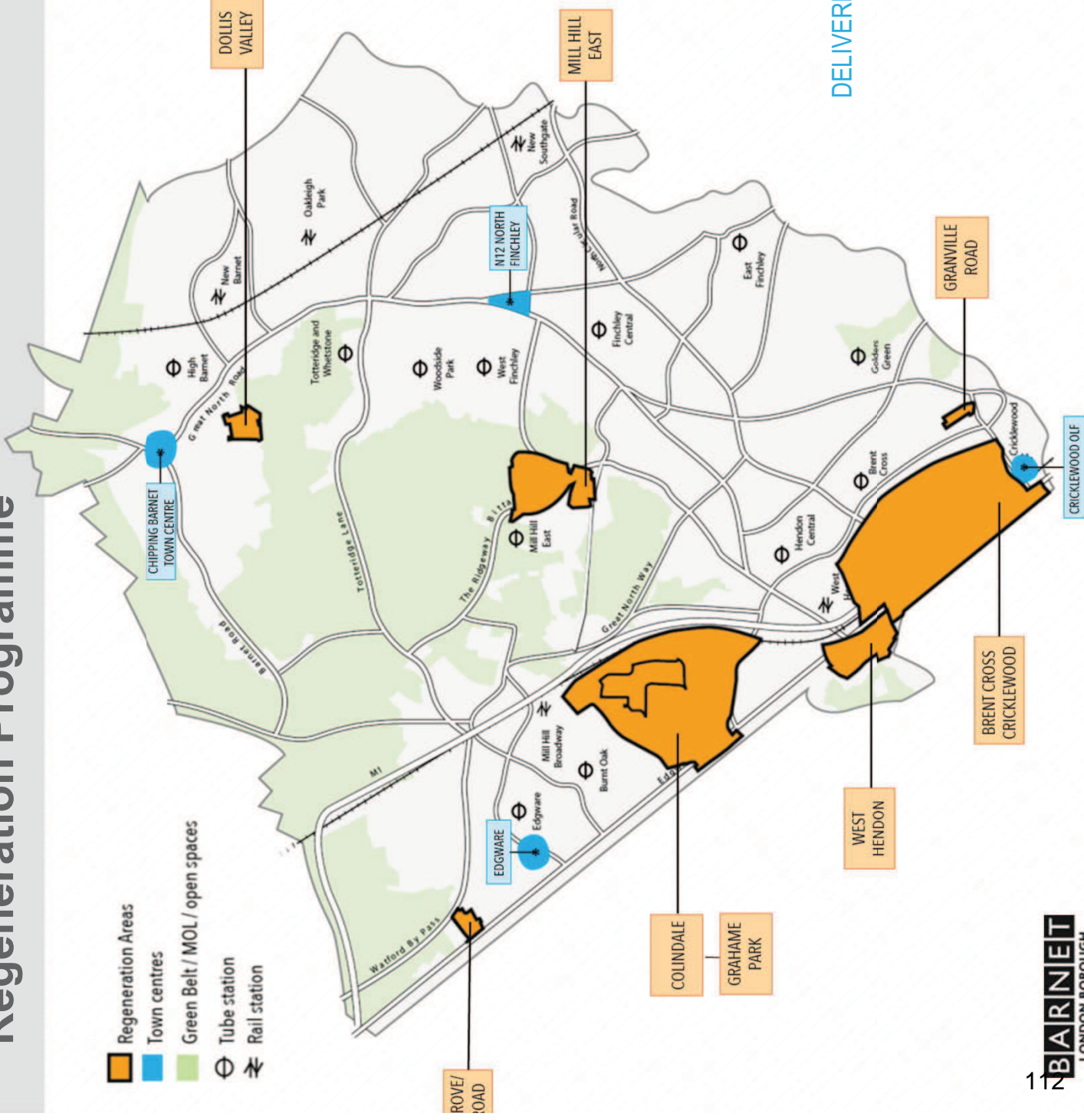
More than 3,900 additional affordable housing by 2020/01

## Residential completions 2004 - 2012 financial years – breakdown by housing type

Unit Type	Number of bedrooms										Total	%
	1	2	3	4	5+	Total	%					
Flats	2267	3813	712	44	7	6843	0	83				
Houses	110	171	566	382	160	1389	11	17				
<b>Total number of units</b>	<b>2377</b>	<b>3984</b>	<b>1278</b>	<b>426</b>	<b>167</b>	<b>8232</b>	<b>2</b>	<b>100</b>				

# Majority of the new housing will be delivered through the Barnet Regeneration Programme

-  Regeneration Areas
-  Town centres
-  Green Belt / MOL / open spaces
-  Tube station
-  Rail station



**15,000+**

NEW HOMES BUILT OVER THE LIFETIME OF THE REGENERATION SCHEMES

**450**

NEW JOBS IN NEXT 5 YEARS

**10**

SCHOOLS ACROSS PRIMARY, SECONDARY & HIGHER EDUCATION LEVELS

**+91,509**

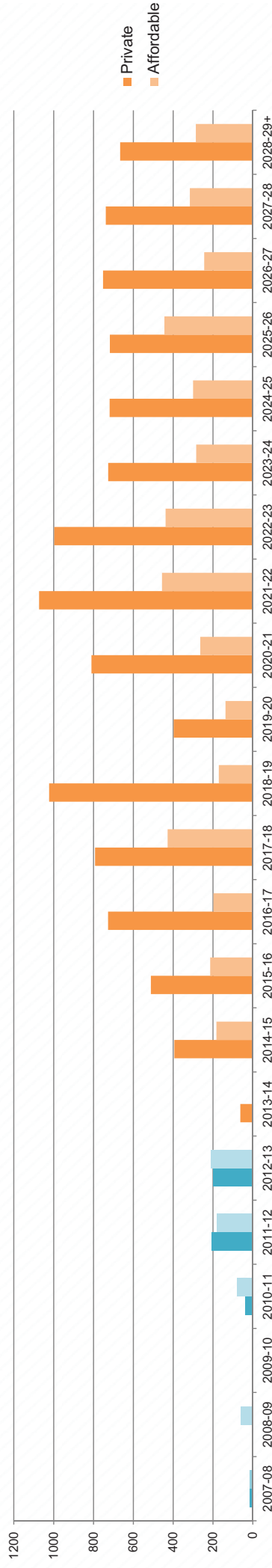
SQM OF RETAIL & COMMERCIAL SPACE DELIVERED IN BRENT CROSS SHOPPING CENTRE

**c£25m+**

NEW HOMES BONUS

# Housing & Growth (Regeneration only)

Housing delivery: Priority Estates, Brent Cross Cricklewood & Mill Hill East



- The 2012/13 housing target for completions was 404 units of housing. By March 2013, the number of completions for the year was 469 units, of which 212 were affordable.

## Housing delivery in 2012/13

	Qtr 1	Qtr 2	Qtr 3	Qtr 4	2012/13 Totals
<b>Private</b>	<b>129</b>	<b>20</b>	<b>0</b>	<b>108</b>	<b>257</b>
Regeneration Estates	129	20	0	108	257
Mill Hill East	0	0	0	0	0
<b>Affordable</b>	<b>39</b>	<b>8</b>	<b>0</b>	<b>165</b>	<b>212</b>
Intermediate	3	3	0	28	34
Rented	36	5	0	137	178
<b>Total</b>	<b>168</b>	<b>28</b>	<b>0</b>	<b>273</b>	<b>469</b>

- The 2013/14 housing target is 39 private housing units and 0 affordable housing units in the Priority Estates.
- 2014/15 will see a significant increase in housing completions.

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	AGENDA ITEM 8
	<h2>Housing Committee</h2> <h3>27 October 2014</h3>
<b>Title</b>	<b>Business Planning</b>
<b>Report of</b>	Housing and Environment Lead Commissioner
<b>Wards</b>	All
<b>Status</b>	Public
<b>Enclosures</b>	Appendix A – Call for Evidence Executive Summary Appendix B – Savings Targets Appendix C – Housing Committee Commissioning Plan
<b>Officer Contact Details</b>	Declan Hoare, <a href="mailto:declan.hoare@barnet.gov.uk">declan.hoare@barnet.gov.uk</a> , 020 8359 4320

### Summary

The Housing Committee has agreed to develop a five-year Commissioning Plan, and proposals for £4.2m savings, by December 2014. This report seeks to support the Committee in this task by setting out the suggested outcomes for the Commissioning Plan, identifying the major commissioning challenges, which this Committee will need to address over the coming five years, and providing proposals for delivering savings. The report also proposes a draft commissioning plan for adoption by the committee.

### Recommendations

**That the Housing Committee:**

- That the Housing Committee approves the Commissioning Plan (Appendix A), subject to consultation. The Commissioning Plan sets out the strategic priorities, commissioning intentions, outcome measures, revenue budgets and capital requirements for recommendation to the council’s Policy and Resources Committee on 2<sup>nd</sup> December 2014.
- That the Housing Committee agrees to public consultation on the Commissioning Plan commencing immediately following Policy and Resources Committee on 2<sup>nd</sup> December 2014, before final Commissioning Plans are agreed by Policy and Resources on 17 February 2015.

## 1. WHY THIS REPORT IS NEEDED

- 1.1 On 30 June 2014 the Housing Committee agreed to complete a Commissioning Plan and savings proposals by December 2014. The Committee also noted that the Policy and Resources Committee were to set a savings target for the Housing Revenue Account (HRA) at their meeting on the 21 July 2014. The target allocated for the HRA was a £4.2 million reduction in the HRA management fee to be achieved by 2019/20. This report seeks to support the Committee in addressing this task. It:
- sets out suggested outcomes for the Commissioning Plan and the Corporate Plan;
  - identifies the major challenges which this Committee will need to make commissioning decisions on over the coming five years; and
  - summarises progress towards putting measures in place to deliver the £4.2m savings target, and suggests that the Housing and Environment Lead Commissioner be authorised to take these forward to Policy and Resources Committee on 2<sup>nd</sup> December 2014.

### **Outcomes**

- 1.2 There are a number of sources that can inform the commissioning priorities of the Committee, including: its terms of reference; the Corporate Plan; other Council plans and strategies notably the current Housing Strategy and associated documents; Government policy; and research and best practice. The suggested list below also draws on the proposed Draft Housing Strategy and the Strategic Asset Management Plan agreed by the Assets, Regeneration and Growth Committee on 8 September 2014.

<b>Priority</b>	<b>Key Outcomes</b>
Increasing Housing Supply	<p>Barnet is delivering large numbers of new homes with an appropriate mix of size and tenure through its growth and regeneration programmes in particular:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>• Housing Strategy has set out Barnet's plans for increasing supply</li><li>• Housing Needs Assessment have identified the quantum and mix of housing required</li><li>• Growth and Regeneration programmes and new private developments meet housing need, and contribute to Barnet's reputation as a desirable place to live.</li><li>• Developments on Council land meet housing need and maximise benefits to the Council.</li></ul>



Priority	Key Outcomes
Delivery of Affordable Housing	<p>Barnet has identified the number of affordable homes it needs and is delivering these in particular:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Housing Strategy has identified Barnet's approach to providing affordable homes</li> <li>• Housing Needs Assessment has identified the amount of affordable housing needed</li> <li>• Affordable Housing Supplementary Planning Document has set out how much affordable housing will be sought from new developments as part of the planning process</li> <li>• A new Framework Agreement with the GLA will set out our approach to delivery of affordable homes in the context of the London Housing Strategy</li> <li>• The HRA Business Plan has set out the investment priorities for new and existing council homes</li> <li>• Developments on Council land meet needs for affordable housing and maximise benefits to the Council.</li> </ul>
Council Housing and Housing Needs Services	<p>Barnet has arrangements in place for providing housing and homelessness services that deliver high satisfaction amongst residents and minimises the number of people being admitted to emergency temporary accommodation in particular:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• The Housing Strategy has set out objectives for Housing Services in Barnet</li> <li>• The future of homelessness and housing management services beyond 2015/16 have been established</li> <li>• The contribution of homelessness and housing management services to the Council's overall aims has been developed</li> </ul>
Tackling Homelessness	<p>Homelessness and use of emergency accommodation has been minimised in particular:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Development of a detailed Homelessness and Temporary Accommodation action plan</li> <li>• Budget monitoring will help to contain costs associated with use of emergency accommodation</li> <li>• Housing Allocations Scheme will ensure that scarce affordable housing is targeted at those in need and making a contribution to the borough</li> <li>• Tenancy Strategy will ensure that more council housing is made available for those who need it</li> </ul>

Priority	Key Outcomes
Sustaining quality in the Private Rented Sector	<p>Barnet has a good quality private rented sector that provides a key role in meeting the housing needs of the borough in particular:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Supporting good landlords in the Private Rented Sector and intervening where necessary.</li> <li>• Bringing empty properties back into use</li> <li>• Houses in Multiple-Occupation – Business Case to extend licensing beyond the statutory minimum scheme to assist in improving the housing impact of houses in multiple-occupation.</li> <li>• Use of Article 4 direction to withdraw the right of houses to be converted into Houses of Multiple Occupation without planning consent.</li> </ul>
Providing suitable housing to support vulnerable people	<p>Barnet is delivering homes with an appropriate mix of size and tenure for the needs of vulnerable groups through its growth and regeneration programmes in particular:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• New integrated specialist housing including extra care</li> <li>• Wheelchair accessible housing</li> <li>• Continuation of the Winter Well programme</li> <li>• Creating a supported housing pathway for children leaving care</li> <li>• Creating a supported housing pathway for people with mental health needs which promotes independence and recovery</li> </ul>
Financial contribution to the Council	<p>The Council will work to review the current arrangements with The Barnet Group to assess value for money and to explore options for the future delivery of services to meet the Councils strategic needs. This will include options for the delivery and management of new homes and a mixed economy of private, social and affordable rents. Revised arrangements will be in place by April 2016.</p>

### **Challenges**

1.3 There are a range of strategic challenges that need to be addressed in the Commissioning Plan to ensure that the Council uses the levers at its disposal to deliver outcomes such as those described above. The Committee has already begun the process of addressing these challenges and will need to take decisions in key areas over the coming months. The main challenges are summarised below.

#### ***An Increasing Population***

1.4 With about 365,000 residents, Barnet is already the second most populous London Borough, and is set to see more growth, with a projected population increase of 83,000 over the next 30 years.

- 1.5 The largest increases are expected among children and the elderly, and a particular challenge will be to provide appropriate housing choices for an increasing number of older people.

### ***Increased Housing Demand***

- 1.6 Increased demand for housing is already evident, with higher house prices and rents and increased levels of homelessness and people in emergency temporary accommodation.
- 1.7 Home ownership has fallen whilst private renting has increased as more people have found it difficult to buy their own home due to higher prices and reduced availability of mortgages. Private renting is set to continue to increase and means that within 10 years half the properties in the borough are likely to be rented.
- 1.8 Rents are also rising and are increasingly beyond the reach of low income households which means that some people will need to consider living in more affordable areas outside of the borough.

### ***Financial Constraints***

- 1.9 Whilst Barnet is a relatively wealthy place, there are pockets of deprivation. More than 20,000 households have been affected by the Government's welfare reforms, which are designed to help people back into employment by making sure that work pays. This means that some households have found it harder to meet their housing costs and the council has worked successfully with its partners, including Job centre Plus, to help households with a focus on employment.
- 1.10 In addition, the Council has been required to make significant reductions in its expenditure, and is determined to provide services in a more cost effective way to maintain quality and customer satisfaction. The reform of council housing finance provides an opportunity to invest in housing in a way that helps reduce some of these costs.

### ***The impact of Growth and Regeneration***

- 1.11 Capacity for 26,000 new homes to be built between 2010 and 2025/26 has been identified in Barnet, and these will be delivered through our growth and regeneration plans. The challenge will be to ensure that the new homes are provided in a way that enhances the borough by creating quality places and delivers the type of homes that we need and not just the quantity.
- 1.12 At its meeting on 9 July 2014, the Assets, Regeneration and Growth Committee agreed the principles that should govern a pipeline of developments on the Council's own sites. This Committee will want to ensure that such developments deliver both high quality outcomes and value for money for the Council and the community; and in particular, how development can support Council services in meeting their housing strategy objectives (for

example around improving housing choice for older people, or meeting our homelessness obligations).

### ***Delivering savings***

- 1.13 Policy and Resources Committee on 21 July 2014 established a 20% savings target of £4.2 million from the Housing Revenue Account for Housing Committee which will be used to support significant development of new homes on Council sites.
- 1.14 Proposals for delivering the £4.2 million savings are summarised in the table below, and set out in more detail in Appendix B:

Service Area	Description	Saving
Barnet Homes	Service Reviews	£1.965m
Barnet Homes	Efficiency	£1.024m
Barnet Homes	Growth and Income	£0.839m
Barnet Homes	Reducing Demand and Promoting Independence	£0.371m
	Total	£4.2m

## **2. REASONS FOR RECOMMENDATIONS**

- 2.1 The Council is developing a new Housing Strategy (reported separately to this Committee) setting out the outcomes and priorities which Housing Services need to meet in the future:
- Increasing the supply of houses and delivering homes that people can afford
  - Improving quality in the Private Rented Sector
  - Tackling homelessness, and providing suitable housing to support vulnerable people
  - Delivering efficient and effective services to residents

### ***Council's Response to the Challenges***

- 2.2 The council has already done much to address the challenges laid out in section 1, for example through its plans to deliver 27,000 new homes through growth and regeneration, and the commencement of building the first new council homes for over 20 years. However, the extent of the housing challenges that face us mean that there are further actions we need to take and options to consider.
- 2.3 High demand for new homes and rising housing costs mean that we will prioritise **increasing the housing supply**, including the use of our own

resources to build new houses, and the **delivery of homes that people can afford**, including homes for rent at local housing allowance levels and low cost home ownership.

- 2.4 The increased level of private renting means that we will focus on **improving quality in the private rented sector**, including the use of discretionary powers to control and manage houses in multiple occupation.
- 2.5 We will continue to help those that need assistance by **tackling homelessness**, with a focus on prevention, and **providing suitable housing to support vulnerable people**, including older residents, those with disabilities and mental health problems and young people leaving care.
- 2.6 We will ensure that housing finances are optimised to maximise the amount of money to invest in delivering new homes, including a review of our rents policy. We will work with Barnet Homes, our Arm's Length Management Organisation (ALMO) to review the housing services to ensure that they are fit for the future, able to deliver our wider objectives and **deliver efficient and effective services to residents**.
- 2.7 These responses are laid out in more detail in the Commissioning Plan at Appendix C and in the draft housing strategy (reported separately on this agenda).

### **3. ALTERNATIVE OPTIONS CONSIDERED AND NOT RECOMMENDED**

- 3.1 This report sets out a range of options across the committee's remit to meet the budget challenge. This includes proposals for workforce savings, as well as generating greater income from new business. Alternatives to this could include cuts to services the Council provides, but these are not included in this report.

### **4. POST DECISION IMPLEMENTATION**

- 4.1 If this report is agreed, these budget proposals will be incorporated into the Council's draft budget proposals for 2015-20, which will be considered by policy and resources committee on the 2nd December. The commissioning outcomes will be incorporated into the corporate plan due to be considered at the same meeting. The commissioning plan will form the basis of the Housing Committees future strategic work programme including future business cases to deliver savings within the HRA.

#### **IMPLICATIONS OF DECISION**

- 4.2 **Resources (Finance & Value for Money, Procurement, Staffing, IT, Property, Sustainability)**
  - 4.2.1 In addition to continued austerity, demographic change and the resulting pressure on services poses a significant challenge to the Council. The

organisation is facing significant budget reductions at the same time as the population is increasing, particularly in the young and very old population cohorts. Given that nearly two thirds of the Council's budget is spent on Adult Social Care and Children's Services, this poses a particular challenge as these services are predominantly 'demand led'.

4.2.2 The budget proposals included in this report will enable the committee to meet its savings target as set out by Policy and Resources Committee in July 2014.

4.2.3 A national HRA subsidy system ended in April 2012 and was replaced with self-financing. The move to self-financing in the HRA was achieved by the Council making a payment of £103 million to the Treasury; the payment of negative subsidy being replaced with the cost of servicing this additional debt. The HRA settlement also included the calculation of a notional debt figure that was higher than the actual HRA debt held by Barnet, generating the capacity for additional borrowing headroom of £39m. The Council has developed an investment model to make decisions about how to spend the headroom over the next five years which is included with the commissioning plan at appendix C. The proposed housing strategy will be a key document to shape and support these decisions as they are taken forward through the 'Housing Development Pipeline' process agreed with the Assets, Regeneration and Growth Committee.

4.2.4 The HRA Business plan has already identified the following priorities for investment which are progressing:

**Existing Stock** - Investment of £32.5m of additional essential expenditure on the council's existing housing stock over the period 2013/14 to 2023/24 to include:

- Accelerated replacement programme for electrical mains following a fire at Upper Fosters in April 2012
- Updated assessment of rewiring requirements for housing stock
- Addition of properties at Ramsey Close into the HRA Business Plan
- Inclusion of additional works on West Hendon estate

**New Homes** – Investment of £7.7m to deliver an initial tranche of 41 new homes on infill sites on HRA land in the borough.

**Extra Care Housing** – Investment of £12.344 million to redevelop the site at Moreton Close, NW7 to provide an Extra Care Housing Scheme for the Council and to pay statutory home loss and disturbance to those residents moving from the existing scheme.

**Leasehold Buybacks** – Investment of £8.773 million to acquire leasehold properties for the Council on the Council's Regeneration Estates from leaseholders who wish to sell in advance of a Compulsory Purchase Order and use these properties as temporary accommodation until they are required by the development partners.

- 4.2.5 The budget projections within these commissioning plans contain indicative figures through to 2020. These budgets will be formally agreed each year as part of Council budget setting, and therefore could be subject to change.
- 4.2.6 Consultation with Ward Members on potential development opportunities at Broadfields, Whitings Hill, Northway/Fairway, Moxon Street and Coppetts Road has been approved by Assets, Regeneration and Growth Committee and following consultation with Ward Members, further consultation with residents will be undertaken prior to the submission of planning applications.
- 4.2.7 Additional priorities are being developed including the development of further Integrated Specialist Housing and proposals to meet investment in an additional 500 new homes by 2019/20 included in the commissioning plan at appendix C.
- 4.2.8 The introduction of the overall benefit cap (as part of the Government's reform of welfare) from August 2013 means that some households will not be able to afford the rents charged in Barnet and other parts of London for temporary accommodation and private rented sector homes even where these fall within local housing allowance levels. The housing strategy will have to take account of these issues in providing a fair approach in terms of procuring quality accommodation in affordable locations.

### **4.3 Legal and Constitutional References**

- 4.3.6 All proposals emerging from the business planning process will be considered in terms of the Council's legal powers and obligations (including, specifically, the public sector equality duty under the Equality Act 2010) and, where appropriate, mechanisms will be put into place to ensure compliance with legal obligations and duties and to mitigate any other legal risks as far as possible.
- 4.3.7 Constitution, Part 3, Responsibility for Functions, Appendix A – sets out the terms of reference of the Housing Committee which includes:
- Housing Strategy (incorporating Homelessness Strategy)
  - Work with Barnet Homes, RSLs and social housing providers to ensure the optimum provision of housing and associated facilities for those who require social housing
  - Commissioning of Environmental Health
  - Promote the better integration of privately rented properties into the Borough's framework;
  - All matters related to Private sector Housing including Disabled Facility Grants
  - Housing licensing and housing enforcement.
- 4.3.3 Specifically the Housing Committee may submit budget proposals to the Policy and Resources Committee relating to the Committee's budget for the following year in accordance with the budget timetable.

## **4.4 Risk Management**

4.4.6 The Council has taken steps to improve its risk management processes by integrating the management of financial and other risks facing the organisation. Risk management information is reported quarterly to the Performance and Contract Management Committee and is reflected, as appropriate, throughout the annual business planning process.

## **4.5 Equalities and Diversity**

4.5.6 Equality and diversity issues are a mandatory consideration in the decision making of the Council. This requires elected Members to satisfy themselves that equality considerations are integrated into day to day business and that all proposals emerging from the finance and business planning process have properly taken into consideration what impact, if any, there is on any protected group and what mitigating factors can be put in train.

4.5.7 The projected increase in the borough's population and changes in the demographic profile will be key factors that need to be considered when determining both the corporate strategy and service responses. Both of these need to also reflect the aspirations and contributions of current residents

4.5.8 A number of savings and income generation proposals have been included in Appendix B to this report. As set out in Appendix B, they result from a combination of greater efficiency in use of Council assets, income generated through a range of new business, reducing demand for services and service redesign

4.5.9 The proposals and priorities within the commissioning plan have been developed to minimise the impact on the most vulnerable, in particular vulnerable households at risk of homelessness. The equalities impact will be reviewed as proposals are developed in more detail and based on consultation findings, with equality impact assessments being undertaken to inform the final consideration of the Commissioning Plans by the Policy and Resources Committee in February.

4.5.10 The Commissioning Plan will be subject to formal consultation following the publication of the draft budget, and this position will be reviewed when the budget is then set in 2015.

4.5.11 All human resources implications will be managed in accordance with the Council's Managing Organisational Change policy that supports the Council's Human Resources Strategy and meets statutory equalities duties and current employment legislation.



## 4.6 Consultation and Engagement

### Consultation and Engagement

4.6.6 Public consultation will commence on all Committee Commissioning Plans following Policy and Resources Committee on 2<sup>nd</sup> December 2014, before final Commissioning Plans are agreed by Policy and Resources Committee on 17 February 2015.

4.6.7 Full public consultation will take place on individual proposals to deliver the savings identified before final decisions are taken by the Committee and savings plans are formalised in the Council's annual budget. Future consultation and engagement will be informed by the consultation work that has already been carried out as part of the Priorities and Spending Review process during which a comprehensive series of residents engagement activities took place in order to understand their priorities for the local area and look at how residents and organisations can support services going forward.

4.6.8 Over the last 12 months the council has been reviewing its priorities and spending. To help inform the council's future long term spending plans the council commissioned the Office for Public Management (OPM), an independent research organisation, to run a comprehensive series of residents engagement activities to understand their priorities for the local area and look at how residents and organisations can support services going forward.

4.6.9 The engagement followed two phases:

#### Phase 1:

4.6.10 A series of resident workshops, service user and businesses focus groups last autumn.

4.6.11 The [findings](#)<sup>1</sup> provide a rich evidence base of residents' priorities, what residents value most, their ideas for generating income, and how local people can work together. As a result the council has been able to identify [broad themes](#)<sup>2</sup> based on residents' views and involvement which will be used to help focus the council's future long term spending plans.

#### Phase 2:

4.6.12 Between March and June 2014 OPM ran an online call for evidence to hear views of organisations, businesses and individual residents on the future of

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<sup>1</sup> [http://engage.barnet.gov.uk/consultation-team/call-for-evidence/user\\_uploads/phase-1--barnet-challenge-opm-summary-report.pdf](http://engage.barnet.gov.uk/consultation-team/call-for-evidence/user_uploads/phase-1--barnet-challenge-opm-summary-report.pdf)

<sup>2</sup> [http://engage.barnet.gov.uk/consultation-team/call-for-evidence/user\\_uploads/key-themes-identified-from-the-first-phase-of-consultation.pdf](http://engage.barnet.gov.uk/consultation-team/call-for-evidence/user_uploads/key-themes-identified-from-the-first-phase-of-consultation.pdf)

Barnet, how the council can ensure that public services best meet the needs of the borough, how the council can change and how organisations and individuals can play a part in meeting Barnet's challenges during this time.

4.6.13 OPM has analysed the responses to the call for evidence on the council's behalf. Evidence was sought on two main topic areas:

- Ideas on the future of public services in Barnet, and how organisations and individuals can play a role in providing some of these services.
- Ideas on how the council could be more entrepreneurial and generate more income.

4.6.14 A summary of the findings can be found in Appendix A and the full report is available at [http://engage.barnet.gov.uk/consultation-team/call-forevidence/consult\\_view](http://engage.barnet.gov.uk/consultation-team/call-forevidence/consult_view)

## 5 BACKGROUND PAPERS

5.2 Relevant previous decisions are indicated in the table below.

Item	Decision	Link
Cabinet 12 March 2010	Decision item 8 - approved the existing Housing Strategy	<a href="http://barnet.moderngov.co.uk/Data/Cabinet/201004121900/Agenda/Document%207.pdf">http://barnet.moderngov.co.uk/Data/Cabinet/201004121900/Agenda/Document%207.pdf</a>
Cabinet 14 September 2011	Decision item 8 - approved Barnet's approach to social housing reform	<a href="http://barnet.moderngov.co.uk/Data/Cabinet/201109141900/Agenda/Document%204.pdf">http://barnet.moderngov.co.uk/Data/Cabinet/201109141900/Agenda/Document%204.pdf</a>
Cabinet Resources Committee 24 June 2013	Decision Item 6 - Local Authority New Housing Programme	<a href="http://barnet.moderngov.co.uk/documents/s9244/CRC%20LA%20New%20Build%20public.pdf">http://barnet.moderngov.co.uk/documents/s9244/CRC%20LA%20New%20Build%20public.pdf</a>
Housing Committee 30 June 2014	Decision Item 5 - Business planning – corporate plan and medium term financial strategy 2015-20	<a href="http://barnet.moderngov.co.uk/documents/s15740/Housing%20Committee%20Business%20Planning%20-%20Cover%20Report.pdf">http://barnet.moderngov.co.uk/documents/s15740/Housing%20Committee%20Business%20Planning%20-%20Cover%20Report.pdf</a>
Assets, Regeneration & Growth Committee 9 July 2014	Decision Item 11 - Strategic Asset Management Plan principles for consultation	<a href="http://barnet.moderngov.co.uk/documents/s16064/Strategic%20Asset%20Management%20Plan%20principles%20for%20consultation.pdf">http://barnet.moderngov.co.uk/documents/s16064/Strategic%20Asset%20Management%20Plan%20principles%20for%20consultation.pdf</a>
Policy and Resources Committee 21 July 2014	Decision Item 6 - Finance and Business Planning – Capital programme and review of reserves	<a href="http://barnet.moderngov.co.uk/documents/s16150/Finance%20and%20Business%20Planning%20Capital%20programme%20and%20review%20of%20reserves.pdf">http://barnet.moderngov.co.uk/documents/s16150/Finance%20and%20Business%20Planning%20Capital%20programme%20and%20review%20of%20reserves.pdf</a>
Policy and Resources Committee 21 July	Decision Item 10 - Funding for an Extra Care Housing Scheme	<a href="http://barnet.moderngov.co.uk/documents/s16154/Funding%20for%20an%20Extra%20Care%20Housing">http://barnet.moderngov.co.uk/documents/s16154/Funding%20for%20an%20Extra%20Care%20Housing</a>

Item	Decision	Link
2014	at Moreton Close, NW7 and Advance Acquisitions of Leasehold properties on Regeneration Estates	<a href="#">%20Scheme%20at%20Moreton%20Close%20NW7%20and%20Advance%20Acquisitions%20of%20Leasehold.pdf</a>
Assets, Regeneration & Growth Committee 8 September 2014	Decision Item 12 - Barnet Development Pipeline	<a href="http://barnet.moderngov.co.uk/documents/s17356/Development%20Pipeline%20-%20Report.pdf">http://barnet.moderngov.co.uk/documents/s17356/Development%20Pipeline%20-%20Report.pdf</a>

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# **Barnet Challenge**

## Report on the findings of a Call for Evidence for the London Borough of Barnet

July 2014

# Executive Summary

During 2014 Barnet Council will review its priorities and spending across all services. The council commissioned the independent research organisation and consultancy OPM to run an online call for evidence to hear views of organisations, businesses and individual residents on the future of Barnet, how the council can ensure that public services best meet the needs of the borough, how the council can change and how organisations and individuals can play a part in meeting Barnet's challenges during this time. OPM has analysed the responses to the call for evidence on the council's behalf. This report presents the findings.

Evidence was sought on two main topic areas:

- ideas on the future of public services in Barnet, and how organisations and individuals can play a role in providing some of these services
- ideas on how the council could be more entrepreneurial and generate more income.

Twenty individual residents and seven organisations responded to the survey between March and June 2014.

## *Summary of responses*

Throughout the survey quite a few individual respondents indicated they would appreciate getting more **involved with council decision-making** and services, e.g. through scrutiny groups, or other consultation activities. Some respondents, however, voiced some scepticism about whether the council would actually listen.

Both organisations and individual residents indicated that the council could do more to **tap into their knowledge and experience**, to help inform council decisions and models of service provision.

Overall, the organisations that responded seem to have **an appetite to work more closely with the council**, and indicated a variety of ways in which this could happen, including in an advisory role, organising working groups, and piloting and testing new models of services and other initiatives.

Some **individual respondents made suggestions about how the council could save money, or how they could help out**. The majority of these

suggestions were relatively abstract, but there were also a few clear cut proposals.

There were several suggestions for where individuals and organisations would envisage **support from the council in making this happen**, of note the provision of financial support, venues and meeting spaces, and support in outreach and advertising.

Both individual respondents and organisations provided a wide range of ideas for supporting income generation. Suggestions included, for example, the council better **utilising its facilities**, to **increase their enforcement role** and the collection of fines, **increasing council tax**, and **making more use of the voluntary sector** to provide support.

Both individual respondents and organisations provided **a wide range of ideas for how the council could generate income**, as well as some suggestions for the council to utilise their skills and assets more. Some would appreciate **more information from the council** on what this might look like. Others felt the council should be undertaking this work themselves.

A majority of those who responded as an **individual resident strongly disagreed with the council's approach to work as a commissioning council**. They didn't believe that outsourcing would save money in the long run, and were worried that it would impact on resident's ability to hold service providers to account. Another common criticism was that it's the council's responsibility to carry out these services, not that of residents. The **organisational responses to Barnet as a commissioning council were slightly more mixed**, with some agreeing, and some disagreeing with the council's approach.

For organisations, a common issue that came up across their responses was around how the procurement and commissioning policies of the 'commissioning council' could **support and enable community and voluntary organisations to bid for, and provide services**.

### *Next steps*

The findings from the call for evidence will go to the new council committees to help inform their decisions.

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HRA Budget Savings

Line ref	Opportunity Area	Description of saving	Consultation (How are we consulting on this proposal)	Impact Assessment		Savings per annum							
				Possible Impact on Service Delivery	Possible Impact on Customer Satisfaction	2016/17 £000	2016/17 FTE	2017/18 £000	2017/18 FTE	2018/19 £000	2018/19 FTE	2019/20 £000	2019/20 FTE
<b>Efficiency</b>													
E1	HR	Review and change some aspects of terms and conditions	Part of budget consultation	This saving will not impact service delivery	This saving will not impact customers	10,000	10,000	10,000	10,000	20,000	20,000	20,000	20,000
E2	HR	Increasing use of graduates, interns, volunteers and apprenticeships	Part of budget consultation	This saving will not impact service delivery	This saving will not impact customers	20,000	20,000	20,000	20,000	40,000	40,000	40,000	40,000
E3	Service level agreements	Negotiate reductions in service level agreements between Barnet Homes and LBB	Part of budget consultation	This saving will not impact service delivery	This saving will not impact customers	25,000	25,000	25,000	25,000	25,000	25,000	25,000	25,000
E4	Procurement	Renegotiate existing contracts to drive down operating costs	Part of budget consultation	New contracts may not have the same level of service	Satisfaction in services will decrease	50,000	50,000	50,000	50,000	40,000	40,000	40,000	40,000
E5	Accommodation	Reduction in accommodation costs as reducing floor space	Part of budget consultation	This saving will not impact service delivery	This saving will not impact customers	100,000	100,000	100,000	100,000				
E6	All systems GP	Efficient gas already delivered to fund All Systems Go business case				105,000	0	130,000	0	55,000	0	125,000	0
<b>Total</b>													
<b>Growth and Income</b>													
G1	New build	Income from new build	Part of budget consultation	This saving will not impact service delivery	This saving will not impact customers	25,000	97,000	257,000	70,000	50,000	50,000	50,000	50,000
G2	New business	Income from new business	Part of budget consultation	This saving will not impact service delivery	This saving will not impact customers	17,000	17,000	50,000	50,000	50,000	50,000	50,000	30,000
G3	New business	Income from PRS management	Part of budget consultation	This saving will not impact service delivery	This saving will not impact customers	37,000	37,000	37,000	37,000				
G4	Income	Seek introduction of higher fees and charges	Separate consultation required	This saving will not impact service delivery	This saving will not impact customers	20,000	20,000	20,000	20,000				
G5	GF Savings	EA & TA savings from new build	Part of budget consultation	This saving will not impact service delivery	This saving will not impact customers	34,000	34,000	102,000	102,000				
<b>Total</b>													
<b>25,000 0 148,000 0 448,000 0 120,000 0 100,000 0</b>													
<b>Reducing demand, promoting independence</b>													
R1	Self service	Reducing demand on services as a result of customer portal and customer applications, e.g. self-service	Part of budget consultation	Tenants might need to do more for themselves through self service whilst paying the same or increased levels of rent	Satisfaction in services will decrease	45,000	22,000	240,000	1,000,000	2,000,000	2,000,000	2,000,000	2,000,000
R2	Self service	Review the landlord and tenant contract e.g. revise policies to make tenants responsible for more than they currently are	Separate consultation required	Tenants might need to do more for themselves whilst paying the same or increased levels of rent	Satisfaction in services will decrease	40,000	40,000	40,000	40,000	40,000	40,000	40,000	40,000
<b>Total</b>													
<b>45,000 1 22,000 1 240,000 1 1,000,000 2 2,000,000 2</b>													
<b>Service redesign</b>													
S1	Service review	Reviewing the role of support services	Part of budget consultation	This saving will not impact service delivery	This saving will not impact customers	25,000	25,000	50,000	1,000,000	25,000	25,000	25,000	25,000
S2	Service review	Review the structure and services within income collection and tenancy sustainment and reduce the level of resources	Part of budget consultation	We could see some increase in the volume and amount of arrears	Less prevention work will mean more customers fall into arrears	50,000	50,000	50,000	50,000	40,000	40,000	40,000	40,000
S3	Service review	Caretaking and estate management	Part of budget consultation	Less frequent cleaning and maintaining of areas	Satisfaction will decrease	200,000	200,000	200,000	200,000	75,000	75,000	75,000	75,000
S4	Service review	Resident involvement, capacity building and community engagement	Part of budget consultation	Less engagement activities	Satisfaction in involvement will decrease	40,000	40,000	40,000	40,000	35,000	35,000	35,000	35,000
S5	Service review	Review the structure and services within Supported housing and reduce the level of resources	Part of budget consultation	This saving will not impact service delivery	This saving will not impact customers	200,000	200,000	200,000	200,000	20,000	20,000	20,000	20,000
S6	Service review	Review the structure and services within repairs and reduce the level of resources	Part of budget consultation	Longer waiting times for repairs, less inspections	Satisfaction will decrease	100,000	100,000	100,000	100,000	100,000	100,000	100,000	100,000
S7	Service review	Review the structure and services within the Call Centre and reduce the level of resources	Part of budget consultation	Longer call waiting times	Satisfaction will decrease	50,000	50,000	50,000	50,000	25,000	25,000	25,000	25,000
S8	Service review	Review the structure and services within regeneration & housing mgmt and reduce the level of resources	Part of budget consultation	Less support, more generic service delivery	Satisfaction will decrease, more ASB, management issues arise	400,000	400,000	400,000	400,000	150,000	150,000	150,000	150,000
S9	Service review	Reduce the level of management overheads	Part of budget consultation	Less ability to support change projects	This saving will not impact customers	150,000	150,000	150,000	150,000	150,000	150,000	150,000	150,000
<b>Total</b>													
<b>65,000 2 450,000 8 575,000 3 520,000 9 355,000 8</b>													
<b>Overall Savings</b>													
<b>240,000 3 750,000 9 1,100,000 4 905,000 12 1,205,000 11</b>													
<b>4,200,000</b>													
<b>Total savings 2015-2020</b>													

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# Housing Committee

## Commissioning Plan 2015 - 2020

### 1. The Context for the development of this plan

Public services in England during the decade 2010-2020 face an unprecedented challenge as the country deals with the impact of the financial crisis of 2008, alongside the opportunities and challenges that come from our changing and ageing population.

Despite a growing economy, the UK budget deficit is forecast to be £75bn at the 2015 General Election, with cuts set to continue to the end of the decade no matter who is in Government. At the same time, demand on local services continues to increase, driven by a growing population, particularly the number of young and older residents. We therefore must plan for the fact that austerity will affect all parts of the public sector to the end of the decade and that we will not be able to meet increasingly levels of demand from simply doing more of what we are currently doing.

The public too, does not expect simply more of the same. Expectations of local services are increasing, advances in customer services and technology provides the ability to interact with services 24/7. Local residents as a result expect better services and more prompt responses from the Council. However satisfaction with the Council and local services remains relatively high in Barnet, and over recent years resident satisfaction with a number of local services has increases, despite these challenges.

In thinking about how the Council lives within its means, the Council needs to recognise that residents are also facing wider financial pressures, from high energy bills, increasing housing costs, continued wage restraint, and benefit reforms, so the ability of many households to absorb the impact of reductions from public sector funding through increased financial contributions is constrained.

We can however expect over the duration of this plan that significant opportunities will flow from Barnet being part of a growing and arguably booming London economy. Unemployment levels have fallen by a third in the last year, the number of 16-18 year old Not in Education, Employment or Training (NEETs. in Barnet is, at 2.3%, the fourth lowest in England and fewer Barnet residents are claiming out-of-work benefits than the London average. This plan needs to ensure that all residents of Barnet can benefit from the opportunities of growth, whether through new employment opportunities, increased investment in infrastructure such as roads and schools, or enjoying new neighbourhoods and places in which all people can live and age well.

## **Barnet Council's Overarching Approach to meeting the 2020 Challenge**

The Council's Corporate Plan sets the framework for each of the Commissioning Committees five year commissioning plans. Whether the plans are covering services for vulnerable residents or about universal services such as the environment and waste there are a number of core and shared principles which underpin the commissioning outcomes.

### **The first is a focus on fairness**

Fairness for the Council is about striking the right balance between fairness towards the more frequent users of services and fairness to the wider taxpayer and making sure all residents from our diverse communities - young, old, disabled, and unemployed benefit from the opportunities of growth.

The Council must 'get the basics right' so people can get on with their lives – disposing of waste, keeping streets clean, allowing people to transact in more convenient ways, resolving issues promptly in the most cost effective way.

We must shift our approach to earlier intervention and demand management .... Managing the rising demand on services requires a step change in the Council's approach to early intervention and prevention. Across the public sector, we need to work with residents to prevent problems rather than treating the symptoms when they materialise.

### **The second is a focus on responsibility**

Continue to drive out efficiencies to deliver more with less:

The Council will drive out efficiencies through a continued focus on workforce productivity; bearing down on contract and procurement costs and using assets more effectively. All parts of the system need to play their part in helping to achieve better outcomes with reduced resources.

Change its relationships with residents, with residents working with the Council to reduce the impact of funding cuts to services:

In certain circumstances, residents will also need to take on more personal and community responsibility for keeping Barnet a great place particularly if there is not a legal requirement for the Council to provide services. In some cases users will be required to pay more for certain services as the Council prioritises the resources it has available.

### **The third is a focus on opportunity**

Prioritise regeneration, growth and maximising income – Regeneration revitalises communities and provides residents and businesses with places to live and work. Growing the local tax base and generating more income through growth and other

sources makes the Council less reliant on government funding; helps offsets the impact of service cuts and allows the Council to invest in the future infrastructure of the Borough.

Redesign service and deliver them differently through a range of models and providers:

The Council has no pre-determined view about how services should be designed and delivered. The Council will work with providers from across the public, private and voluntary sectors to provide services which are more integrated, through a range of models most appropriate to the service and the outcomes that we want to achieve.

**Planning ahead is crucial:**

The Council dealt with the first wave of austerity by planning ahead and focusing in the longer-term, thus avoid short-term cuts - the Council is continuing this approach by extending its plans to 2020.

## 2. Committee context

### Background to Housing Provision

A rapidly increasing population in Barnet has resulted in increased demand for housing and rising housing costs. In addition, there has been a significant shift in tenure, which has seen owner occupation reduce and private renting increase by about 10% respectively between 2001 and 2011. Over the next ten years it is expected that renting will rise to comprise 50% of the housing accommodation in Barnet.

### WHAT IS HOUSING IN BARNET FOR?

Based on what we know already about housing in Barnet we arrive at the following emerging strategic priorities which will be consulted upon as part of the draft housing strategy:

- We will prioritise **Increasing the Housing Supply**, including the use of our own resources to build new houses,
- The **Delivery of homes that people can afford**, including homes for rent at local housing allowance levels and low cost home ownership.
- The increased level of private renting means that we will focus on **sustaining quality in the Private Rented Sector**, including the use of discretionary powers to control poorly managed houses in multiple occupation.
- We will continue to help those that need assistance by **Tackling Homelessness**, with a focus on prevention as well as making best use of our existing housing stock.
- **Providing suitable housing to support vulnerable people**, including older residents, those with disabilities and mental health problems and young people leaving care will be a priority.
- We will ensure that housing finances are optimised to **maximise the amount of money to invest in delivering new homes**, including a review of our rents policy.
- We will work with Barnet Homes, our Arm's Length Management Organisation (ALMO) to review the housing services to ensure that they are fit for the future, able to deliver our wider objectives and **deliver efficient and effective services to residents**.

Taking into account these objectives, we can describe the overall vision for housing in Barnet as:

*“Barnet is a place where housing helps individuals and families who add economic, social, civic or cultural value to communities, to live as owners or renters of property.”*

## HOUSING IN BARNET IN 2020 – PEN PORTRAIT

Barnet in 2020 is a place where **individuals and families who add value to the community, be it financially, culturally, or through the provision of important services like teaching or nursing can find a place to live and are able to put down roots**. The borough's population has reached a new high of 387,000 people, 20,000 more than the number in 2014, with more growth anticipated for the foreseeable future. This growth reflects not just the rise of London as a whole, but also the relative success of Barnet, which is now widely viewed as **an aspirational suburb** where people from a wide range of backgrounds want to live, work and raise families.

This is partly as a result of Barnet's close **proximity to excellent infrastructure connections** and the City of London, but also the fact that housing in the borough reflects its current and expected future population. The more traditional and established parts of the borough are **conserved to a high standard**, whilst areas of higher future growth such as **Colindale and Brent Cross-South are enabled to grow to their full potential** through active brokerage by the council and its partners to unlock growth and deliver infrastructure, and by **actively engaging with home builders to create high quality housing** for the growing population. Additional supply of housing is being unlocked by bringing **vacant properties back onto the market** at affordable prices.

Housing in Barnet is differentiated from other areas by its **high quality developments** and focus on creating **places and homes that people, whether home owners or renters, want to live in for the medium and longer-term**. Homes in Barnet are not only an adequate size and quality internally, but also **integrate particularly well into the existing physical and social fabric** of the borough. For instance, by matching with the local vernacular and providing the right infrastructure for the new residents' and **"building out" negative impacts like crime and anti-social behaviour**, whilst making it easier for new residents to interact with each other and build cohesive communities.

In 2020 **owning a property remains a key aspiration** for many people living in the borough. This is recognised by both the council, central government and developers who are responding by **delivering historically high levels of new housing** through regeneration and non-regeneration building in all parts of the borough, **particularly 1 and 2 bedroom properties** demanded by those taking their first steps onto the property ladder. New housing in the borough is appropriate not just for new families and younger people, but is also **designed explicitly with the needs of an ageing population in mind**, both in terms of their health and their needs as active participants in the local community.

The nature of the housing market in 2020 has **more emphasis on private renting** than was the case in 2014, with **the majority of people moving into the borough renting**, and the overall percentage of owner-occupied properties falling.. **More and more highly skilled residents are also choosing to rent**. This combination of greater numbers of renters, and a changing profile of renters means that the quality of the **quality of private rented properties is increasingly in line with the best owner-occupied properties**. **The length of tenure of private rented contracts is increasing**, with 2, 3 and 5 year contracts for families and more mature renters increasingly becoming the norm and helping the market to mature. An important principle of the councils approach to housing is that **anyone who works and adds value to the community is able to live in Barnet**, even if this includes support from local housing allowance. In 2020 some school staff, nurses and carers are included in this cohort.

Barnet continues to manage **the supply of houses in multiple occupation** through its Article 4 adopted planning powers. It intervenes in the private rented market where rogue landlords fail to meet minimum health and safety standards for rented property, and supports good landlords.

Homelessness has reached the lowest level for 15 years, with **people identified as vulnerable or homeless being offered temporary accommodation and additional support and mentoring** to help them re-engage with the private sector renting safely and quickly. The Council works hard to find the best option for vulnerable people, whether that's local to Barnet, or further afield. Unlike the rest of London Barnet continues with its policy of no homeless person ever being put into bed and breakfast accommodation. **Coordinated preventative work** by the council and its partners means that fewer and fewer vulnerable people are reaching a point of crises where temporary accommodation needs to be found for them.



### 3. Outcomes

Within the resources available to the Committee up to 2020, achieving the following outcomes will steer strategic decision making in relation to service delivery and investment.

<b>Priority</b>	<b>Key Outcomes</b>
<b>Increasing Housing Supply</b>	<p>Barnet is delivering large numbers of new homes with an appropriate mix of size and tenure through its growth and regeneration programmes in particular:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Housing Strategy has set out Barnet’s plans for increasing supply</li> <li>• Housing Needs Assessment have identified the quantum and mix of housing required</li> <li>• Growth and Regeneration programmes and new private developments meet housing need, and contribute to Barnet’s reputation as a desirable place to live.</li> <li>• Developments on Council land meet housing need and maximise benefits to the Council.</li> </ul>
<b>Delivery of Affordable Housing</b>	<p>Barnet has identified the number of affordable homes it needs and is delivering these in particular:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Housing Strategy has identified Barnet’s approach to providing affordable homes</li> <li>• Housing Needs Assessment has identified the amount of affordable housing needed</li> <li>• Affordable Housing Supplementary Planning Document has set out how much affordable housing will be sought from new developments as part of the planning process</li> <li>• A new Framework Agreement with the GLA will set out our approach to delivery of affordable homes in the context of the London Housing Strategy</li> <li>• The HRA Business Plan has set out the investment priorities for new and existing council homes</li> <li>• Developments on Council land meet needs for affordable housing and maximise benefits to the Council.</li> </ul>
<b>Council Housing and Housing Needs Services</b>	<p>Barnet has arrangements in place for providing housing and homelessness services that deliver high satisfaction amongst residents and minimises the number of people being admitted to emergency temporary accommodation in particular:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• The Housing Strategy has set out objectives for Housing Services in Barnet</li> <li>• The future of homelessness and housing management services beyond 2014/15 has been established</li> <li>• The contribution of homelessness and housing management services to the Council’s overall aims has been developed</li> </ul>

<p><b>Tackling Homelessness</b></p>	<p>Homelessness and use of emergency accommodation has been minimised in particular:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Development of a detailed Homelessness and Temporary Accommodation action plan</li> <li>• Budget monitoring will help to contain costs associated with use of emergency accommodation</li> <li>• Housing Allocations Scheme will ensure that scarce affordable housing is targeted at those in need and making a contribution to the borough</li> <li>• Tenancy Strategy will ensure that more council housing is made available for those who need it</li> </ul>
<p><b>Sustaining quality in the Private Rented Sector</b></p>	<p>Barnet has a good quality private rented sector that provides a key role in meeting the housing needs of the borough in particular:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Supporting good landlords in the Private Rented Sector and intervening where necessary.</li> <li>• Bringing empty properties back into use</li> <li>• Houses in Multiple-Occupation – Business Case to extend licensing beyond the statutory minimum scheme to assist in improving the housing impact of houses in multiple-occupation.</li> <li>• Use of Article 4 direction to control development of new HMOs</li> </ul>
<p><b>Providing suitable housing to support vulnerable people</b></p>	<p>Barnet is delivering homes with an appropriate mix of size and tenure for the needs of vulnerable groups through its growth and regeneration programmes in particular:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• New integrated specialist housing including extra care</li> <li>• Wheelchair accessible housing</li> <li>• Continuation of the Winter Well programme</li> <li>• Creating a supported housing pathway for children leaving care</li> <li>• Creating a supported housing pathway for people with mental health needs which promotes independence and recovery</li> </ul>
<p><b>Financial contribution to the Council</b></p>	<p>The Council will work to review the current arrangements with The Barnet Group to assess value for money and to explore options for the future delivery of services to meet the Councils strategic needs. This will include options for the delivery and management of new homes and a mixed economy of private, social and affordable rents. Revised arrangements will be in place by April 2016.</p>

#### **4. About this plan**

The commissioning plan has been developed in sections for the following priorities that make up the draft Housing Strategy:

- Increasing Housing Supply
- Delivery of Affordable Housing
- Council Housing and Housing Needs Services
- Tackling Homelessness
- Sustaining quality in the Private Rented Sector
- Providing suitable housing to support vulnerable people
- Financial contribution to the Council

For each priority, the strategic direction is set out together with the commissioning intentions and the outcomes to be achieved.

## 5. Priority: Increasing Housing Supply and Delivery of Affordable Housing

### Delivering homes that people can afford

- **Increasing supply** will help ease the pressure on housing costs over the longer-term. However, **there is a more immediate need to address the issue of a lack of housing – across all tenures - that people can afford.**

### *Reviewing the amount of affordable housing in new developments*

- The Council will review its **Affordable Housing Supplementary Planning Document**, which determines the amount of affordable housing for rent and sale as part of new developments. The current requirement is for 40% of homes on new developments to be affordable and the review will consider whether this should change.

### *Rented homes at affordable prices*

- The Council believes that, for most people, including working households on modest incomes, 'affordable' means **rent at Local Housing Allowance (LHA) level** – meaning that residents will qualify for Housing Benefit if their income is low enough to qualify. As a result, the Council will seek to **increase the supply of rented homes at LHA level** by making use of available resources to develop new homes.

### *Simplifying rents policy and reinvesting to build more homes that are affordable*

- There is a **link between the level of rent that is charged for council housing and the amount of resource available to invest in the construction of more homes that are affordable.**
- The Council needs to strike the right balance between **setting council rents at a level which is fair and generating income to increase the total number of homes that are affordable.**
- In view of this, the Council will **charge an affordable rent at Local Housing Allowance (LHA) levels or 80% of average market rent whichever is lower for all new council homes it builds.** This will generate an additional income to be **reinvested in building more homes that are affordable.**
- To **ensure consistency in relation to existing properties**, the Council will set **rents at LHA levels or 80% of the average market rent whichever is lower when empty properties are re-let.** For **existing tenants**, the Council will consult on proposals for increasing rents to LHA levels or 80% of average market rents whichever is lower. Each additional 1% increase will generate around £550,000 of additional income to be **reinvested in building more homes that are affordable.**

### **In delivering more homes that people can afford, the Council will:**

- ✓ **Increase the supply of housing over the longer-term.**
- ✓ **Revise its Affordable Housing Supplementary Planning Document**, which guides applicants, agents, developers and planners through the affordable

housing delivery mechanism and clarifies Barnet's application of Local Plan and London Plan policy requirements.

- ✓ Increase the supply of rented homes at **Local Housing Allowance level (LHA)**.
- ✓ Strike the right balance between the level of council rents and the amount of resource available for building more homes that are affordable by charging rent at LHA levels or **80% of average market rent for all new council homes; existing council properties that are re-let** and, over time increase, for **existing council tenants**.
- ✓ Additional revenues generated through this change in rents policy will be **reinvested to increase the number of affordable homes across the borough**.

For residents this will mean;

- An increased supply of homes at affordable prices
- New homes that will meet housing need in the borough

For providers this will mean

- Developers and Registered Providers will have the opportunity to work with the council to build new homes including new and innovative products

#### **Commissioning intentions:**

	<b>Commissioning intention</b>	<b>What needs to happen</b>
1	Increasing the supply of new homes	- Housing Strategy has set out Barnet's plans for increasing supply
2	New homes that will meet the needs of Barnet's households	- Housing Needs Assessment has identified the quantum and mix of housing required. - Growth and Regeneration programmes and new private developments meet housing need, and contribute to Barnet's reputation as a desirable place to live. - Developments on Council land meet housing need and maximise benefits to the Council

	<b>Commissioning intention</b>	<b>What needs to happen</b>
3	Delivering Homes that people can afford	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>- Housing Strategy has identified Barnet's approach to providing affordable homes</li> <li>- Housing Needs Assessment has identified the amount of affordable housing needed</li> <li>- Affordable Housing Supplementary Planning Document has set out how affordable housing will be sought from new developments as part of the planning process</li> <li>- A new Framework Agreement with the GLA will set out our approach to delivery of affordable homes in the context of the London Housing Strategy</li> <li>- The HRA Business Plan has set out the investment priorities for new and existing council homes</li> <li>- Council rents policy in place that provides additional income for building new council homes</li> <li>- Developments on Council land meet needs for affordable housing and maximise benefits to the Council.</li> </ul>

These commissioning intentions will contribute to the following outcomes:

- **Increasing Housing Supply**
- **Delivery of Affordable Housing**

#### **Outcome measures**

<b>Measure</b>	<b>Baseline – 13/14</b>	<b>Target - 19/20</b>
Additional Homes provided on HRA land	-	500 additional homes provided by 2019/20
% of New Build homes that are affordable		40%
Reduction in those considering affordable housing as a concern in residents' survey.		Reduce to average for London by 2020 (Barnet 6% above London Average Spring 2014)

**Revenue impact**

The revenue position for the services is detailed at the end of the plan.

**Capital requirements**

The capital position for the services is detailed at the end of the plan.

## 6. Priority: Council Housing and Housing Needs Services and Tackling Homelessness

- Barnet Council will continue to take action to **reduce the number of people placed in temporary accommodation** and, in doing so, has successfully **avoided the use of bed and breakfast accommodation**.
- The Council's strategy for reducing the number of residents in temporary accommodation will continue to focus on increasing the number of private lettings to homeless households **working with private landlords** to achieve this; a greater focus on **homelessness prevention measures**; sourcing accommodation in **less expensive areas outside of Barnet**; and working in partnership with Job Centre Plus to create a multi-agency **benefits Task Force** to work closely with households affected by welfare reform to minimise the risk of homelessness.

### *Making best use of existing housing stock*

- In order to make the best use of existing stock, the Council has already **changed the way that these homes are allocated** and restricted allocations to those households that are in the highest need.
- Barnet's housing allocations scheme also already recognises the contribution that people who are **working** or **volunteering** make to the community by taking this into account.
- In order to **increase the turnover and availability of council homes**, most new tenants now receive a fixed term tenancy of five years,
- A review of the operation of the Barnet's Tenancy Strategy by February 2015 to ensure that its stated objectives are being achieved.

### **In tackling homelessness in Barnet, the Council has:**

- ✓ **Increased incentives to private landlords** to increase the number of private lettings to homeless households.
- ✓ Placed a greater focus on **homelessness prevention measures**.
- ✓ Sourced accommodation in **less expensive areas outside of Barnet**.
- ✓ Partnered with Job Centre Plus to create a multi-agency **benefits Task Force** to work closely with households affected by welfare reform to minimise the risk of homelessness.
- ✓ Reformed its **Tenancy Strategy** to recognise volunteering and setting fixed term tenancies of five years for new tenants to **increase the turnover of council homes** and **make more homes available to those that need them**.

For residents this will mean;

- Support from the Council via Barnet Homes to prevent Homelessness
- Access to homes in more affordable areas outside of the borough
- Support for residents affected by welfare reform to minimise the risk of homelessness
- Additional priority for affordable housing for those residents making a contribution to the community by working or volunteering



For providers this will mean

- Opportunity to provide high quality and efficient housing services for Barnet's residents

**Commissioning intentions:**

	<b>Commissioning intention</b>	<b>What needs to happen</b>
1	Housing Services provision that meets the needs of Barnet's residents	- The Housing Strategy has set out objectives for Housing Services in Barnet
		- Work to ensure high quality and efficient homelessness and housing management services beyond 2014/15
		- The contribution of homelessness and housing management services to the Council's overall aims has been developed.
2	Reducing Homelessness and the use of Temporary Accommodation	- Development of a detailed Homelessness and Temporary Accommodation action plan
		- Budget monitoring will help to contain costs associated with use of emergency accommodation
		- Housing Allocations Scheme will ensure that scarce affordable housing is targeted at those in need and making a contribution to the borough
		- Tenancy Strategy will ensure that more council housing is made available for those who need it

These commissioning intentions will contribute to the following outcomes:

- **Council Housing and Housing Needs Services**
- **Tackling Homelessness**

**Outcome measures**

<b>Measure</b>	<b>Baseline – 13/14</b>	<b>Target - 19/20</b>
Percentage of respondents very or fairly satisfied with the service provided by their social housing provider		No less than 81% annually
Numbers in Emergency Temporary Accommodation (ETA)		No More than 500 at financial year end
Number of households living in Bed and Breakfast		Zero

Percentage of those households in ETA pending enquiries or found to be intentionally homeless		No more than the London Average quarterly
Homelessness Preventions		No less than the London Average <sup>1</sup>

**Revenue impact**

The revenue position for the services is detailed at the end of the plan.

**Capital requirements**

The capital position for the services is detailed at the end of the plan.

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<sup>1</sup> Total number of cases of homelessness prevention and relief per thousand households

## 7. Priority: Sustaining quality in the Private Rented Sector

- Everyone wants to live in a home that is of **good quality** and makes them feel safe. As such, Barnet's Housing Strategy will seek to **improve the quality of housing across the borough**.
- In all new developments, the Council is committed to building **high quality new homes** where people want to live. At the same time, there is also a need to tackle the issue of **poor quality housing in the private rented sector**.
- The high demand for homes has seen an increase in the number of **Homes in Multiple-Occupation (HMOs)** – particularly through the conversion of family homes into properties shared by unrelated people which, in some cases, are not well managed.
- The Council will review how HMOs are **regulated** and **crack down on rogue landlords** and sub-standard properties, working directly with landlords and encouraging them to acquire formal accreditation through the **London Landlords Accreditation Scheme**.

**In order to ensure high quality housing across the borough, the Council will:**

- ✓ Ensure that all new homes are built to **high standards of quality**.
- ✓ Review regulations relating to **Homes in Multiple Occupancy**.
- ✓ Crack down on **rogue landlords** and encourage more of the borough's private landlords to acquire formal accreditation through the **London Landlords Accreditation Scheme**.

For residents this will mean;

- Sustained quality in the private rented sector
- A reduction in poor quality HMOs and associated negative impacts on local neighbourhoods

For providers this will mean

- Improved professionalism within private rented sector

**Commissioning intentions:**

	<b>Commissioning intention</b>	<b>What needs to happen</b>
1	Supporting good landlords in the Private Rented Sector and intervening where necessary.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>- Houses in Multiple-Occupation – Business Case to extend licensing beyond the statutory minimum scheme to assist in improving the housing impact of houses in multiple-occupation.</li> <li>- Use of Article 4 direction to control development of new HMOs</li> </ul>

These commissioning intentions will contribute to the following outcomes:

- **Sustaining quality in the Private Rented Sector**

### Outcome measures

<b>Measure</b>	<b>Baseline – 13/14</b>	<b>Target - 19/20</b>
Housing Health and Safety Rating System		Category 1 hazards reduced in 165 properties
Improvement in HMOs		60% HMOs licensed in 90 days or less
Improvement in HMOs		60% Licensed HMOs with expired major conditions are complied with or enforcement action is taken against owners
Improvement in HMOs		5% increase in the number of accredited landlords
HMOs licensed		Total number of licensed premises is increased by 20 annually

### Revenue impact

The revenue position for the services is detailed at the end of the plan.

### Capital requirements

The capital position for the services is detailed at the end of the plan.

## 8. Priority: Providing suitable housing to support vulnerable people

**In order to provide suitable housing to support vulnerable people, the Council will:**

Prioritise developments for:

Older people including:

- New homes
- Co-housing
- Sheltered housing
- Supported housing options
- Adapted and Accessible Older Properties
- Advice
- Housing for adults with disabilities
- Mental Health
- Young People Leaving Care

**In providing suitable housing to support vulnerable people in Barnet, the Council has:**

- Identified a site and funding agreed for new Extra Care Housing Scheme
- Planning permission granted for Co-housing project
- Developed additional Sheltered Housing Plus
- Re-commissioning of housing related floating support services
- Supported Living Housing Scheme established at Speedwell Court
- 220 Disability Facility Grants were approved in 2013/14.

For residents this will mean;

- Increased housing options for vulnerable people in Barnet

For providers this will mean

- Working with the Council to provide a range of housing options for vulnerable people

**Commissioning intentions:**

	<b>Commissioning intention</b>	<b>What needs to happen</b>
1	Increased supply of alternatives to residential care for vulnerable people	- New integrated specialist housing including extra care - More wheelchair accessible housing
2	Reduce the number of deaths amongst older people associated with cold weather	- Continuation of the Winter Well programme
3	Providing sustainable housing options for children leaving care	- Creating a supported housing pathway for children leaving care
4	Providing sustainable housing options for people with mental health needs	- Creating a supported housing pathway for people with mental health needs which promotes independence and recovery

These commissioning intentions will contribute to the following outcomes:

- **Providing suitable housing to support vulnerable people**

#### **Outcome measures**

<b>Measure</b>	<b>Baseline – 13/14</b>	<b>Target - 19/20</b>
Provide additional integrated specialist housing including extra care		100 additional units by 2019/20
Provide additional wheelchair housing		10% of new housing provision
Provide additional 'lifetime homes' housing		100% of new housing provision

#### **Revenue impact**

The revenue position for the services is detailed at the end of the plan.

#### **Capital requirements**

The capital position for the services is detailed at the end of the plan.

## 9. Financial contribution to the Council

The Council will work to review the current arrangements with The Barnet Group, to assess value for money and to explore options for the future delivery of services to meet the Council's strategic needs. This will include options for the delivery and management of new homes and a mixed economy of private, social and affordable rents. Revised arrangements will be in place by April 2016.

### Council Housing and Housing Needs Services

The council's Medium Term Financial Strategy (MTFS) includes a general fund saving of £300k for 2015/16. A Priority Spending Review (PSR) target has been set for a 20% reduction of management costs in the HRA for the period from 2016-20. This equates to a baseline adjustment of £4.2 million and work is currently underway to identify how that can be achieved. This savings assumption has been built into the proposals for funding new build and ensuring use of right to buy receipts (see pages 13 and 14). In order to meet this saving requirement Barnet Homes has developed proposals for savings which currently total £3.4 million as laid out in the section on savings below. These savings targets are set out in the table below.

<u>Service Area</u>	<u>2014/15 budget</u> <u>(£'000)</u>	<u>MTFP</u>	<u>PSR</u>
		<u>Proposed</u>	<u>Suggested</u>
		<u>2015/16 budget</u> <u>(£'000)</u>	<u>2019/20 budget</u> <u>(£'000)</u>
HNR (Expenditure)	20,484	20,184	20,184
HNR (Income)	(16,230)	(16,230)	(16,230)
Inflation			196
<b>TOTAL</b>	<b>4,254</b>	<b>3,954</b>	<b>4,150</b>

<u>Service Area</u>	<u>2014/15 budget</u> <u>(£'000)</u>	<u>Proposed</u>	<u>Suggested</u>
		<u>2015/16 budget</u> <u>(£'000)</u>	<u>2019/20 budget</u> <u>(£'000)</u>
HRA (Expenditure)	65,176	65,176	60,976
HRA (Income)	(61,830)	(61,830)	(61,830)
<b>TOTAL*</b>	<b>3,346</b>	<b>3,346</b>	<b>(854)</b>

\* The 2014-15 & 2015-16 periods show a net cost of Housing Revenue Account (HRA) services (funded by the HRA reserve). The PSR period shows a surplus.

### HRA Savings proposals – Barnet Homes proposed savings 2016-2020

Service Area	Description	How saving will be achieved	Saving

Barnet Homes	SERVICE REVIEWS -	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Reviewing the role of:</li> <li>• Support services</li> <li>• Income collection and tenancy sustainment</li> <li>• Caretaking and estate management</li> <li>• Resident involvement, capacity building and community engagement</li> <li>• Supported housing and Assist</li> <li>• Repairs</li> <li>• Call Centre</li> <li>• Regeneration &amp; housing management</li> <li>• Management structure</li> </ul>	£1.965m
Barnet Homes	Efficiency	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Consider Revised reward strategy</li> <li>• Increasing use of graduates, interns, volunteers and apprenticeships</li> <li>• Negotiate reductions in service level agreements between Barnet Homes and LBB</li> <li>• Review contracts to achieve greater purchasing power and maximise efficiencies from existing contracts</li> <li>• Reduction in accommodation costs as reducing floor space</li> <li>• Efficiencies already delivered to fund All Systems Go business case</li> </ul>	£1.024m
Barnet Homes	Growth and Income	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Income from new build</li> <li>• Income from new business</li> <li>• Income from PRS management</li> <li>• Seek introduction of higher fees and charges</li> <li>• EA &amp; TA savings from new build</li> </ul>	£0.839m



Barnet Homes	Reducing Demand, Promoting Independence	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Reducing demand on services as a result of customer portal and customer applications</li> <li>Review the landlord and tenant contract</li> </ul>	£0.371m
		<b>Total</b>	<b>£4.2m</b>

**Delivery of Affordable Housing** - Delivery of new council homes will be supported by a combination of HRA headroom, right to buy receipts and GLA grant. The Savills modelling tool shows that in addition to the existing commitments<sup>2</sup>, a new build programme of 500 new council homes over 5 years could be supported subject to the availability of suitable land, as well as two further extra care housing schemes (100 units).

In addition, Barnet Homes have secured £2.47m funding from the GLA 2015/18 affordable housing programme to support building 101 new homes at a total cost of £19.1m.

**Tackling Homelessness** – Containing budget pressures associated with the costs of temporary accommodation continues to be a challenge especially with the demand to bring forward early decanting for regeneration. Detailed plans are in place to contain those costs and this will be monitored through existing governance structures.

**Barnet Homes Capital Programme:**

Investment to refurbish General Fund hostels and 3 new council homes at Alexandra Road.

2014-15	TOTAL CAPITAL FUNDING £'000					
General Fund	2014-15	2015-16	2016-17	2017-18	2018-19	Total
Alexandra Road	24					24
Hostel Refurbishment Programme	270					270

**Current HRA Capital Programme:**

Investment to ensure that council owned housing stock is well maintained and that statutory health and safety obligations are met. Also includes investment to improve Granville Road and deliver 38 new council homes.

2014-15 TO 2018-19	TOTAL CAPITAL FUNDING £'000
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<sup>2</sup> Existing Barnet Homes programme for 41 units, Extra Care Housing at Morton Close, Advanced Acquisitions of Leasehold properties on Regeneration Estates

Housing Revenue Account	2014-15	2015-16	2016-17	2017-18	2018-19	Total
Major Works (excl. Granville Rd)	8,519	8,520	8,438	8,101	6,331	39,908
Granville Road	293					293
Regeneration	4,623	2,301	2,506	2,065	1,684	13,181
Misc. - Repairs	1,316	942	2,020	2,073	2,348	8,698
M&E/ GAS	14,101	15,014	8,254	8,079	6,826	52,273
Voids and Lettings	1,980	1,712	1,806	1,853	2,305	9,655
38 New Affordable Homes	6,832					6,832
<b>Totals</b>	<b>37,664</b>	<b>28,488</b>	<b>23,024</b>	<b>22,171</b>	<b>19,493</b>	<b>130,840</b>

### Current Actions - Development & Infrastructure

<b>Priorities for use of HRA Headroom</b>	
	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>General Fund Savings particularly social care pressures and costs of emergency temporary accommodation</li> <li>Tackling Homelessness</li> <li>Regeneration &amp; Growth</li> </ul>
<b>In Place</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Additional £32m investment in existing stock</li> <li>£7.7m for 41 New homes on HRA land</li> <li>£12.3m for new supported housing scheme at Morton Close</li> <li>£8.7m for advanced acquisitions on Regeneration Estates</li> </ul>
<b>To be confirmed</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Additional new build – 500 units by 2019/20</li> <li>Two more supported housing schemes – 100 units by 2019/20</li> </ul>
<b>Other expenditure</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Development of affordable homes on General Fund land</li> <li>Developing our own Private Rented Sector with prudential borrowing</li> <li>Use of Right to Buy Receipts</li> <li>Can we do more with existing assets? (Net Present Value project underway)</li> </ul>

### Critical dependencies for the availability of HRA headroom and design of the financial model

- Levels of affordable rented homes, including quantity of private rented homes at Local Housing Allowance levels
  - Use of Low Cost Home Ownership and innovative private rented models
  - Rents policy for the Councils housing stock
  - Future of non-secure tenants on the regeneration estates in the borough
  - Delivery of the Barnet Homes HRA saving of £4.2 million
- Establishing role of Barnet Homes going forward


The table on the next page shows the currently modelled available build budget and the maximum numbers of units capable of being built on HRA land assuming:

- Current Right to Buy projections
- Delivery of the HRA management fee saving of £4.2 million
- A rent policy of annually increasing rents 0.5% above CPI plus 1% (the current rent increase cap)
- Holding HRA reserves at a minimum of £7 million

5. Build cost of £150,000 per unit (note actual build cost would vary significantly dependent upon what was being built especially in terms of density and specialist requirements)
6. Accumulated surpluses are achieved at end of each year and are available for subsequent year investment

The following page lays out the financial modelling for investment in house building on the Council's HRA land holding based upon the assumptions above. This shows that approximately 750 homes could be built subject to land availability over the next five years.

<b>HOUSING REVENUE ACCOUNT</b>							
	<b>2014/15</b>	<b>2015/16</b>	<b>2016/17</b>	<b>2017/18</b>	<b>2018/19</b>	<b>2019/2020</b>	
<b>Income</b>	<b>£</b>	<b>£</b>	<b>£</b>	<b>£</b>	<b>£</b>	<b>£</b>	
Dwelling rents	(53,164,530)	(54,168,612)	(54,109,790)	(53,664,026)	(52,570,966)	(52,570,616)	
New Build Dwellings	0	0	(4,504,491)	(4,956,361)	(6,301,029)	(7,879,214)	
Non-dwelling rents	(1,596,622)	(1,689,506)	(1,675,027)	(1,648,791)	(1,603,124)	(1,591,130)	
Tenants Charges for services and facilities	(4,088,289)	(3,858,931)	(3,930,169)	(3,882,849)	(3,844,793)	(3,854,227)	
Leaseholder Charges for Services and Facilities	(2,898,389)	(2,945,732)	(2,983,940)	(2,995,690)	(2,954,934)	(2,998,687)	
<b>Total Income</b>	<b>(61,747,830)</b>	<b>(62,662,781)</b>	<b>(67,203,417)</b>	<b>(67,147,718)</b>	<b>(67,274,846)</b>	<b>(68,893,874)</b>	
<b>Expenditure</b>							
Repairs and Maintenance	7,650,000	7,650,000	7,650,000	7,687,310	7,457,970	7,385,863	
Supervision and management							
General	14,207,510	13,127,510	12,166,510	11,574,469	10,918,657	10,276,274	
Special	6,756,617	6,756,617	6,756,617	6,986,794	7,161,464	7,340,500	
Rents, Rates, taxes and other charges	121,500	121,500	121,500	124,538	127,651	130,842	
Contribution to capital programme	33,489,000	32,683,000	23,024,000	22,171,000	19,494,000	17,312,130	
Impairment write off for HRA commercial properties	820,000	840,500	861,513	883,050	905,127	927,755	
Debt Management Costs	7,424,728	6,588,108	8,803,092	8,376,508	8,307,310	8,172,716	
Increase in bad debt provision	615,000	615,000	615,000	615,000	615,000	615,000	
<b>Total Expenditure</b>	<b>71,084,355</b>	<b>68,382,235</b>	<b>59,998,232</b>	<b>58,418,668</b>	<b>54,987,178</b>	<b>52,161,080</b>	
<b>Net Cost of HRA Services</b>	<b>9,336,525</b>	<b>5,719,455</b>	<b>(7,205,185)</b>	<b>(8,729,049)</b>	<b>(12,287,668)</b>	<b>(16,732,794)</b>	
Interest and investment income	(80,000)	(80,000)	(80,000)	(80,000)	(80,000)	(80,000)	
<b>(Surplus) or deficit for the year on HRA services</b>	<b>9,256,525</b>	<b>5,639,455</b>	<b>(7,285,185)</b>	<b>(8,809,049)</b>	<b>(12,367,668)</b>	<b>(16,812,794)</b>	
Right to buy receipts retained	(6,778,360)	(8,261,540)	(8,261,540)	(8,261,540)	(8,261,540)	(8,261,540)	
<b>(Surplus) or deficit contributing to HRA balances</b>	<b>2,478,165</b>	<b>(2,622,086)</b>	<b>(15,546,726)</b>	<b>(17,070,589)</b>	<b>(20,629,209)</b>	<b>(25,074,334)</b>	<b>Totals</b>
<b>No. of Newbuilds Base Case</b>		412	19	85	88	102	706
<b>No. of Newbuilds with 4.2m</b>		0	5	12	18	25	60
<b>No. of Newbuilds CPI+1%+0.5%</b>		0	1	4	6	9	20
<b>Maximum build total each year.</b>		<b>412</b>	<b>25</b>	<b>101</b>	<b>112</b>	<b>136</b>	<b>786</b>

	AGENDA ITEM 9
	<h2>Housing Committee</h2> <h3>27 October 2014</h3>
<b>Title</b>	<b>Final Approval of Proposed Changes to Housing Allocations Scheme</b>
<b>Report of</b>	Lead Commissioner for Housing and Environment
<b>Wards</b>	All
<b>Status</b>	Public
<b>Enclosures</b>	Appendix 1- Summary of Proposed Changes Appendix 2- Draft Housing Allocations Scheme Appendix 3- Equalities Impact Assessment Appendix 4- Survey Responses Appendix 5- Written Responses
<b>Officer Contact Details</b>	Declan Hoare, <a href="mailto:declan.hoare@barnet.gov.uk">declan.hoare@barnet.gov.uk</a> , 020 8359 4320 Paul Shipway, <a href="mailto:paul.shipway@barnet.gov.uk">paul.shipway@barnet.gov.uk</a> , 020 8359 4924 Chloe Horner, <a href="mailto:chloe.horner@barnet.gov.uk">chloe.horner@barnet.gov.uk</a> , 020 8359 4775

**Summary**

The Housing Allocations Scheme sets out how the Council allocates council housing, housing association rented and private rented sector homes in the borough. There are a number of changes proposed, in particular, requiring applicants to have lived in the borough for at least five years before they qualify for assistance. The proposed changes have been consulted on. This has included a survey of the Council's Citizens' Panel and of existing housing applicants. Registered providers have also been invited to comment on the proposals. The Council has considered the responses to the consultation and found that there is broad agreement with the proposals. Housing Committee is now asked to approve the changes to the Housing Allocations Scheme.

**Recommendations**

**1. That the Housing Committee approves the proposed revisions to the Council's Housing Allocations Scheme, following on from a period of public consultation.**

## 1. WHY THIS REPORT IS NEEDED

- 1.1 The Council has consulted with housing applicants, Citizen's Panel members, registered providers and other stakeholders on proposed changes to the Housing Allocations Scheme.
- 1.2 Barnet is an area of high demand for housing. As can be seen from Table 1, below, the number of households presenting as homeless and the number of households being accepted as homeless has increased significantly over the past five years. The number of new temporary accommodation admissions has also risen. Although there was a reduction of 34 households presenting as homeless in 2013/14, the number of homeless acceptances increased by 80.
- 1.3 The key reasons for the increased demand on services include:
- Increased housing costs combined with restrictions on housing benefit has resulted in more households moving out of Central London to Outer London boroughs, including Barnet. This is evidenced by a significant increase in the number of households claiming housing benefit in Barnet and a fall in housing benefit claims in Central London.
  - The number of households seeking help with their housing has been increasing throughout London because of the high cost of owning or renting a home.
  - Private sector rents have increased faster in Barnet than in other parts of London and they are the 4<sup>th</sup> highest out of 16 Outer London boroughs, meaning that more low-income households may approach the Council for assistance with their housing.

Table 1- increased total demand on housing services

	2009/10	2010/11	2011/12	2012/13	2013/14
Homeless presentations	643	867	1,113	1,131	1,097
Homeless acceptances	231	252	339	591	671
New temporary accommodation admissions	364	509	692	846	823

- 1.4 Housing supply has not kept up with increased demand for housing services. As can be seen from Table 2, below, the number of properties available for the Council to allocate reduced from 2009/10. This has been particularly the case for private rented sector homes. As a result of better services and incentives introduced through the Let2Barnet service at Barnet Homes, the number of private rented properties available has increased significantly since 2012. This has resulted in more households being rehoused in 2013/14 than in the previous two years.

Table 2- Total supply of housing

	2009/10	2010/11	2011/12	2012/13	2013/14
Council	457	412	434	375	409
Housing association	249	312	498	307	342
Private rented	715	404	121	172	324
<b>Total</b>	<b>1,421</b>	<b>1,128</b>	<b>1,053</b>	<b>854</b>	<b>1,075</b>

- 1.5 New households who apply for rehousing are competing for limited social housing along with accepted homeless households placed on the regeneration estates in long-term temporary accommodation. This impacts the Council's ability to offer housing to people who need to be decanted from the regeneration estates.
- 1.6 The proposed changes to the scheme that have been consulted on are:
- Applicants will generally have to live in the borough for at least five years before they qualify for assistance. The Council will continue to offer assistance to households who are statutorily homeless and have less than five years residence.
  - Applicants who refuse a reasonable offer of accommodation will be excluded from the scheme for two years rather than one year.
  - Households at risk of violence will be provided with emergency accommodation so they are placed out of danger.
  - Changes to community contribution qualification criteria, in particular including increasing the number of hours that an applicant has to work, volunteer or undertake training to 16 hours per week and removing requirements for young people who are leaving care.
  - Service tenants with more than 15 years' service will not be offered more bedrooms than are required as is currently the case.
- 1.7 The consultation has confirmed that there is broad agreement from residents and registered providers on the proposed changes. It is recommended that the Housing Committee approves the scheme as set out in Appendix 2 which includes an amendment to the residential connection criteria set out at paragraph 2.4 below.

## 2. REASONS FOR RECOMMENDATIONS

### Five Years Residential Connection

- 2.1 It is proposed that households should live in the borough for at least five years before they qualify for housing with a residential connection. Analysis of customers banded during quarters 3 and 4 in 2012/13 demonstrated that 17% of applicants would not have been placed in any band if local connection was five years. Across a year, potentially 137 households would be excluded from the allocations scheme. This would increase the opportunity for long-term regeneration non-secure tenants who the Council has previously accepted a homelessness duty to be shortlisted for social housing when they are

decanted. Otherwise, such households will be offered further temporary accommodation and the Council will continue to have a homeless duty.

- 2.2 A number of other boroughs, including the neighbouring councils of Brent, Harrow and Hertsmere as well as Ealing and Hammersmith & Fulham have already adopted a residential connection of five years. Hillingdon and Barking & Dagenham councils have adopted a residential connection of 10 years.
- 2.3 Results of the consultation have found that there is broad agreement that the allocations scheme should prioritise housing for established local residents. This is the case for residents of the borough as whole and housing applicants in particular. In the survey of the Citizen's Panel residents, 77.8% of respondents agreed that applicants should have to live in the borough for five years, with 13.9% disagreeing. In the survey of existing housing applicants, 46.38% agreed with the proposal and 33.33% disagreeing.
- 2.4 Following on from the consultation the residential connection section of the allocations scheme has been amended slightly to allow for some discretion to band and award residential connection to out of borough placements by Adults and Children's Services and for housing association tenants when the Council can make use of the resulting void. The change will also cover exceptional circumstances, for example high risk and high support Domestic Violence cases.

### **2 Year Exclusion for Refusing a Reasonable Offer of Accommodation**

- 2.5 Currently applicants who refuse one reasonable offer of accommodation are excluded from the scheme for one year. It is proposed that this is increased to two years. Applicants will continue to have the right to appeal if they feel that the offer of accommodation is not suitable. In the past six months 25 housing offers were refused by applicants. Of these, seven decisions have been reviewed (the stage after the first appeal), of which two were found in favour of the customer. Increasing the exclusion period to two years will help convey the reality that there is very limited social housing supply and that turning down a suitable offer is a serious decision which has significant consequences.
- 2.6 The results of the Citizen's Panel survey suggests that 67.9% of respondents agreed that applicants should be excluded from the allocations scheme if they refuse a reasonable offer of accommodation, with 22% disagreeing. Existing applicants are concerned about this proposal as they are worried that they will be forced to accept a property that does not meet their needs. In the survey of existing applicants, only 20.98% agreed with this proposal with 62.9% disagreeing. Given the lack of housing supply it is recommended that this proposal is taken forward. Applicants will have a right to a review if they think that an offered property is unsuitable.

### **Community Contribution**

- 2.7 It is proposed that workers should work for at least 16 hours per week or 64 hours per month. This is based on the number of hours per week a single person or single parent has to work in order to be able to claim Working Tax Credit and be exempted from the overall benefit cap. This can be verified



through payslips, or in the case of self-employed applicants, through invoices for work.

- 2.8 It is also proposed that the hourly requirements for applicants who volunteer or are training for employment are also increased from 10 hours per month to 16 hours per week or 64 hours per month. Where a training course is for less than 16 hours per week, an applicant will be expected to make up the hours by volunteering. There is discretion available within the scheme to reduce these requirements where, for example, disability or age makes it more difficult for an applicant to work or volunteer for this long.
- 2.9 Applicants on maternity leave who intend to go back to work qualify for community contribution. In line with the new national standards on parental leave the scheme should be amended to include applicants on paternity leave who intend to go back to work.
- 2.10 Following on from an audit and mock Ofsted inspection of the Children's Service, it is proposed that all young people leaving care<sup>1</sup> are placed in band 2 even if they do not make a community contribution. This is to prevent young people not engaging in employment, education and training from remaining in temporary accommodation for long periods. The Council's Local Tenancy Strategy will then encourage these young people to engage in education employment, and training when they move into council housing.
- 2.11 The consultation has suggested that there is broad agreement for the proposed changes to community contribution. In the results of the Citizen's Panel survey 82.6% agreed with the proposal to extend the working, training and volunteering requirement to 16 hours per week with 9.2% disagreeing. 73.4% agreed that applicants on paternity leave should be awarded community contribution, with 9.9% disagreeing. 62.8% of Citizen Panel respondents agreed that young people leaving care should be placed in band 2 even when they do not make a community contribution. with 25.9% disagreeing.

### **Households at Risk of Violence**

- 2.12 The Council's priority is to ensure that people at risk of violence at home are moved quickly and removed from the immediate danger that they face in a way that supports the vision set out in the Barnet Domestic Violence and Violence against Women and Girls Strategy (DV and VAWG) 2013-2016. The DV and VAWG strategy aims to ensure that people who suffer from domestic violence get the support they need through partnership, prevention, provision and protection. In particular, the housing allocations scheme will ensure that there is provision of alternative and safe accommodation for the household away from the danger.
- 2.13 The most immediate mechanism for doing this is to place people in emergency accommodation so that they are removed from the risk and the Council will therefore prioritise such cases by placing them in emergency

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<sup>1</sup> The Council has duties as corporate parent towards young people under 21 leaving care

accommodation and then assist them in finding a safe more permanent solution. To this end Band 1 will only be used for households at risk of violence in exceptional circumstances.

- 2.14 In addition, Barnet Homes will continue to work in partnership with other agencies, including the Multi-Agency Risk Assessment Conference to ensure that high risk of harm cases are supported into safe accommodation. Where it is appropriate the Barnet Homes Sanctuary Scheme helps households remain in their own home, if it is safe to do so, by increasing the security at their home so helping in the prevention of domestic violence.
- 2.15 83.1% of Citizen's Panel members who responded to the survey agreed with this proposal and 9.2% disagreed. Concerns have been raised in the consultation about how this may affect the tenancy rights of existing secure tenants living in council or housing association rented housing. Where the applicant is an existing secure tenant they would not necessarily have to apply for rehousing and they will not have to surrender their tenancy. Rather their housing officer can highlight the case as having an exceptional need to move and apply to have the tenant moved as a management transfer or through the North London reciprocal arrangements as well as the existing mutual exchange arrangements. Once moved the tenant will sign a secure tenancy on the same conditions as the previous tenancy that they held.
- 2.16 For applicants who are currently living in the private sector they will be provided with safe temporary accommodation and depending on the outcome of their banding assessment and the housing that is available will be offered housing in the social or private sector.
- 2.17 The Housing Allocations Scheme includes a discretionary facility for placing applicants in Band 1 in exceptional circumstances, and this could be used for housing applicants in the most severe cases of domestic violence, regardless of tenure.
- 2.18 Households who have already been accepted for rehousing under the council's allocations scheme prior to their needing to move because of threats of violence will not be disadvantaged, and housing officers will use existing discretion within the scheme to ensure this.

### **Service Tenants**

- 2.18 Former service tenants with 15 years' service who apply for rehousing at the end of their employment can currently be allocated one more bedroom than they need. Given the shortage of housing and in accordance with government policy on spare room subsidy, it is more appropriate to allocate according to bedroom need. There are currently 30 Barnet Homes service tenants in post. Of these 14 have already served for 15 years and of this smaller group, five have an expected retirement date within the next five years.
- 2.19 In the Citizens Panel Survey 83.5% of respondents agreed with this proposal and 9.3% disagreed. Existing service tenants who work for the Council and Barnet Homes have also been written to as part of the consultation and there were no specific concerns raised about this proposal.

- 2.20 There are a number of other minor operational amendments to the scheme. These are listed in Appendix 1.

### **3. ALTERNATIVE OPTIONS CONSIDERED AND NOT RECOMMENDED**

- 3.1 The alternative option is not to change the scheme. This would mean that the Council would continue to see more households qualifying for housing assistance than there are homes available to allocate to. New households in the system would be competing for a limited amount of homes with households who have to be decanted from the regeneration schemes. This could have an impact on the progress of regeneration. Also there would be very limited movement from the lower bands into settled accommodation and this is costly for the council as it has to fund the temporary accommodation.
- 3.2 The Council has also considered other options to increase the residential connection criteria to three and four years as well as the five years proposal. This would mean that slightly fewer applicants would be excluded from the scheme. Using the sample of applicants banded in the six months to March 2014 and projecting this across a whole year, potentially 92 applicants would be excluded if residential connection was increased to three years and 110 applicants would be excluded if residential connection was increased to four years. Given the high demand for housing in the borough and limited housing supply it is recommended that the residential connection is increased to five years as planned.
- 3.3 However the scheme will be kept under review and changes will be made in the future to ensure that it continues to meet housing needs in the borough.

### **4. POST DECISION IMPLEMENTATION**

- 4.1 Following on from approval by the Housing Committee, the Council will instruct Barnet Homes to implement the approved scheme as soon as practicably possible.

### **5. IMPLICATIONS OF DECISION**

#### **5.1 Corporate Priorities and Performance**

- 5.1.1 The Council's Corporate Plan 2013/16 includes as a priority outcome "To maintain the right environment for a strong and diverse local economy". Barnet is a popular place in which to live and has high demand for a limited supply of council and housing association housing. The Council has faced increasing costs of providing temporary accommodation to housing applicants. A key performance measure is to reduce the number of households placed in the most expensive emergency temporary accommodation to 500 per year.

- 5.1.2 The Council can offer more applicants re-housing by increasing the number of private sector properties available. This has been difficult to procure in recent years due to restrictions in local housing allowances and since the introduction of the overall benefit cap where many private sector properties are unaffordable to non-working benefit-reliant households. For 2014 the Council has introduced a performance measure to increase the number of private sector lettings to 315.
- 5.1.3 The Council is developing a new Housing Strategy to take account of the increased demand for housing in the borough. This is evident with higher house prices, higher rents and increased levels of homelessness and people in emergency temporary accommodation. Private rents in Barnet are beyond the reach of some low-income households and it may be necessary for them to consider moving to more affordable accommodation outside of the borough.

## **5.2 Resources (Finance & Value for Money, Procurement, Staffing, IT, Property, Sustainability)**

- 5.2.1 There is a limited supply of social housing in Barnet. Applications for housing have increased along with acceptances and admissions to Temporary Accommodation. In 2013/14 there were 671 homeless acceptances and only 409 social housing units available to let during the year, not all of which would go to new applicants. The Council is therefore reliant on procuring homes in the private rented sector to meet its housing obligations.
- 5.2.1 It has become increasingly difficult to procure accommodation in the private sector at Local Housing Allowance rates. This has resulted in a significant increase in the use of emergency temporary accommodation<sup>2</sup>, often at a cost that cannot be fully met through the housing benefit system, resulting in a pressure on the Council's General Fund budget. In 2013/14, 471 such units had to be procured at a cost of £829k (£1.418m including bad debt provision). At the end of May 2014, the average nightly rate for emergency temporary accommodation was £41.36 and average nightly rent that could be charged through the housing benefits system was £36.95 meaning a net average cost to the Council of £4.41 per night per unit. This has resulted in a significant increase in the use of emergency temporary accommodation. This has an impact on the General Fund.

- 5.2.3 Costs towards the consultation were contained within existing Council budgets

## **5.3 Legal and Constitutional References**

- 5.3.1 The Council has a duty under section 166A (14) Housing Act 1996 to allocate to social housing in accordance with a published housing allocations scheme. Section 166A (3) specifies a list of applicants entitled to a degree of preference within the scheme. These are the reasonable preference categories. The Localism Act 2011 gives local authorities greater flexibility in terms of restricting access to the allocations scheme.

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<sup>2</sup> In Barnet all emergency temporary accommodation consists of self-contained units which is paid for on a nightly basis

- 5.3.2 The Council's duties in respect of homeless applicants are contained in Part VII of the Housing Act 1996. The Localism Act 2011 has also allowed greater flexibility in discharging this duty by placing applicants into the private rented sector where particular requirements on property condition and location are met. These requirements are set out in the Homelessness (Suitability of Accommodation) (England) Order 2012.
- 5.3.4 The legal requirements of consultation under S166A (13) Housing Act 1996 have been complied with.
- 5.3.5 The Council's Constitution (Responsibly For Functions, Annex A) sets out the responsibilities of the Housing Committee which includes "to work with Barnet Homes, RSLs and social housing providers to ensure the optimum provision of housing and associated facilities for those who require social housing."

## **5.4 Risk Management**

- 5.4.1 The Council could face legal challenges to decisions that it makes under the revised Housing Allocations Scheme. This risk is being mitigated by undertaking consultation with stakeholders, in particular Housing Association partners and community representatives in the voluntary sector. The Council will also consult with households who have been placed into a housing band and who may be affected by the proposed amendments.
- 5.4.2 The Council will need to allow for further adjustments to the scheme once it is operating, to take account of any challenges that are made on a case by case basis.

## **5.5 Equalities and Diversity**

- 5.5.1 The 2010 Equality Act outlines the provisions of the Public Sector Equalities Duty which requires Public Bodies **to have due regard** to the need to:
- eliminate unlawful discrimination, harassment and victimisation and other conduct prohibited by the Equality Act 2010
  - advance equality of opportunity between people from different groups
  - foster good relations between people from different groups.
- 5.5.2 An equalities impacts assessment has been completed and is contained in Appendix 3. In summary, changes to the allocations scheme are required to ensure that scarce resources are allocated on a fair and consistent basis and to reflect changes in entitlement and bring Barnet into line with allocations policy in other boroughs. The data suggests that the proposals will have an unavoidable minimum negative impact because there is greater diversity amongst social housing tenants in comparison with the Barnet borough population and the diversity of applicants for social housing is greater still.
- 5.5.3 Therefore while preliminary indications suggest that the overall impact of these proposals is likely to result in a minimum negative impact, the full impact is being recorded as not known in order to continue to monitor the impact of

the changes. Any untoward trends will be followed up as the Council keeps the allocations scheme under regular review.

## **5.6 Consultation and Engagement**

- 5.6.1 The Council has consulted on the proposed changes to the housing allocations scheme from 14 July to 31 September 2014.
- 5.6.2 Registered providers were consulted through the Council's Housing Association Liaison Group which was supportive of the proposed changes. The Communities Together Network was also engaged on the proposals.
- 5.6.3 The Council's Citizen's Panel was consulted through an online or postal survey asking for view on all the key proposals. 636 members of the Citizen's Panel responded to the survey. There was widespread support for the proposed changes.
- 5.6.4 Existing housing applicants were consulted through an online survey which focused on the main changes to affect them which are: increasing residential connection to five years and increasing exclusion from the scheme as a result of refusing a reasonable offer of accommodation to two years. 69 current applicants responded to the survey. There was support for the five years residential connection proposal but not for the two years exclusion proposal.
- 5.6.5 Appendix 4 contains the full results from the consultation.

## 6 BACKGROUND PAPERS

6.1 Relevant previous decisions are listed in the table below.

<b>Item</b>	<b>Decision</b>	<b>Link</b>
Cabinet 10 January 2011	Decision item 6- approved the existing scheme following an extensive period of consultation.	<a href="http://barnet.moderngov.co.uk/CeListDocuments.aspx?Committeed=120&amp;MeetingId=317&amp;DF=10%2f01%2f2011&amp;Ver=2">http://barnet.moderngov.co.uk/CeListDocuments.aspx?Committeed=120&amp;MeetingId=317&amp;DF=10%2f01%2f2011&amp;Ver=2</a>
Cabinet 4 April 2012	Decision item 5- approved revisions to the existing scheme following a 6 month review	<a href="http://barnet.moderngov.co.uk/CeListDocuments.aspx?Committeed=120&amp;MeetingId=6792&amp;DF=04%2f04%2f2012&amp;Ver=2">http://barnet.moderngov.co.uk/CeListDocuments.aspx?Committeed=120&amp;MeetingId=6792&amp;DF=04%2f04%2f2012&amp;Ver=2</a>
Delegated Powers Report 27 November 2012	Approved further minor changes in relation to the Homelessness (Suitability of Accommodation)(England) Order 2012	<a href="http://barnet.moderngov.co.uk/documents/s6674/1873%20-%20Revisions%20to%20Housing%20Allocations%20Scheme.pdf">http://barnet.moderngov.co.uk/documents/s6674/1873%20-%20Revisions%20to%20Housing%20Allocations%20Scheme.pdf</a>
Cabinet 24 September 2013	Decision item 7- approved amendments to the existing scheme and the introduction of a placements policy	<a href="http://barnet.moderngov.co.uk/ieListDocuments.aspx?CId=120&amp;MId=7464&amp;Ver=4">http://barnet.moderngov.co.uk/ieListDocuments.aspx?CId=120&amp;MId=7464&amp;Ver=4</a>
Housing Committee 30 June 2014	Decision item 6- approved draft changes to the existing scheme and approved public consultation in the proposals	<a href="http://barnet.moderngov.co.uk/documents/s15739/Proposed%20Changes%20to%20Housing%20Allocations%20Scheme%20-%20Cover%20Report.pdf">http://barnet.moderngov.co.uk/documents/s15739/Proposed%20Changes%20to%20Housing%20Allocations%20Scheme%20-%20Cover%20Report.pdf</a>

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## Appendix 1- summary of changes

The proposed policy changes that will be consulted upon are summarised in the table below.

Reference	Description of proposed change	Why is the change needed?
Paragraph 3.5- local connection	Applicants will normally have to live in the borough for FIVE years to qualify for assistance rather than TWO years.	This will reduce the number of applicants qualifying and increase the opportunity for long-term non-secure tenants to be shortlisted when they are decanted. Most neighbouring local authorities have already extended residential connection to five years.
Paragraph 4.26- suitability of offers	Applicants who have refused one reasonable offer of accommodation will be excluded from the scheme for TWO years rather than ONE year.	There is a very limited housing supply and change will encourage applicants to accept a reasonable offer. They can request a review if they feel that an offer is not reasonable.
Annex 1- band 1	Remove the reasonable preference category in band 1 relating to applicants who need to move because there is a risk of violence or threat to life.	Households fleeing violence need to be re-housed urgently. This will not necessarily happen even in band 1 because of the shortage of supply.  Applicants will be offered emergency accommodation while a more permanent solution is found. Existing secure tenants will not have to surrender their tenancy rights.  There will still be capacity in band 1 to move in exceptional circumstances.
Community contribution	Applicants will have to work for at least 64 hours per month to be placed in band 2. There is currently no hourly requirement for working households but there is for training and volunteering.	It is reasonable that applicants work for a number of hours per month to qualify for band 2 status. 16 hours per week (i.e.: 64 per month) is the level of work a person needs to do to apply for working tax credit and be exempted from the overall benefit cap.

## Appendix 1- summary of changes

Reference	Description of proposed change	Why is the change needed?
Community contribution	Applicants will volunteer for at least 64 hours per month to be placed in band 2. Currently applicants have to volunteer for 10 hours per month.	To qualify for band 2 status it is reasonable to expect an applicant to have shown more commitment than 10 hours per month.
Community contribution	Training must be for a minimum of 64 hours per month. Currently applicants have to train for 10 hours per month.	This brings the hourly requirement in line with working and volunteering.
Community contribution	Reference to Disability Living Allowance is removed.	This brings the policy up to date with changes to benefits changes.
Community contribution	Young people leaving care will not be required to make a community contribution in order to be placed in band 2.	This follows an audit recommendation. Young people leaving care may find it difficult to make a full community contribution. When these young people are rehoused in council housing they will be encouraged to engage in education, employment and training through the Council's Tenancy Strategy.
Annex 4	Service tenants retiring after 15 years of service will not be entitled to one extra bedroom	Given the overall shortage of housing it is fairer to allocate former service tenants in the same way as other applicants.

The following are minor amendments that are required to bring the allocations scheme in line with current operating procedures.

Reference	Description of proposed change	Why is the change needed?
Section 1- context	"Match applicants to available homes" rather than "allow applicants to view available homes".	This is a clearer description of how the scheme actually operates. Offers may be enforced even if a customer has not visited a property.
Paragraph 2.5- legal context	Removal of bullet point "Choice Based Lettings Code of Guidance". This is guidance only and not a legal requirement.	The scheme describes the Council's policy on choice as is required by the law. Where possible applicants will be given a choice, but given limited housing supply, offers that

## Appendix 1- summary of changes

Reference	Description of proposed change	Why is the change needed?
		meet assessed needs may be enforced.
Paragraph 3.2-eligibility	Replace the sentence on non-dependent adult children with “Adult children (aged 18 and over) will not be taken into account, unless they are either in full time education and subject to applicant/partner receiving Child Benefit, or the applicant/partner receives Carer’s Allowance for them. Also, relatives, non-relatives and lodgers will not be taken into account.”	This brings the definition of non-dependents in line with benefits regulations.
Paragraph 3.3-classes of person that do not qualify	Change the order of the classes of person that do not qualify.	The revised order is more logical.
Paragraph 3.3-classes of person that do not qualify	Add “which have been accrued through deliberate and wilful non-payment” to the exclusion category “Applicants with lawfully recoverable arrears or other housing related debts”.	This ensures that applicants engaging with the benefits taskforce will not be excluded.
Paragraph 3.5-local connection	Change “local” connection to “residential” connection.	It is clearer to label this as a residential connection as a “Local connection” for Part 7 applications has a wider definition than having lived in the area, such as work or family connections.
Paragraph 3.5-local connection	“Households accepted under Part 7 of the Housing Act 1996” rather than “accepted homeless households”.	This is required for clarity. Homeless households are accepted under Part 7.
Paragraph 3.5-local connection	Remove words “through their own choice”.	Not required, the section details the types of applicant that meet the residential requirements.
Paragraph 3.5-local connection	Insert sentence “Care leavers who were placed in residential care outside of Barnet will qualify under this scheme”.	This makes clear that care leavers will qualify for assistance if they were placed outside of the borough.
Paragraph 3.18-council tenants	Insert sentence “As such they will also be subject to the	This makes it clear that existing council tenants

## Appendix 1- summary of changes

Reference	Description of proposed change	Why is the change needed?
	qualification criteria at 3.8”.	applying to move have to meet the qualification criteria.
Paragraph 4.4- property pool and assisted choice	This paragraph on private rented sector homes let under the scheme has been redrafted.	This clarifies how the scheme operates in practice.
Paragraph 4.6- Property pool and assisted choice	This paragraph on what happens where a property is not available has been redrafted.	This is what happens in practice. Applicants may be assisted to find their own property in the private sector.
Paragraph 4.13- exemptions to assisted choice	The word “options” has been deleted from the phrase “housing options officer”.	This updates current job titles.
Paragraph 4.17- types of property	Some properties or blocks of properties “may be designated” rather than “are designated”.	This is required for clarity. Urgency and band 1 status may override these designations.
Paragraph 4.17- types of property	Final bullet point- Priority for houses will “normally” only be given to households “in band 1 or households with children...”	This change maximises flexibility given that there is a limited supply of housing.
Paragraph 4.26- suitability of offers	Reference to paragraph 4.25 not 4.26.	The reference is incorrect
Paragraph 5.2- procedure for appeals	This paragraph on review has been redrafted.	This is a clearer description of what applicants need to do if they do not agree with a reasonable offer or a decision.
Paragraph 6.2- requests for assistance	Change notification period to 33 days. It currently states that it is 10 days.	The statutory requirement is for decisions to be made in 33 days.
Paragraph 6.7- income and savings	The paragraph on income limits has been redrafted.	This clearer about the type of income that is counted.
Annex 1- (bands 1, 2 and 3)	References to section 167 changed to section 166 A (3),	Due to changes in legislation, all English local authorities now refer to 166A (3). Section 167 now only applies to Wales.
Annex 1- (band 1)	Remove words “without assistance” “from bullet point starting “The applicant has severe mobility issues”. End	This is clearer.

## Appendix 1- summary of changes

Reference	Description of proposed change	Why is the change needed?
	with “save with assistance that will result in high risk to themselves or their carer”.	
Annex 2– size of homes	A couple with two children of opposite sex one of whom is “10 or over” instead of “over 10”.	To qualify for a 3 bedroom need there is currently a gap for when the child is aged 10.
Annex 2- size of homes	Replace “A single parent is counted as a single person and an unborn baby is counted as a child” with “Unborn babies and children under the age of 1 are not considered when size of home needed is assessed”.	These changes are supported by the Housing Act’s statutory overcrowded definition which does not recognise children under one for housing need purposes.
Annex 2- size of homes	Delete “Where a single parent has a child under the age of one they will be offered a flat with one double bedroom” and replace with: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• A couple or single parent expecting a baby are entitled to one double bedroom and</li> <li>• A couple or single parent with a child under one is entitled to one double bedroom.</li> </ul>	There is also the risk that by not making this change households could be allocated properties that housing benefits will not pay for.
Annex 2- size of homes	Delete “A couple expecting a child or with a child, including an adult son or daughter” and replace with “a couple with a child aged one or over, including an adult son or daughter”.	

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**barnet  
homes**

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**Barnet Council**

**The Housing  
Allocations Scheme  
2014**

## Appendix 2- full draft scheme

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## Appendix 2- full draft scheme

### 1. Context and Policy Aims

#### **The Aims of Barnet Council's Allocations Scheme**

This document describes the criteria and procedure that Barnet Council uses to prioritise housing applicants for the social housing<sup>1</sup> that we allocate to; i.e. homes owned by Barnet Council, and a proportion of homes owned by Private Registered Providers (housing associations) in the Borough and other areas covered by the North London Housing Sub-region<sup>2</sup> to which we make nominations). It also sets out other assistance that we provide to housing applicants, including advice and access to housing in the private rented sector.

In Barnet the demand for social housing is very much greater than the number of homes available. This Allocations Scheme describes how the Council prioritises housing applicants to ensure that those in greatest housing need, as described by the legal definition of Reasonable Preference (see section 3), are given a head start to access available social housing, compared with those who have no housing need, but who want to move to or within social housing.

Barnet Council's Allocations Scheme sets out in detail who is and who is not assisted under the scheme and how this is decided. It also sets out how to apply for housing and the standard of service that the council will aim to achieve.

The Allocations Scheme is designed to meet all legal requirements and to support and contribute towards the Council's wider objectives such as promoting mixed communities.

The key objectives of this Allocations Scheme are to:

- Provide a fair and transparent system by which people are prioritised for social housing.
- Help those most in housing need.
- Promote the development of sustainable mixed communities.
- Encourage residents to access employment and training.
- Recognise residents who make a contribution to a local community.
- Make the best use of Barnet's social housing.
- Make efficient use of our resources and those of our partner Registered Social Landlords.

Social housing in Barnet will be allocated through a property pool that will match applicants to available council and housing association homes, along with homes that the council has secured access to in the private rented sector. The system will be supported by a housing options approach giving applicants realistic advice and

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<sup>1</sup> Social housing is housing owned by local authorities and registered social landlords for which guideline rents are determined through the national rent regime. It may also include rented housing owned or managed by other persons and provided under equivalent rental arrangements, as agreed with the local authorities or with the Homes and Communities Agency.

<sup>2</sup> Westminster, Camden, Islington, Haringey and Enfield

## **Appendix 2- full draft scheme**

promoting other housing options, such as low cost home ownership options and private sector renting.

We are committed to providing a fair and transparent service to everyone applying for housing under the Council's scheme and to allocate accommodation, in the majority of cases, to those households with the greatest need. In doing so we are also committed to ensuring that the allocation of homes is done in such a way as to promote social cohesion and promote mixed communities, to enhance Barnet's reputation as a place where people want to live.

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## Appendix 2- full draft scheme

### 2. LEGAL CONTEXT

- 2.1 Barnet Council's Allocations Scheme sits within a legal framework which is summarised in this section.
- 2.2 The 1996 Housing Act (as amended by the 2002 Homelessness Act) requires local authorities to make all allocations and nominations in accordance with an Allocations Scheme. A summary of the Allocations Scheme must be published and made available free of charge to any person who asks for a copy. This document and a easy to read summary of the scheme are available on the council's web site, [www.barnet.gov.uk](http://www.barnet.gov.uk) and paper copies will be provided on request.
- 2.3 The Housing Act 1996, (as amended) requires local authorities to give Reasonable Preference in their allocations policies to people with high levels of assessed housing need who are defined as:

- All homeless people as defined in Part VII of the Housing Act 1996 (whether or not the applicant is owed a statutory homeless duty and regardless of whether such cases have any local connection with Barnet Council);
- People who are owed a duty under section 190 (2), 193 (2) or 195 (2) of the 1996 Act (or under section 65 (2) or 68(2) of the Housing Act 1985) or who are occupying accommodation secured by any Housing authority under section (192 (3).
- People occupying Insanitary, overcrowded or otherwise unsatisfactory housing;
- People who need to move on medical or welfare grounds (including grounds relating to a disability);
- People who need to move to a particular locality within the district to avoid hardship to themselves or others.

- 2.4 The Act also requires local authorities to state within the policy what its position is on offering applicants a choice of housing accommodation, or offering them the opportunity to express preference about the housing accommodation to be allocated to them. Our policy on choice is described below in Section 4.

- 2.5 This Allocations Scheme complies with the requirements of:
- Housing Act 1996 (as amended)
  - Allocation of Accommodation: Code of Guidance for Housing Authorities 2002
  
  - Fair and Flexible: Statutory guidance on social housing allocations for local authorities in England 2009
  - Localism Act 2012
  - London Housing Strategy
  - Barnet Housing Strategy.

## Appendix 2- full draft scheme

2.6 The Scheme also complies with the Council's equality duties including the duty to eliminate unlawful discrimination and to promote good relations between different racial groups, as well the duty to promote equality between disabled persons and other persons and between men and women.

2.7 This Scheme has considered:

- The Council's statutory obligations and discretion as to who is eligible for housing allocation
- The Council's statutory obligation to provide Reasonable Preference to certain categories of applicants set down by law i.e. those who must be given a 'head start' under the Council's Allocations Scheme.
- The Council's statutory discretion to grant "additional preference" and/or to determine priority between applicants with Reasonable Preference.
- The general and specific statutory discretions the Council can exercise when allocating housing in support of its Community Strategy.
- The Council also recognises its discretion to give additional preference to particular descriptions of people with urgent housing needs
- The Council's participation in the pan-London mobility scheme administered by the Greater London Authority

2.8 Tenancies for council homes are allocated according to the council's local tenancy strategy as required as part of the Localism Act 2011. Other registered providers have to take account of the Council's local tenancy strategy when setting their own policies.

## Appendix 2- full draft scheme

### OUR PRIORITIES FOR SOCIAL HOUSING

#### ELIGIBILITY

3.1 Anyone can approach the council for housing advice and assistance, however, the amount of social housing in Barnet is very limited, and the Council will no longer maintain an open housing waiting list<sup>3</sup> containing households that it is unable to help access a council or housing association home.

3.2 People in the following criteria are not eligible for re-housing:

*Those people subject to immigration control and certain other people from abroad excluded by law or regulation.*

For more information on this please contact the Council.

In some instances a person may be eligible despite being subject to immigration control. The Council will disregard as members of the household those who are "restricted", such as those who are:

- not eligible
- those who are subject to immigration control
- those with no leave to enter or remain in the UK
- those with leave but subject to a condition of no recourse to public funds.

For households eligible to be rehoused only because of the housing need of the restricted persons, the Council has a duty to arrange as far as practicable, an assured shorthold tenancy with a private landlord.

If the main applicant is eligible and not subject to immigration control, non eligible dependant children, other dependant family members and live in carers in receipt of carers allowance **will be** taken into account.

Adult children (aged 18 and over) will not be taken into account, unless they are either in full time education and subject to applicant/partner receiving Child Benefit, or the applicant/partner receives Carer's Allowance for them. Also, relatives, non-relatives and lodgers will not be taken into account.

Furthermore, due to shortage of properties with 4 bedrooms or more the Council will discuss with large households whether their application may be divided into two or more smaller households.

#### CLASSES OF PERSON THAT DO NOT QUALIFY

3.3 Having considered the changes made to the Housing Act 1996 Part VI in the Localism Act 2011, the following classes of person will not normally qualify for a place in a band. There is discretion to waive these classes in exceptional circumstances, as approved by an appropriate manager:

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<sup>3</sup> Also known as a Housing Register

## Appendix 2- full draft scheme

- a) Applicants who have been convicted of housing or welfare benefits related fraud where that conviction is unspent under the Rehabilitation Offenders Act 1974
- b) Applicants in breach of another condition of their Tenancy Agreement in respect of their current or former accommodation (including temporary accommodation)
- c) Applicants in breach of Section 214 of the Housing Act 1996.
- d) Applicants with lawfully recoverable arrears or other housing related debt within the meaning of this Scheme, which have been accrued through deliberate and wilful non-payment
- e) Applicants whose income or assets exceeds the limits set by the Council (as these limits will change the Officers will use guidance to apply this test)
- f) Applicants who owe arrears of rent or other accommodation charges to the Council in respect of the current tenancy or former accommodation, unless an appropriate agreement has been reached and sustained for a minimum period of 8 weeks. In assessing the application for registration, the Council will take into account the size of the debt, the means to pay and the degree of need. Existing tenants with rent arrears because they have been affected by the under-occupancy charge will not normally be excluded where a move will prevent further arrears building up and they have made a reasonable contribution towards the charge
- g) Homeless applicants found to be intentionally homeless
- h) Homeless applicants to whom the main homelessness duty has been ended due to refusal of a suitable offer
- i) Homeless applicants but assessed as having no priority need under the homelessness law
- j) Homeless applicants placed in long term suitable temporary accommodation under the main homelessness duty unless the property does not meet the needs of the household or is about to be ended through no fault of the applicant see Para 3.6
- k) Applicants who have refused one reasonable offer of accommodation under the terms of this Allocations Scheme, see Para 4.26
- l) Applicants that have in the 12 months prior to making an application voluntarily surrendered any tenancy that would have been reasonable for them to continue to occupy
- m) Applicants who are overcrowded by only 1 bedroom and this is their only housing need
- n) Applicants with no residential connection to Barnet as set out at Para 3.5 (save for applicants placed in band 4 as in Para 3.4 below).

### ASSESSMENT OF NEED

- 3.4 The council has developed a housing banding system to determine who will be prioritised for housing in the borough. The housing bands are summarised below and full details are set out in Annex 1:

## Appendix 2- full draft scheme

**Band 1:** People who have a reasonable preference<sup>4</sup> and are granted additional preference (being people with a very urgent need to move).

**Band 2:** People who need to move and fall within one of the reasonable preference categories but also qualify for the positive community contribution criteria such as being in employment, training or voluntary work. People who currently live in supported housing who have been prioritised by Adult Social Care and Health as ready for independent living.

**Band 3:** People who need to move and fall within one of the reasonable preference categories but do not qualify for the positive community contribution criteria

**Band 4:** People who need to move and have been awarded reasonable preference under Housing Act 1996 Part VI Section 193(2), but have had their preference reduced due to for example, no local connection, unspent housing or welfare benefits fraud, rent arrears, other housing related debt, higher income or savings or other tenancy breaches.

### RESIDENTIAL CONNECTION

3.5 Residential connection within the terms of this scheme will normally mean that an applicant has lived in this borough continuously for a minimum of 5 years up to and including the date of their application, or the date on which a decision is made on their application whichever is later.

Households placed in accommodation outside of the borough by this authority in meeting its statutory duties will also have a residential connection as long as they fulfil the 5 year residential qualification. The time spent placed by Barnet in temporary accommodation outside the borough will count towards time spent in Barnet.

Residential connection may also be awarded to people who need to move to a particular locality in the borough, where failure to meet that need would cause exceptional hardship to themselves or to others. Those without a residential connection will not be eligible to be placed in bands 1,2 or 3 until this condition is satisfied.

People in the following categories will not normally be considered as having a residential connection:

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<sup>4</sup> a) people who are homeless (within the meaning of Part 7);(b) people who are owed a duty by any local housing authority under section 190(2), 193(2) or 195(2) (or under section 65(2) or 68(2) of the Housing Act 1985) or who are occupying accommodation secured by any such authority under section 192(3); (c) people occupying insanitary or overcrowded housing or otherwise living in unsatisfactory housing conditions;(d)people who need to move on medical or welfare grounds [(including grounds relating to a disability)]<sup>2</sup>; and (e) people who need to move to a particular locality in the district of the authority, where failure to meet that need would cause hardship (to themselves or to others).

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- Those placed in the borough of Barnet in temporary accommodation by another borough
- Those placed in the borough of Barnet in residential or supported housing by another borough
- Secure or flexible tenants of other boroughs
- Those who do not meet the residential criteria but who have family members in this borough.

3.6 Applicants who have been placed in long term temporary accommodation by the Council will not be placed in a housing needs band. This will be reviewed if the arrangement is due to expire within the next 3 months or there is a change in circumstances that may increase their priority under this scheme. Long term temporary accommodation includes<sup>5</sup> private sector properties let via the council or a housing association under a leasing arrangement, and non-secure tenancies on the regeneration estates.

3.7 Applications for housing will be assessed by Housing Officers using information supplied by the applicant and as a result of further enquiries as appropriate. The Housing Officer will decide whether the applicant falls within the Council's housing banding system and if so which band will apply.

3.8 Applicants who are assessed as not falling within one of the Council's Housing Bands will only be offered housing advice and assistance as necessary.

3.9 The Council recognises that there may be exceptional circumstances where the only way an exceptional housing need can be resolved is through the use of discretion in the banding assessment and residential connection. In the interests of fairness to all these applicants these circumstances are kept to a minimum. Examples of exceptional circumstances include, but are not limited to:

- Threat to life
- Emergency cases whose homes are damaged by fire, flood or other disaster may be provided with another tenancy if it is not possible to repair the existing home, or if any work to repair is to take such a long period of time that there will be serious disruption to family life.
- Households who, on police advice, must be moved immediately due to serious threats to a one or more members of the household, or whose continuing occupation would pose a threat to the community.
- Cases nominated under the Police Witness Protection Scheme or other similar schemes that the council has agreed to be part of.
- An applicant who has an exceptional need that is not covered in the Allocations Scheme. For example, where child or public protection issues require rehousing or for severe domestic abuse where all other options to remain in the home have been considered.

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<sup>5</sup> These examples do not represent an exhaustive list.



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- Other exceptional circumstances as authorised by the Head of Housing Options or equivalent.
- 3.10 Medical priority will be awarded according to the extent to which the health or welfare of one or more members of the applicant's household is affected by their housing conditions and the expected benefits of providing suitable alternative settled housing. Applicants who are assessed as having an overriding medical or welfare housing need will be placed in Band 1; the circumstances that justify this are detailed in Annex 1.
- 3.11 We will work together with social services and other agencies looking at supply and demand to identify clients currently in supported housing who are ready for independent living. Subject to these discussions and agreement that the client's housing needs cannot be met outside of social housing, clients referred by Adult Social Care and Health will be placed in Band 2, unless there is an urgent need to move in line with the Band 1 criteria.
- 3.12 Where a young person is identified by Children's Services as ready to move on to other accommodation the young person will be placed in Band 2 or 3 subject to community contribution (unless there is an urgent need to move in line with the Band 1 criteria). The amount and type of contribution may vary for young people and the housing needs officer will have discretion to assess this as set out in Annex 3 to this scheme.

### **CONDITION AND SIZE OF ACCOMMODATION**

- 3.13 All accommodation offered will be habitable and in reasonable repair.
- 3.14 The size of accommodation for which each applicant will be considered will depend upon the size and composition of the applicant's household. The requirements for each size of household are set out at Annex 2. Young people aged 16 to 25 might be offered shared housing dependent on their assessed housing need.
- 3.15 Larger accommodation than specified in Annex 2 may be considered in exceptional circumstances on the recommendation of a specialist advisor, for example the Council's Medical Adviser, Occupational Therapy Service, or senior social worker.
- 3.16 In calculating the number of bedrooms available within properties the Council will treat every habitable room as a bedroom except kitchens, bathrooms and one room for use as a living room. The Council will normally consider additional downstairs rooms in houses for use as bedrooms in accordance with Housing Benefit regulations.
- 3.17 Cases of existing secure Council tenants agreed as Management Transfers (due to extreme circumstances such as violent assault, harassment etc) are able to move to alternative accommodation as the only viable resolution to

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their current difficulties. These moves should however not be at the expense of others. Therefore their move will only be to the same size and type of accommodation as they currently occupy regardless of their actual housing need.

### **COUNCIL TENANTS**

- 3.18 Council tenants wishing to move from their existing home will be assessed in the same way as other applicants applying for housing advice and assistance under this scheme. As such they will also be subject to the qualification criteria in point 3.3.
- 3.19 Applications for transfer may be made jointly by separate tenants of the Council who wish to apply for housing together, on the condition that both tenancies will be relinquished if the Council makes an acceptable offer of a transfer to a third property.
- 3.20 On occasion it may be necessary for a council tenant to move out of their existing home to allow major works to be carried out or because their home is due to be demolished. In these circumstances, the Council will use its discretion to prioritise a move to a suitable alternative home by placing the tenant in Band 1 at an appropriate time.
- 3.21 Council tenants who have to move because major works are required to their home will have the option of moving back to their original home once the works have been completed.
- 3.22 The Council is undertaking a number of regeneration schemes. Under these schemes a large number of existing council homes will be demolished and replaced with new homes owned and managed by housing associations. Under this allocations policy, existing secure tenants whose homes are due to be demolished will have priority for the new replacement homes being provided on their estate in accordance with the provisions agreed for each estate, before they are made available to any other applicants.
- 3.23 Where a council tenant is imprisoned for a period of more than 12 months, and would therefore either accumulate rent arrears or possibly lose their tenancy, they can voluntarily give up their tenancy. Upon release they would be made a direct allocation of a secure property that meets their needs. The size of accommodation would be the same as their previous tenancy, or a size that meets their needs under the terms of this policy, whichever is smaller. This will not apply to tenants who have been imprisoned in relation to a crime that would enable the Council to seek repossession of their accommodation- where this applies the Council will normally take repossession action.

### **HOUSING ASSOCIATION TENANTS**

- 3.24 Housing association tenants will be assessed in the same way as other applicants applying for housing advice and assistance under this scheme.

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### MUTUAL EXCHANGES

3.25 Secure tenants have certain rights in relation to exchanging their tenancies with other secure tenants and in relation to the circumstances in which a member of their household can succeed to their tenancy. These do not fall within the scope of this allocations scheme, and full details for how these schemes operate can be obtained from Barnet Homes or their Landlord in the case of Housing Association Tenants.

### DISCRETIONARY SUCCESSION

3.26 Housing law means that certain household members are entitled to succeed to a council tenancy when the tenant dies. This statutory right only applies to the first time that a succession occurs, but beyond this, the council will use its discretion to allow additional successions to take place in the following circumstances:

- The person applying for succession has lived continuously in the property as their principle home for twelve months before the death of the tenant and
- They are the spouse, civil partner, a close relative of the tenant, or someone who had to live with the tenant in order to provide them with care, without which the tenant could not have maintained their tenancy and
- They would qualify for the property they have applied to succeed to under the council's allocations policy.

Where a property is not suitable for the person applying to succeed, for example because it is too large, the Council will assist them to find alternative accommodation if they qualify for help under the allocations scheme, this could include an offer of accommodation in the private rented sector.

Where a discretionary succession is agreed, the tenancy will be treated as a new tenancy under the Council's Tenancy Strategy – this means that in most cases a flexible tenancy will be granted, unless the applicant falls within a category of people who will still be granted a lifetime tenancy, for example a former member of the armed forces.

### SERVICE TENANCIES

3.27 Employees of the council or Barnet Homes who have a service tenancy associated with their employment may be rehoused by the council in certain circumstances as set out in Annex 4. This will be achieved outside of assisted choice through the operation of clause 4.11 of this scheme.

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### **4. HOW THE COUNCIL ALLOCATES PROPERTIES**

#### **THE PROPERTY POOL AND ASSISTED CHOICE**

- 4.1 Barnet Council operates a property pool and assisted choice lettings system. This means that the council will maintain a list of properties that are available to let to housing applicants who fall into one of the housing bands described in Annex 1. This will include properties in the council, housing association and private rented sectors.
- 4.2 Priority for council and housing association properties being let as secure or assured tenancies will be determined by housing band, with those applicants in Band 1 having a greater priority than those in bands 2-4, and those in band 2 having a greater priority than those in bands 3-4, and so on. Within bands, priority will be determined by date order<sup>6</sup>.
- 4.3 In considering priority for re-housing between applicants with a similar priority under the banding scheme, the Council will also take account of the immediacy of need of each applicant. This means, for example, that where two applicants in the same band are interested in the same property, preference may be given where one of the applicants is facing a more immediate loss of their existing home than the other.
- 4.4 To avoid the loss of properties available to the Council, properties in the private rented sector may be offered to applicants across bands 1-4. In the interests of maximizing the supply of properties to those in housing need and working in partnership with local landlords, landlords play a role in selecting tenants for whom their properties are suitable from a shortlist provided by Barnet Homes.
- 4.5 Applicants will be selected for a property from those that are available that meet their needs and will be required to accept this property as their offer of rehousing. Paragraph 4.20 below explains in more detail how the Council will determine the suitability of a property.
- 4.6 If no suitable properties are available at the time of banding the applicant's case will remain open until a property becomes available. However, while the case remains open, customers will be encouraged and supported to secure their own accommodation by making use of the private rented sector incentive schemes.

#### **EXCEPTIONS TO ASSISTED CHOICE**

- 4.7 Available properties which are adapted or which are suitable for adaptation and Extra Care and Sheltered Plus housing or which are otherwise potentially suitable for applicants with a substantial disability or other special or support needs may be allocated outside strict banding and date order priority.

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<sup>6</sup> Date order means that date that an applicant was placed in the housing band

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- 4.8 An allocation may also be made outside banding priority in the case of a Council tenant who is willing to transfer from a property which s/he does not require and which is particularly suitable for an applicant with special or support needs.
- 4.9 Applicants who have a special need for an adapted property or other particular type of accommodation which is in very short supply may be invited to consider a suitable property which becomes available outside of the areas preferred by the applicants concerned.
- 4.10 Applicants who have given up their Council tenancy whilst they are in prison as set out in 3.23 above.
- 4.11 The Council reserves the right to restrict the operation of the property pool to certain groups of applicants or to make direct offers of accommodation to households waiting for re-housing in order to fulfill its fiduciary or housing management duties and responsibilities, including achieving a balance of lettings as set out in the Council's letting plan.
- 4.12 Special allocation arrangements may apply in respect of properties available for letting on new-build developments.
- 4.13 Decisions to allocate properties outside of the property pool and assisted choice under 4.7 to 4.12 will be authorised by a senior housing officer. In addition, decisions under 4.11 and 4.12 will be notified to an appropriate senior representative of the Council.

### **PAN-LONDON MOBILITY**

- 4.14 Barnet Council participates in pan-London mobility (PLM) arrangements<sup>7</sup> and accordingly up to five percent of the properties that become available to the Council for re-letting or nomination each year will be made available to transferring tenants from other London local authorities participating in the scheme.
- 4.15 Homes under this scheme are allocated according to the PLM allocations scheme rules and not the rules outlined in this scheme. Full details of the PLM scheme can be found at [www.london.gov.uk](http://www.london.gov.uk).
- 4.16 Existing tenants of Barnet Council can make transfer applications through PLM to be considered for vacancies in other London local authority areas.

### **TYPES OF PROPERTY**

- 4.17 Some properties or blocks of properties may be designated for allocation only to applicants sharing a common characteristic or need, for example:

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<sup>7</sup>Currently known as Housing Moves

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- Properties in blocks of flats for people aged over 40, or aged over 50.
- Properties in sheltered housing developments for people over 60,
- Properties in supported housing schemes offering special services,
- Individual properties which are adapted or otherwise particularly suitable for applicants who use a wheelchair, or
- Priority for ground floor, level access accommodation, will be given to customers with an assessed need for ground floor, level access accommodation
- Priority for houses will normally only be given to households in band 1 or households with children under the age of 16, unless there are exceptional circumstances approved by the head of housing options and allocated to households with children over 16.

### SELECTION OF PROPERTIES

4.18 In selecting properties from the property pool for applicants to consider, the Council will normally take into account the following factors:

- The number of bedrooms required (see Annex 2)
- Any essential requirement concerning the type or location of rehousing
- The housing band into which the applicant's case falls
- The suitability of the accommodation.

4.19 The Council will not normally take into account:

- Non-essential preferences concerning the location or type of rehousing requested by the applicant.
- An applicant's preference as between an allocation of a Council property, a nomination to a housing association property or an allocation to the private rented sector.
- The standard, type or location of the applicant's current accommodation (except where this is related to the assessment of their need)

### SUITABILITY OF OFFERS OF REHOUSING (This section is to be read in conjunction with the Placements Policy)

4.20 Where accommodation is offered through the assisted choice process described above, an applicant will normally be expected to accept an offer of a property that meets their specified needs. Suitable offers are those that are deemed as suitable and appropriate to meet the housing and medical needs of the household concerned and are affordable to the applicant and his or her household.

4.21 The Council will seek to take into account applicants' particular or special needs but it will not always be possible to ensure that these needs are met. In considering what is reasonable, the Council will have regard to the overall supply of Council and other accommodation and the demands placed upon it by all priority groups. A suitable property may, therefore, be located outside the borough.

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- 4.22 As a guideline and subject to the individual circumstances of each application, the Council will normally consider that a property is suitable if:
- It is located close to an area which the applicant has selected or an area that the Council considers to be reasonable.
  - If it is affordable for the applicant and his or her household based on his or her financial circumstances at the time of offer.
  - It is sized in accordance with the criteria in Annex 2.
  - It complies with any recommendation made by a Medical or other relevant advisor.
  - In determining the suitability of accommodation, the council will consider the following:
    - the significance of any disruption to the employment, education or caring responsibilities of the applicant or a member of the household;
    - the accessibility of medical or other support facilities that are currently used by the applicant or a member of the household;
    - the accessibility of local services, including places of worship, amenities and transport
- If a suitable property is located outside of the borough's boundary then the Council has to take into consideration the distance from the applicant's existing accommodation in the borough.
- 4.23 Applicants may be offered a property in the private rented sector. These offers are subject to specific regulations that protect the health and safety of tenants. Full details of these regulations are available on request.
- 4.24 An offer of accommodation which is arranged by way of a nomination to a housing association will be considered to be as reasonable as an offer of a council tenancy.
- 4.25 If a housing applicant refuses one reasonable offer of accommodation through the assisted choice scheme or a direct allocation, they will be removed from the banding system.
- 4.26 An applicant who has been removed from the banding system under 4.25 will not be entitled to be reconsidered for housing under this allocations scheme for a period of 2 years from the date that the Council notified them of its decision, except where there has been a material change in circumstances such that the offer of re-housing would no longer be suitable, for example because of an enlargement of the applicant's household or a deterioration in ill health.

### PROCEDURE FOR APPEALS AND REVIEWS

- 5.1 All applicants have the right to request general information about their application, including whether they are entitled to any preference for housing and whether and when suitable accommodation will be offered to them. Decisions made under this policy will be notified to applicants in writing and applicants are entitled to request information concerning the facts of their case that have been taken into account.
- 5.2 Applicants who are unhappy with a decision made under this scheme should in the first instance contact the Housing Options service and explain why they think that the decision is not reasonable. An initial review will then be undertaken of the decision to offer the applicant the property. This review will be undertaken by either the housing officer who dealt with their case or an equivalent officer.
- 5.3 The applicant will be notified whether the decision still stands and the reasons for this usually within 2 working days.
- 5.4 If an applicant wishes to take the matter further, they can make a request for a formal review of the decision within 21 days. In these cases the applicant will be invited to make a written submission stating the reasons for their request for a review and the Council will seek any further information it requires, including advice from medical and other specialist advisors. Formal reviews will be conducted by a team leader or manager within the Council's Housing Service with no previous involvement in the case who will notify the applicant of the outcome of the review including the reasons for their decision within 56 days.
- 5.5 Where an applicant wishes to appeal the suitability of an offer of accommodation under 5.1 of this policy, the property will be held available whilst the appeal is considered where this is not likely to lead to an unreasonable delay in letting the property.
- 5.6 Where an applicant requests a formal review concerning the suitability of accommodation under 5.3 of this policy, the property will not normally be held available whilst the appeal is considered.



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### **GENERAL RULES AND CONDITIONS**

#### **DECISIONS**

- 6.1 All decisions taken under this policy will be by fully trained housing officers within the Council's Housing Service unless otherwise specified. Housing Officers are supported by Team leaders and Senior Managers.

#### **REQUESTS FOR ASSISTANCE**

- 6.2 Requests for housing assistance must be made to the Housing Service. The Council aims to notify applicants of the result of the assessment of their priority under the Housing Banding System within 33 days. However, in cases where a medical assessment or other special assessment is required, it may take longer to notify the result.

#### **PERSONS ELIGIBLE FOR ASSISTANCE**

- 6.3 Persons entitled to assistance must be members of the applicant's immediate family who normally reside with the applicant. Any other person or persons will only be considered as entitled if the Council is satisfied that it is reasonable for that person to reside with the applicant. This will normally exclude lodgers or anyone sub letting from the applicant.
- 6.4 The Council may also refuse to consider an application for assistance or someone's inclusion on an application if the person concerned (i.e. other than the applicant) has made a separate housing application.

#### **EVIDENCE OF IDENTITY AND HOUSING CIRCUMSTANCES**

- 6.5 All applicants must provide satisfactory evidence of identity and past and current residences for themselves and all household members. The Council will request documentary evidence from each applicant and will conduct such further enquiries as are reasonable in the circumstances. An application will be cancelled if the applicant has failed to provide documentary evidence or other information reasonably required by the Council in order to validate the application.
- 6.6 The Council will normally carry out a visit to each applicant's residence if their priority is sufficient for an allocation of housing under this scheme. Visits conducted will include an inspection of the accommodation and facilities and are normally but not necessarily arranged by appointment.

#### **INCOME AND SAVINGS**

- 6.7 All prospective new tenants will be required to supply evidence of their financial income and resources. Verification of income and savings will be required prior to applicants being offered accommodation. Income assessments will take into account the incomes of both the main applicant and their partner. The income that is assessed will include both gross earned income and income from benefits (excluding disability benefits). Households will not normally be placed in a band or

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offered social housing if their total income is above the median income level for their household size in Barnet. Similarly where applicants have resources above the level set by the Council (£30,000 capital or savings) they will not normally be placed in a band or offered social housing. Households with incomes or assets below these limits will only be banded if they meet the criteria set out in this scheme.

### **CHANGES OF CIRCUMSTANCES**

6.8 Once placed in a priority band, applicants should notify the Council in writing of any material change in their circumstances that will affect their priority for housing, for example:

- a change of address, for themselves or any other person on the application.
- any additions to the family or any other person joining the application
- any member of the family or any other person on the application who has left the accommodation.
- any change in income or savings.

6.9 Applications may be temporarily suspended while the Council assesses the information provided by the applicant and completes further enquiries that may be necessary.

6.10 The Council will carry out an assessment of each applicant's entitlement to and priority for re-housing on the basis of information which has been provided by the applicant or otherwise received in connection with the applicant.

### **INVESTIGATION OF FRAUD**

6.11 The Council recognises its duty to protect the public resources it administers. Detailed enquiries about applications will therefore be made in order to guard against misrepresentation and fraud. Such enquiries will be made in all cases where applicants appear to have sufficient priority for an offer for rehousing, and in other cases as resources allow and may be made at any time either at the time of application or subsequently including after any grant of tenancy. Applications will be suspended if there is evidence of misrepresentation or fraud until enquiries are completed.

6.12 Any applicant seeking to obtain accommodation by making a false or misleading statement or by withholding relevant information or by failing to inform the Council of any material change in circumstances is liable to have his/her application cancelled. Prosecution will be considered where it appears to the Council that a criminal offence has been committed. Proceedings for possession will be taken to recover any tenancy granted in consequence of a fraudulent application for housing.

### **MEMBERS OF THE COUNCIL, STAFF MEMBERS AND THEIR RELATIONS**

6.13 In order to ensure that the Council is seen to be treating all applicants fairly, any application for housing or rehousing from members of the Council, employees of the Council or associated persons must be disclosed. These applications will be

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assessed in the normal way but any allocation of housing will require special approval by a Team Leader in the Housing Service.

### **EQUAL OPPORTUNITIES AND MONITORING**

- 6.14 The Council is committed to the principle of equal opportunities in the delivery of all its services.
- 6.15 Applicants will be invited to indicate if they wish to make use of the Council's translation and interpretation services, or if they require other special services as a result of visual impairment, hearing difficulties or other disability.
- 6.16 Confidential interview facilities are provided at all housing offices. There is full access to the housing office at Barnet House for people who use a wheelchair. Home interview services are available for applicants who are elderly or who experience mobility difficulties.
- 6.17 The Council will seek to ensure that its allocation policies are being operated in a manner that is fair to all sections of the community regardless of nationality, ethnic origin, marital status, age, gender or disability. The information provided will be kept confidential and treated with respect. The council believes it is important to understand the different communities who apply for housing and it is only by asking these questions that we can check we are operating a fair system.
- 6.18 All applicants for housing or rehousing will be asked to provide details of ethnic origin, faith, sexuality and disability. This will not, however, be a requirement for acceptance of an application. Equalities records will be kept and monitored on a regular and systematic basis to ensure properties are being offered and allocated fairly.
- 6.19 Allocation policies and any changes to them will be reviewed regularly to ensure they do not operate in ways that discriminate against or disadvantage any particular group.

### **CONFIDENTIALITY**

- 6.20 The Council will take disciplinary action against any employee who makes use of any information obtained in the course of their employment for personal gain or benefit, or who passes it to others who might use it in such a way. A report to the police will be made if it appears that a criminal offence has been committed.
- 6.21 The disclosure of information about any housing application to a third party is prohibited except on a "need to know" basis in the following circumstances:
- to plan and provide assistance jointly with health and social services agencies in appropriate cases.
  - for the purpose of fraud detection, the prevention of crime, and the promotion of community safety.
  - to enable efficient administration of offers of rehousing, lettings, housing association nominations, and rent and benefit accountancy etc.

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- where disclosure is a legal requirement.

### **ACCESS TO PERSONAL DATA**

- 6.22 The Data Protection Act 1998 (DPA) provides individuals with a right to request access to any of their personal data held by the Council, and a right to know where the data came from, how it is used and why it is held. Such a request is called a “subject access request” and applies to personal data in housing files.
- 6.23 Subject access requests should be made in writing to the Head of Housing and must describe the information sought. Applicants must state their name and provide proof of their identity, such as a copy of a passport, driving license, or recent utility bill.
- 6.24 Any applications made by third parties on behalf of an applicant (for example by a lawyer acting for a client) must be accompanied by written evidence of authority to act. If this is not possible by reason of disability then the Council should be contacted in order to make alternative arrangements.
- 6.25 The Council may charge a £10 fee to handle a subject access request. There is no charge for students, pensioners, staff, benefit claimants and those on Income Support.
- 6.26 Once the Council has received the information, documentation and fee (if charged) referred to above in paragraphs 6.23, 6.24 and 6.25, it must begin processing the request and respond within 40 calendar days. There is a limited range of exemptions from the right of subject access.
- 6.27 Housing files may contain information about other people (third parties), such as details of complaints made by other tenants, or comments made by housing staff. If the Council cannot respond to a request without giving information about other people, it is not obliged to include this information in its response unless they consent, or unless it thinks it is reasonable in all the circumstances to disclose this information without their consent.
- 6.28 Under the DPA applicants may also have the right to challenge the information held on them and may request the correction of records which they believe to be inaccurate. Such challenges should be made in writing and addressed to the Head of Housing.

### **ACCESS TO OTHER INFORMATION**

- 6.29 Anyone has the right to request access to recorded information held by the Council, either under the Freedom of Information Act 2000 (FOIA) or, for environmental information, the Environmental Information Regulations 2004 (EIRs).
- 6.30 Requests under the FOIA must be made in writing, must include the applicant’s name and a correspondence address and must specifically describe the

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information requested. Requests under the EIRs must also comply with these regulations except that they can be made verbally. Please address requests under the FOIA or EIRs to the “FOI Officer” at the Council’s postal address or to [foi@barnet.gov.uk](mailto:foi@barnet.gov.uk).

6.31 Once a valid request has been reviewed the Council must usually respond within 20 working days.

6.32 Requests made by individuals for their own personal data will be treated as “subject access requests” under the DPA (see 6.22 to 6.28 above).

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**ANNEX 1 – BARNET HOUSING BANDS**

<b>Band 1: Urgent Need to Move due to Reasonable Preference PLUS additional priority and a residential connection<sup>8</sup></b>	
	<b>Summary Guide of Criteria<sup>9</sup></b>
<p>Emergency medical or disability Reasonable preference category S.166A(3)(d)</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Where an applicant’s condition is expected to be terminal within a period of twelve months and rehousing is required to provide a basis for the provision of suitable care.</li> <li>• The condition is life threatening and the applicant’s existing accommodation is a major contributory factor.</li> <li>• The applicant’s health is so severely affected by the accommodation that it is likely to become life threatening.</li> <li>• The applicant has severe mobility issues, is housebound and is unable to leave their accommodation save with assistance that will result in high risk to themselves or their carer. They have an assessed need to move to accommodation that meets their needs.</li> <li>• The applicant is a wheelchair user who is unable to use their wheelchair within their current accommodation and has an assessed need to move to wheelchair suitable accommodation.</li> <li>• The applicant’s accommodation is directly contributing to the deterioration of the applicant’s health such as severe chest condition requiring intermittent hospitalisation as a result of chronic dampness in the accommodation and the condition of the property cannot be resolved within a reasonable period of time – usually 6 months.</li> <li>• Where overcrowding in the property leaves the applicant at risk of life threatening infection.</li> </ul>
<p>Exceptional Circumstances Welfare and Hardship Criteria Reasonable preference category S.166A(3)(e)</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Emergency need to move determined by the Council and authorised by the Head of Housing Options or equivalent.</li> </ul> <p>Examples of exceptional circumstance cases are given in the policy at paragraph 3.9</p>
<p>Disability need to move on hardship grounds Reasonable preference category S.166A(3)(d)</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• This is any applicant who needs to move to suitable adapted accommodation because of a serious injury, medical condition or disability which he or she, or a member of their household, has sustained as a result of service in the Armed Forces</li> </ul>

<sup>8</sup> As defined in paragraph 3.5 of this scheme

<sup>9</sup> This summary guide of criteria does not represent an exhaustive list of all applicants entitled to reasonable preference

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<p>Release of adapted property Reasonable preference category S.166A(3)(e)</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Where a tenant is willing to transfer to a suitable non adapted property and is releasing an adapted house or designated older persons property.</li> </ul>
<p>Statutory Overcrowded Reasonable preference category S.166A(3)(c)</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Tenants who are statutorily overcrowded</li> </ul>
<p>Acute Overcrowding Reasonable preference category S.166A(3)(c)</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Where a household is 3 bedrooms short of the bedroom standard outlined in Annex 2.</li> </ul>
<p>Private sector properties insanitary or unfit. Those living in insanitary conditions where the conditions pose an ongoing and serious threat to health; Reasonable preference category S.166A(3)(c)</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Private sector tenants and residents of dwellings that the Council's Private Sector Housing Team has determined that the property poses a category 1 hazard under the Housing Health and Safety Rating System (e.g.: crowding and space, excessive cold or risk of falls) and the Council are satisfied that the problem cannot be resolved by the landlord within 6 months and as a result continuing to occupy the accommodation will pose a considerable risk to the applicant's health. This includes a property that has severe damp, major structural defects including subsidence, flooding, collapse of roof, or have living conditions which are a statutory nuisance, <u>and</u> there is no prospect of the problems being remedied within a 6 month time period.</li> <li>• A private sector property either owned or rented where a statutory notice has been issued by the environmental health department that an unfit property is to be demolished under the Housing Act 2004.</li> </ul>
<p>Under-occupation Reasonable preference category S.166A(3)(e)</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Where a secure Council tenant will release a home with two or more bedrooms by moving to a property with fewer bedrooms than they currently have.</li> <li>• Housing association tenants who will release a home with two or more bedrooms are eligible if their landlord agrees that the vacated property can be used for a nomination by the council</li> </ul>
<p>Major works or demolition Reasonable preference category S.166A(3)(c)</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Where a council tenant has to move either temporarily or permanently whilst major works are undertaken or where their home is due to be demolished</li> </ul>
<p>Foster carers referred by the Council's Children's Service Reasonable preference category S166A(3) (d) or (e)</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Foster carers approved by the Council whose housing prevents them from being able to start, or continue, to provide foster care.</li> </ul>

## Appendix 2- full draft scheme

<b>Band 2 Need to move – Reasonable Preference plus Community Contribution and a residential connection<sup>10</sup></b>	
	<b>Summary of Criteria</b>
<p>Homeless Households owed a full homeless duty under section 193(2) or 195(2).</p> <p>Reasonable Preference categories s166A(3) (a)</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• People who are owed a duty under section 193 (2) Or 195 (2) of the 1996 Act (or under section 65 (2) or 68(2) of the Housing Act 1985) -- This means households who are homeless or threatened with homelessness and in priority need</li> <li>• Note for cases owed a full homeless duty by any other Council they will receive a reduced preference for not having a local connection to Barnet Council (until they acquire a local connection with the borough).</li> </ul>
<p>Overcrowded by the Bedroom standard.</p> <p>Reasonable Preference category s166A(3)(c)</p>	<p>Where a household is 2 bedrooms short of the bedroom standard outlined in Annex 2.</p>
<p>Applicants living in unsatisfactory housing lacking basic facilities.</p> <p>Reasonable Preference category s166A(3)(c)</p>	<p>Applicants without access at all to any of the following facilities. No access to:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• a bathroom or kitchen</li> <li>• an inside WC</li> <li>• hot or cold water supplies, electricity, gas or adequate heating</li> </ul> <p>Applicants who occupy a private property which is in disrepair or is unfit for occupation and is subject to a Prohibition Order and recovery of the premises is required in order to comply with the Order as defined by Section 33 of the Housing Act 2004.</p> <p>Applicants who only have access to shared facilities in shared accommodation will not qualify under these criteria.</p>
<p>Medical grounds</p> <p>Reasonable Preference category s166A(3)(d)</p>	<p>Where an applicant's housing is unsuitable for severe medical reasons or due to their disability, but who are not housebound or whose life is not at risk due to their current housing, but whose housing conditions directly contribute to causing serious ill-health.</p>
<p>Hardship or welfare need to move for care or support</p> <p>Reasonable Preference category s166A(3) (c) and (d)</p>	<p>Those who need to move to give or receive care that is substantial and ongoing.</p> <p>Those who need to access social services facilities, and are unable to travel across the Borough.</p> <p>Those who need to take up (or continue) employment, education or a training opportunity that is not available</p>

<sup>10</sup> As defined in paragraph 3.5 of this scheme



## Appendix 2- full draft scheme

	elsewhere <u>and</u> who do not live within reasonable commuting distance.
Housing need due to age Reasonable Preference category s166A(3)(d)	Older or disabled applicants seeking Retirement or Extra Care or Sheltered Plus housing
Ready to move on from Council accredited supported care schemes Reasonable Preference category s166A(3)(c)	An applicant is ready to move to independent settled housing on the recommendation of the support worker or equivalent.  The applicant is in need of medium to long term rather than short term ongoing tenancy support.  That support package has been assessed and is in place.
Move on from Care Reasonable Preference category s166A(3)(c)	A care leaver is ready to move to independent settled housing and is genuinely prepared for a move to independent living.  They possess the life skills to manage a tenancy including managing a rent account.  The care leaver is in need of either a long term or medium term tenancy support.  That support package has been assessed and is in place.
Discretionary Succession	Where the Council has agreed to grant a tenancy under clause 3.26 of this policy.
Existing Foster carers approved by the Council willing to provide care for an additional child Reasonable preference category S166A(3) (d) or (e)	Where a Foster carer already providing a home for at least one foster child offers to provide care for an additional foster child

### **Band 3 : Need to move – Reasonable Preference BUT no Community Contribution and a residential connection<sup>11</sup>**

Reasonable Preference categories s166A(3) (a) homeless	Applicants in this Band will have the same element of housing need / Reasonable Preference as those applicants in Band 2 BUT will <u>not</u> have the Community Contribution or Working Household award as defined section 3 part 3 of the policy. Once a Community Contribution or Working Household award is given, the applicant will be moved into Band 2.
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<sup>11</sup> As defined in paragraph 3.5 of this scheme

**Appendix 2- full draft scheme**

<b>Band 4: Reduced Priority : Need to Move - Reasonable Preference but with Reduced Priority</b>	
	<b>Summary of Criteria</b>
<p>Applicants owed Reasonable Preference but who have been given reduced priority but are owed, or are likely to be owed, the main homelessness duty under Housing Act 1996 Part VIII) 193(2).</p> <p>No local connection</p> <p>Unspent housing or welfare benefits convictions</p> <p>Rent or other housing arrears</p> <p>Income or assets exceeding the limits set out in paragraph 6.7</p> <p>Breaches in tenancy conditions</p>	<p>Customers in this band have reduced preference and are extremely unlikely to be offered social housing but may be helped to find a home in the private rented sector.</p>

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## Appendix 2- full draft scheme

### ANNEX 2

#### SIZES OF HOMES

- The number of bedrooms you need depends upon the size of your family.
- The chart shows the size of home that we consider you need.
- Unborn babies and children under the age of 1 are not considered when size of home needed is assessed
- Single people without children are usually offered studios.
- Single bedrooms will be used for one person not sharing (for example a single parent).
- Double bedrooms will be used for two people sharing (for example two children sharing)
- A couple or single parent expecting a baby is entitled to one double bedroom.
- A couple or single parents with a child under one are entitled to one double bedroom.
- Two children of the opposite sex under ten will be expected to share a bedroom.
- Some retiring staff are contractually entitled to one bedroom more than they need.
- Council or Housing Association tenants trading down from properties with three or more bedrooms may choose a property with one bedroom more than they need
- Sometimes Housing Associations adopt different criteria for determining the number of bedrooms a household requires.

SIZE OF FAMILY	SIZE OF PROPERTY
Single person	Bedsit/single person home- with single bedroom
A couple without children	1 bedroom
Two adults of the same sex and generation* for example, flat sharers, or two brothers	1 bedroom
A couple with a child aged one or over, including an adult son or daughter	2 bedrooms
A couple with two children of the same sex	2 bedrooms
Two adults of opposite sex who do not live as a couple, for example, brother and sister	2 bedrooms
A couple with two children of opposite sex and both under ten	2 bedrooms
A couple with two children of opposite sex one of whom is 10 or over	3 bedrooms
A couple with three children	3 bedrooms
A couple with four children (all of the same sex or two of each sex)	3 bedrooms
A couple with two children of the opposite sex under ten and one dependant relative (for example, widowed mother)	3 bedrooms

## Appendix 2- full draft scheme

A couple with four children (three of one sex and one of the opposite sex)	3 or 4 bedrooms depending on the age of the children
A couple with more than four children	4 bedrooms
A couple with three children and one dependant relative	4 bedrooms
*This does not apply to parents/children	

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### ANNEX 3

## COMMUNITY CONTRIBUTION: HOW PRIORITY IS AWARDED

### Community Contribution

People who play a part in making their neighbourhood strong, stable and healthy – those who help make it a good place to live, work and play – are valuable people. They are the backbone of their community, and the Council believes such people should be allocated social housing to continue contributing to sustaining local communities in the area where they contribute.

The Community Contribution priority scheme is a Barnet Council policy which gives the main applicant or partner increased priority for housing when they have reasonable preference and qualify under the community contribution criteria described below. These applicants will be placed in Band 2 by virtue of this award.

### Community Contribution Awards – How they work in practice

Community contribution can only be awarded to the main applicant or their partner.

Applicants or their partners and all household members must have a *current positive residence history* to qualify for a Community contribution award.

1. No on-going culpable involvement in anti-social behaviour or criminal activities.
2. No breaches of tenancy within the last 3 years
3. No outstanding lawfully recoverable housing-related debt over £100.
4. Not have an outstanding unspent conviction

Increased priority for housing is given to those applicants who demonstrate a commitment to contribute to the Borough's economic growth as working households or who make a contribution by their contribution within communities.

Applicants or their partners awarded community contribution must also fulfil the eligibility criteria in section 3 of the housing allocations scheme.

Applicants can access increased priority for housing in five ways;

#### 1. Working Households

This policy aims to support the economic growth of Barnet.

We want to encourage people who can, to work and want to raise levels of aspiration and ambition. We will offer increased priority to applicants who are working but are on a low income and will therefore find difficulty in accessing outright Home Ownership or Low cost low Ownership. Applicants who have reasonable preference can receive increased priority to Band 2 by virtue of their "working" status.

## Appendix 2- full draft scheme

### **Definition of Working Households**

Households where the applicant or their partner is in employment.

For the purposes of this Allocations Policy employment is described as having a permanent contract, working as a temporary member of staff or being self-employed. Applicants will only qualify if the worker has worked for at least 64 hours per month for 6 out of the last 12 months. Applicants who are on maternity leave or paternity leave but remain in employment can also qualify for this award. Verification will be sought at point of application as well as point of offer under the same terms. Applicants must provide payslips, P60, bank statements or a verifying letter on headed paper in order to qualify.

### **2. Volunteering**

Households where the main applicant or their partner is volunteering.

Volunteers must have been volunteering for a continuous period of at least 6 months up to the point of application and continuously until the point of offer. Volunteering must be for a not-for profit organisation that is registered with the Volunteer Centre Barnet or recognised by the Council, or a charity that is registered with the Charity Commission or is funded by the Council or another local authority or a faith based community group or organisation. Tenants and Residents Associations which are constituted are classified as not-for-profit organisation. They must be registered with Barnet Council or a Registered Social Landlord to qualify.

Volunteering must be for a minimum of 64 hours per month.

#### **Evidence required for voluntary work.**

A letter on the organisation's headed paper from the manager responsible for volunteers confirming the applicant's involvement in a minimum of 10 hours per month of voluntary work for at least 6 months. This person must not be related to the applicant in any way.

### **3. Training or Education**

Households where the main applicant or their partner is in training or education.

We want to encourage people to move closer to gaining paid employment by gaining employability skills and becoming job ready. This may be achieved by attending higher or further education or by accessing a longer vocational course of study or engaging in a programme of work-related training courses. In all cases the course of study must lead to achieving accredited qualifications and / or certification by a registered awarding body.

## Appendix 2- full draft scheme

Study or training may be undertaken at a range of recognised institutions and organisations such as: Further Education College; registered Private Training Provider; registered Voluntary Sector Organisation or University.

To be eligible for the vocational training qualification a person must initially access a recognised Information, Advice and Guidance (IAG) service to develop an agreed action plan and to be signposted to relevant training providers. Candidates must be working towards gaining employment in a vocational occupation.

A person must have been studying or training against the eligible criteria and definition outlined, for a continuous period of at least 6 months up to the point of application and continuously until the point of offer. Applicants eligible for out-of-work related benefits must also be registered with Job Centre Plus and accessing mainstream job brokerage provision, thus actively seeking work. This training must be in addition to, or supplementary to any mandatory training required and may be undertaken in conjunction with volunteering to gain further knowledge and experience.

Some people undertaking training are not actively seeking work. Where the Benefits Agency can confirm that the applicant is not required to actively seek work because of their circumstances, for example they have caring responsibilities, their training can be recognised in this policy.

All training or education must be a minimum of 64 hours a month.

### **Evidence required for Training element**

Further/higher education candidates must supply evidence of:

- letter from college or university confirming participation in course of study for period of 6 months

For vocational training award the following evidence must be provided:

- certificate or letter from a registered awarding body for the course or by a recognised training provider as evidence of gaining a recognised vocational qualification or successfully completing accredited work-related training (over a continuous period of at least 6 months)

## **4. Ex service personnel**

Applicants or their partner, who have served in the British Armed Forces and lived in Barnet for at least 6 months immediately prior to enlisting, will qualify for a community contribution award automatically, with the exception of those who have been dishonourably discharged. This includes people who have served in the Royal Navy, Royal Air Force and British Army.

Service with the armed forces will be confirmed with the Royal British Legion.

## **5. Registered Foster Carers**

## Appendix 2- full draft scheme

We recognise the contribution that Barnet foster carers make towards ensuring that children in Barnet's care receive a good service. In order to qualify for a community contribution award under this policy, applicants will require a letter from the council's Children's Service confirming that they have been approved as a Barnet foster carer and that they are in a position to take one or more placements.

### 6. Carers

An applicant or their partner who is receiving carers allowance for caring for a person will qualify for the community contribution award under this policy.

### 7. People with disabilities and older residents

Whilst many older people and those with disabilities work or volunteer, there may be circumstances in which frailty or a disability prevents this, or means that the full eligibility criteria set out above can not be met. Housing Officers will consider such cases on an individual basis and use their discretion to award a community contribution where they consider this is appropriate.

### 8. Young people

Generally young people (applicants aged 25 and under) will be required to meet the full community contribution criteria outlined above. However housing needs officers will have discretion with regard to the length of time a young person has been in employment. In addition where a young person is able to participate in volunteering and is not in employment or training the number of hours required is 16 hours per week.

#### ***Young people referred by Children's Services (Care Leavers)***

It is acknowledged that some care leavers referred by the Onwards and Upwards team may not have a positive residence history and may have difficulty in meeting the full requirements of the community contribution criteria. To help meet the Council's corporate parenting obligations and reduce the potential for care leavers remaining in temporary accommodation for long periods the requirement for a community contribution shall not apply. All young people will however continue to be encouraged to make a positive contribution and engage with employment, training and education as part of the Council's Local Tenancy Strategy.



## Appendix 2- full draft scheme

### Annex 4

#### SERVICE TENANCIES

Re-housing for former Service Tenants Length of Service	Eligibility	Entitlement
Less than 7 years	<ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>• Retiring or transferring to non-residential employment</li><li>• Was a council tenant before taking a service tenancy</li><li>• Dependent children</li><li>• Vulnerable because of ill health or disability</li></ul>	Bedrooms according to need (as defined in annex 2 of this Scheme)
More than 7 years	<ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>• Any service tenant leaving employment or transferring to non-residential employment</li><li>• Spouses/partners left on death or separation</li></ul>	Bedrooms according to need
More than 15 years	<ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>• Retiring or transferring to non-residential employment</li></ul>	Bedrooms according to need

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## APPENDIX 3- Equalities Impact Assessment

### Summary

- The Housing Act 1996 requires all local authorities to have a scheme for allocating council and housing association rented homes in the borough. The Localism Act 2011 increases the flexibilities to develop schemes that reflect local priorities.
- Changes to the housing allocations scheme are required to ensure that scarce resources are allocated on a fair and consistent basis and to bring Barnet into line with allocations schemes in neighbouring boroughs.
- The specific changes include increasing residential connection to five years, excluding applicants from the scheme for two years when they refuse a reasonable offer of accommodation and providing victims of domestic violence with emergency accommodation so that the risk to their life is removed.
- Barnet is an area of high demand for housing. The number of households presenting as homeless and the number of households being accepted as homeless has increased significantly over the past five years. The number of new temporary accommodation admissions has also risen. Housing supply has not kept up with increased demand for housing services.
- The data suggests that the proposals will have an unavoidable minimum negative impact because there is greater diversity amongst social housing tenants in comparison with the Barnet borough population as a whole and the diversity of current applicants applying for social housing is greater still.
- The data for applicants is based on applicants in the last year. The application profile is fluid and subject to change.
- There is limited data available on disability and this will be followed up. There is no data available on sexual orientation.
- It appears that the five year residential connection requirement may have a minimum negative impact at both the younger and older end of the age range. In the data sample approximately 33 applicants are under the age of 35 (9% of 387) and 10 (3% of 387) applicants over 75 would no longer be eligible for housing assistance.
- Similarly, the data suggests that older people over the age of 55 are more likely to refuse an offer of accommodation than younger people which might result in them being excluded from the allocations scheme. In the sample of 387 households, 47 are over the age of 55 (12% of 387).
- The evidence shows that only 4 cases in the last two years would be impacted by the proposed change on domestic violence. The proposal is driven primarily through the safeguarding agenda and the paramount need for safety for victims and their children. Although the proposal may appear to have a disproportionate impact on women and children, the numbers are small and the mitigation is that existing secure tenants would transfer or gain a new tenancy on the same secure terms.

### Recommendations

- While preliminary indications suggest that the overall impact of these proposals is likely to result in a minimum negative impact, the EIA is recording the impact as not known in order to continue to monitor the impact of the changes. Any untoward trends will be followed up as the allocations scheme is kept under review.
- The EIA therefore recommends no change to the proposals outlined in this paper.

## APPENDIX 3- Equalities Impact Assessment

### Increasing residential connection

<b>What happens now</b>	Applicants have to generally live in the borough for TWO years before they qualify for rehousing.
<b>What is proposed</b>	Applicants will have to live in the borough for FIVE years before they qualify for rehousing. The council will continue to meet its obligations to homeless households with less than five years connection in terms of providing temporary accommodation.
<b>Rationale</b>	This will reinforce the message that there is only limited social housing in Barnet. It will increase the opportunity for long-term regeneration non-secure tenants to be shortlisted for social housing when they are decanted. A six month sample of 387 customers <sup>1</sup> showed that 17% would not have been placed in any band if the residential connection had been 5 years. Across one year, potentially 132 households would be excluded from the scheme. The same sample also showed that 12% of applicants would have had their priority reduced to Band 4. (Although TA would have been provided for these applicants, with the focus on procuring private sector accommodation in more affordable areas and support and communications for customers encouraging them to find PRS themselves, it is anticipated that Band 4 customers will start to be moved on from TA more quickly in the future). The change would also bring residential connection in line with most other North London boroughs.

<b>Equalities question</b>	<b>Issues/risks</b>	<b>Mitigations/comments</b>
Are there differential service outcomes for the different communities using our services?	<p>Analysis of the equalities data of the sample of 387 banded customers highlighted the following:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• 68% were female, 32% were male</li> <li>• 16% were aged 18 to 24, 31% were 25 to 34, 26% were 35 to 44, 14% were 45 to 54, 8% were 55 to 64, 2% were 65 to 74 and 2% 75 plus</li> <li>• 28% were White households, 22% Black, 6% Asian and there were 31% Other ethnicities</li> <li>• The largest faith groups are Blank (not recorded) at 68% then Christian at 10% and Muslim at 9%</li> <li>• Only 3% (11) of the 387 households had recorded a disability.</li> </ul> <p>The 64 households in the same sample that may be excluded because they have less than 5 years local connection had a similar profile with the</p>	<p>Regular analysis of the applicants will be needed to ensure that specific groups are not being adversely affected. The Barnet Homes Customer Insight Group meets on a 6 weekly basis. Part of the remit of the Group is to monitor the equalities impacts on housing applicants. The Group will monitor the impact of the allocations scheme.</p> <p>Barnet Homes has implemented a new housing management system which will improve the recording of data on disabilities.</p> <p>When housing applicants are considered for rehousing disability needs are taken into account in terms of assessing their overall housing need and banding status.</p> <p>Consideration has also been given to</p>

<sup>1</sup> All customers banded in the 6 months from October 2013 to March 2014

## APPENDIX 3- Equalities Impact Assessment

Equalities question	Issues/risks	Mitigations/comments
	<p>following differences:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Female and males are slightly more balanced at 61% female, 39% male</li> <li>• Younger and older people are more represented- 38% of the sample is aged 25 to 34 and 8% is 75+</li> <li>• There are proportionally more Black (27%) and Other (39%) households in the sample and fewer White households (18%)</li> <li>• Although there is limited data on disability there do not appear from the sample to be more disabled applicants excluded from the scheme as a result of extending residential connection.</li> </ul>	<p>implementing a residential connection of 3 or 4 years. In the sample, 46 would be excluded if the policy was 3 years and 55 excluded if the policy was 5 years. Whilst this would mean that slightly fewer households would be excluded, it does not change the overall equalities impact of the proposals.</p> <p>Following on from the consultation the residential connection section of the allocations scheme has been amended slightly to allow for some discretion to band and award residential connection to out of borough placements by Adults and Children's Services and for housing association tenants when the Council can make use of the resulting void. The change will also cover exceptional circumstances, for example high risk and high support Domestic Violence cases.</p>
<p>Will the delivery of any proposed new services or functions increase satisfaction ratings amongst different groups of residents'?</p>	<p>Applicants who are not banded because they do not have 5 years local connection will be dissatisfied.</p> <p>However the survey results suggest that residents generally and housing applicants in particular are supportive of the principle that long-standing residents should be given priority for housing. This proposal helps make this happen.</p>	<p>The council will continue to meet its statutory duty to provide temporary accommodation to homeless households with less than 5 years local connection.</p>
<p>Does the proposal enhance Barnet's reputation as a good place to work and live?</p>	<p>Barnet is a popular place in which to live and work and there is a high demand for housing. The allocations scheme has to reflect the fact that there is a limited supply of housing available and that priority is given to established households in the highest need.</p>	<p>Barnet will continue to be a good place in which to live and work. The allocations scheme is reviewed on a regular basis to ensure that it meets housing needs and reflects the reality of the housing market.</p>

## APPENDIX 3- Equalities Impact Assessment

Equalities question	Issues/risks	Mitigations/comments
Will members of Barnet's diverse communities feel more confident about the council and the manner in which it conducts its business?	The proposed allocations scheme meets the requirements for the council to prioritise applicants with a strong residential connection to access limited housing supply.	A key issue in terms of building confidence is demonstrating that the council is operating housing allocations consistently and fairly. As the Customer Insight Group is regularly monitoring the operation of allocations, it may be appropriate to publish through the Barnet Homes website anonymised information on the types of people being rehoused.
How will the new proposals enable the council to promote good relations between different communities?	The allocation of housing is used to ensure that housing need is met in a sustainable and affordable way which helps to promote good relations between different communities.	
How have residents with different needs been consulted on the anticipated impact of this proposal? How have any comments influenced the final proposal?	The council has consulted with residents with different needs in a number of ways, including: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Survey of current housing applicants</li> <li>• Survey of Citizen's Panel members</li> <li>• Communities Together Network event.</li> </ul>	

### Exclusion from allocations scheme for 2 years when applicant refuses reasonable offer of accommodation

<b>What happens now</b>	Applicants who have refused one reasonable offer of accommodation are excluded from the allocations scheme for ONE year.
<b>What is proposed</b>	Applicants will be excluded from the allocations scheme for TWO years if they refuse one reasonable offer of accommodation.
<b>Rationale</b>	In the past six months 25 housing offers were refused by applicants. Of these, 7 decisions have been reviewed (the stage after the first appeal), of which 2 were found in favour of the customer. Increasing the exclusion period to two years will help convey the reality that there is very limited housing supply and that turning down a suitable offer is a serious decision which has significant consequences.

Equalities question	Issues/risks	Mitigations/comments
Are there differential service outcomes for the different communities using our services?	Analysis of data on housing applicants <sup>2</sup> indicates the following: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Older people aged over 55 are more likely to refuse an offer of accommodation than</li> </ul>	Housing Revenue Account self-financing is being used to increase the number of housing units for specific customers, including older people and people with needs for wheelchair accessible

<sup>2</sup> Applicants banded in 1<sup>st</sup> April 2012 to 31<sup>st</sup> March 2013 year

## APPENDIX 3- Equalities Impact Assessment

Equalities question	Issues/risks	Mitigations/comments
	<p>all households</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• People aged 16 to 44 are less likely to refuse an offer of accommodation than all households</li> <li>• Some ethnic groups are more likely to refuse an offer of accommodation than all households (particularly Black African, Black Other), other groups less likely (Asian British/Other, White Other)</li> <li>• There is very little information available on disability but from the data that is available disabled applicants appear to be no more likely to refuse an offer than non-disabled applicants.</li> </ul>	<p>homes. This will improve the offer of housing to these groups.</p> <p>Applicants with an assessed need for level access accommodation will be offered level access accommodation under the proposals whereas at present these properties are not reserved for this group.</p> <p>Young people may be offered shared accommodation where this means that the accommodation is affordable and will help the young person to obtain skills in managing a tenancy.</p> <p>Access to different community, including faith, facilities will be important in assessing the suitability of offers of accommodation under the Placements Policy.</p> <p>Regular analysis of the applicants excluded because they refused an offer will be undertaken by the Customer Insight Group to ensure that specific groups are not being adversely affected.</p>
<p>Will the delivery of any proposed new services or functions increase satisfaction ratings amongst different groups of residents'?</p>	<p>Applicants may be less satisfied with their offer if they feel that they have been forced into a property that they feel does not meet their needs.</p> <p>Barnet Homes currently monitors new tenant satisfaction with their homes and will be able to assess whether satisfaction increases or declines as a result of the one-offer only policy.</p> <p>Residents support the proposal according to the</p>	<p>It will be important to clearly communicate the suitability of a property to enable applicants to understand that the property meets their assessed needs. Applicants will still have the right of a review of their offer if they feel that it is unsuitable and if the review finds that an offer was not suitable will be given a second offer.</p> <p>Regular analysis of the applicants who are successful in a review of offer will be needed to</p>

## APPENDIX 3- Equalities Impact Assessment

Equalities question	Issues/risks	Mitigations/comments
	survey of the citizen's panel although existing applicants are less likely to support this.	<p>ensure that specific groups are not being adversely affected.</p> <p>Monitoring of suitability of the offers made by officers is required to ensure consistency of approach.</p> <p>Property satisfaction monitoring could be extended to include private rented sector offers when they are used to discharge duty.</p>
Does the proposal enhance Barnet's reputation as a good place to work and live?	Barnet is a popular place in which to live and work and there is high demand for housing. The allocations scheme has to reflect the fact that there are limited properties available that are affordable, particularly for households affected by welfare reforms.	Barnet will continue to be a good place in which to live and work. The Allocations Scheme is reviewed on a regular basis to ensure that it meets housing needs and reflects the reality of the housing market.
Will members of Barnet's diverse communities feel more confident about the council and the manner in which it conducts its business?	Communication of the one offer only policy is essential to ensure that applicants understand that their needs have been assessed and that the offer of a property is reasonable and fair.	<p>This will reduce the amount of time properties are left empty and reduce void costs. Applicants will have their housing needs met more quickly.</p> <p>Regular updates on the Barnet Homes website on housing supply and demand will help reinforce the message to housing applicants that it is reasonable for one offer to be made and that there is a very limited supply of accommodation.</p>
How will the new proposals enable the council to promote good relations between different communities?	The allocation of housing is used to ensure that housing need is met in a sustainable and affordable way which helps to promote good relations between different communities.	
How have residents with different needs been consulted on the anticipated impact of this proposal? How have any comments influenced the final proposal?	<p>The council has consulted with residents with different needs in a number of ways, including:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Survey of current housing applicants</li> <li>• Survey of Citizen's Panel members</li> <li>• Communities Together Network event.</li> </ul>	



## APPENDIX 3- Equalities Impact Assessment

### Provide domestic violence victims with emergency accommodation

<b>What happens now</b>	The current Allocations Scheme gives a Band 1 status to those who have an exceptional need to move due to domestic abuse, extreme violence or extreme harassment. This exceptional need only exists if there is a clear threat of violence to the applicant whilst they remain in their current home. This does not necessarily mean that these applicants move immediately because there may not be a suitable property available. Therefore the applicant may remain in their current home and be exposed to the risk.
<b>What is proposed</b>	Applicants who need to move due to domestic abuse, extreme violence or extreme harassment will be moved into emergency accommodation immediately and be removed from the risk to their life.
<b>Rationale</b>	The existing policy is encouraging customers to stay in unsafe accommodation where their lives are put at risk. By being placed in Band 1, applicants are given the impression that they will be rehoused through the Allocations Scheme into an alternative home immediately. With the severe lack of housing available in Barnet, this is not the reality. Securing suitable alternative accommodation, even for housing applicants in Band 1, can take a considerable amount of time. It is therefore safer and more sensible to move customers into emergency accommodation immediately so that they are no longer at risk. As a responsible organisation, the London Borough of Barnet does not want to encourage customers to put themselves at risk and this is why the change has been suggested.

<b>Equalities question</b>	<b>Issues/risks</b>	<b>Mitigations/comments</b>
Are there differential service outcomes for the different communities using our services?	<p>The vast majority of the victims of domestic violence are women and children, and women are also considerably more likely to experience repeated and severe forms of violence, and sexual abuse. Women may experience domestic violence regardless of ethnicity, religion, class, age, sexuality, disability or lifestyle.</p> <p>Between April 2012 and March 2014 there were 4 applicants placed into band 1 with an exceptional need to move due to domestic abuse, extreme violence or extreme harassment. Overall over this period there were 145 applicants placed in band 1 and represents 2.7% of all band 1 cases were in this category.</p>	<p>Remaining in their existing accommodation may put vulnerable people in further danger. It is better to place them in safety in emergency accommodation while a more long-term solution is arranged.</p> <p>Where the applicant is an existing secure tenant, they would not necessarily have to apply for rehousing through the Allocation Scheme's banding system. Rather their Housing Officer can highlight the case as having an exceptional need to move and apply to have the tenant moved as a management transfer. Once moved, the tenant will sign a secure tenancy on the same conditions as the previous tenancy that they held. For those who are secure tenants from other local authorities, Barnet Homes can discuss reciprocal</p>

## APPENDIX 3- Equalities Impact Assessment

Equalities question	Issues/risks	Mitigations/comments
		<p>agreements with those other authorities so as to allow the applicant to retain their secure tenant status. The North London Housing Partnership which includes Barnet, Camden, Islington, Westminster, Enfield and Haringey has developed a DV reciprocal agreement that commenced in October 2013 which allows secure tenants to move across these boroughs.</p> <p>Where an applicant is fleeing domestic violence and is not a secure tenant of any authority or where a reciprocal agreement is not possible, the customer will be assessed under the provisions of the Allocations Scheme. In such cases, if the Band 1 status is removed, the customer may be banded into either Band 2, 3 or 4, or may not qualify for the scheme at all dependent on the outcome of an detailed housing assessment, that considers all details of the customers individual case including the level of threat they face, their priority need and residential history.</p> <p>There will still be discretion in band 1 for the most severe cases of domestic violence, regardless of tenure.</p>
<p>Will the delivery of any proposed new services or functions increase satisfaction ratings amongst different groups of residents'?</p>	<p>Victims of domestic violence may be less satisfied initially that they have to move to emergency accommodation but given the fact that the policy is intended to secure their safety they should be satisfied in the long-term.</p>	<p>The proposal does not mean that existing secure tenants will have to surrender their tenancy as outlined above.</p>
<p>Does the proposal enhance Barnet's reputation as a good place to work and live?</p>	<p>Barnet is a popular place in which to live and work and there is high demand for housing. The allocations scheme has to reflect the fact that there are limited properties available.</p>	<p>Barnet Council will continue to support victims of domestic violence and their children by ensuring that they are rehoused out of danger in temporary accommodation while more long-term plans can</p>

## APPENDIX 3- Equalities Impact Assessment

Equalities question	Issues/risks	Mitigations/comments
Will members of Barnet's diverse communities feel more confident about the council and the manner in which it conducts its business?	The allocation of housing is used to ensure that housing need is met in a sustainable and affordable way which helps to promote good relations between different communities.	be made. Barnet Council has a duty to safeguard vulnerable people including those affected by domestic violence. The proposed change supports the Domestic Violence and Violence Against Women and Girls Strategy by providing safe accommodation out of danger and where appropriate extra security in the existing home through the Sanctuary Scheme.
How will the new proposals enable the council to promote good relations between different communities?	The allocation of housing is used to ensure that housing need is met in a sustainable and affordable way which helps to promote good relations between different communities.	
How have residents with different needs been consulted on the anticipated impact of this proposal? How have any comments influenced the final proposal?	The council has consulted with residents with different needs in a number of ways, including: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Survey of current housing applicants</li> <li>• Survey of Citizen's Panel members</li> <li>• Communities Together Network event.</li> </ul>	

### Other proposals

Proposal	Comments
Applicants will have to work for at least 16 hours per week to be given additional priority for housing.	There is currently no hourly requirement for working households but it makes sense to align this with being exempted from the overall benefit cap so that the applicant is not reliant on benefits. Some protected groups may be unable to work 16 hours per week, in particular older and disabled applicants but there is discretion in the scheme to reduce or remove these requirements when a housing assessment finds that this is appropriate.
Applicants will have to volunteer for at least 16 hours per week to be given additional priority for housing.	Volunteers currently have to volunteer for 10 hours per month but it makes sense for this to be aligned with working households. Similarly, there is discretion in the scheme so that the requirements for older and disabled applicants can be reduced.
Applicants will have to train for at least 16 hours per week to be given additional priority for housing.	Volunteers currently have to train for 10 hours per month but it makes sense for this to be aligned with working and volunteering households. Similarly,

### APPENDIX 3- Equalities Impact Assessment

Proposal	Comments
	there is discretion in the scheme so that the requirements for older and disabled applicants can be reduced.
Applicants on paternity leave may qualify for additional priority where they intend to go back to work.	This brings the policy in line with the position on maternity leave.
Young people leaving care will not be required to make a community contribution to be placed in band 2.	Evidence suggests that young people leaving care are remaining in temporary accommodation for a long period because they do not fully meet the community contribution requirements. By placing these young people in band 2 they are more likely to obtain a secure tenancy and then they can be encouraged to take up training and/or employment through the council's flexible tenancy policy.
Service tenants retiring after 15 years of service will not be entitled to one extra bedroom than they need.	These applicants are likely to be older people. In the current climate, where there is a very limited supply of housing and high demand, it is not appropriate to offer former service tenants something that all other applicants are not given- one more bedroom than they need. Former service tenants will still be given priority for housing in the scheme but only housing that meets their bedroom requirements. It is also inappropriate to deliberately cause under-occupation when it may be subject to benefit reductions.

## APPENDIX 4- SURVEY RESPONSES

*To what extent do you agree or disagree with the proposal that applicants will now have to live in the borough for 5 years instead of two before they qualify for rehousing?*

Citizens Panel

Response	Number	%
Strongly agree	287	45.10%
Agree to some extent	208	32.70%
Neither agree or disagree	48	7.60%
Disagree to some extent	50	7.80%
Strongly disagree	39	6.10%
Don't know/not sure	4	0.70%
Total	636	

Current housing applicants

Response	Number	%
Strongly agree	19	27.54%
Agree to some extent	13	18.84%
Neither agree or disagree	7	10.14%
Disagree to some extent	14	20.29%
Strongly disagree	9	13.04%
Don't know/not sure	7	10.14%
Total	69	

*To what extent do you agree or disagree with the proposal that applicants will be excluded from the housing allocations scheme for 2 years if they refuse a reasonable offer of accommodation?*

Citizens Panel

Response	Number	%
Strongly agree	258	40.80%
Agree to some extent	171	27.10%
Neither agree or disagree	57	8.90%
Disagree to some extent	83	13.20%
Strongly disagree	55	8.80%
Don't know/not sure	8	1.30%
Total	632	

Current housing applicants

Response	Number	%
Strongly agree	8	12.90%
Agree to some extent	5	8.06%
Neither agree or disagree	8	12.90%
Disagree to some extent	15	24.19%
Strongly disagree	24	38.71%
Don't know/not sure	2	3.23%
Total	62	

## APPENDIX 4- SURVEY RESPONSES

***To what extent do you agree or disagree with the proposal that applicants who are fleeing domestic violence are placed into temporary accommodation?***

Citizens Panel

<b>Response</b>	<b>Number</b>	<b>%</b>
Strongly agree	312	49.10%
Agree to some extent	216	34.00%
Neither agree or disagree	39	6.20%
Disagree to some extent	30	4.80%
Strongly disagree	28	4.40%
Don't know/not sure	9	1.50%
<b>Total</b>	<b>634</b>	

***To what extent do you agree or disagree with the proposal changes to the community contribution criteria?***

Citizens Panel

	<b>16 hours per week for working, volunteering and training</b>		<b>Applicants on paternity leave can qualify</b>		<b>Young people not required to make a contribution</b>	
Strongly agree	306	48.40%	233	37.50%	188	30.20%
Agree to some extent	217	34.20%	223	35.90%	203	32.60%
Neither agree or disagree	38	6.10%	92	14.80%	63	10.10%
Disagree to some extent	42	6.60%	43	6.90%	95	15.20%
Strongly disagree	17	2.60%	19	3.00%	66	10.70%
Don't know/not sure	14	2.10%	11	1.80%	8	1.20%
<b>Total</b>	<b>634</b>		<b>621</b>		<b>623</b>	

***To what extent do you agree or disagree with the approach for service tenants?***

Citizens Panel

<b>Response</b>	<b>Number</b>	<b>%</b>
Strongly agree	319	50.50%
Agree to some extent	208	33.00%
Neither agree or disagree	37	5.80%
Disagree to some extent	40	6.30%
Strongly disagree	19	3.00%
Don't know/not sure	8	1.30%
<b>Total</b>	<b>631</b>	

Proposal	Comment	Barnet Council response
<p>Applicants will normally have to live in the borough for five years to qualify for assistance.</p>	<p>Increasing the residential qualification period to 5 years may inhibit mobility across social landlords, e.g.: downsizers with or without bedroom tax deductions.</p>	<p>Moves should still be able to happen within existing reciprocal arrangements as they are outside the Allocation Scheme. The council has amended the residential connection criteria to ensure that there is some flexibility in the residential connection rules for exceptional cases with less than 5 years that need a management transfers or trade down.</p>
	<p>This proposal is likely to disproportionately affect single mothers with young children and so potentially breach the duties the council owes such a group under the Equality Act 2010 by at least indirectly discriminating against them. The same is likely to be true for the disabled, recently ill and foreign workers.</p>	<p>The equalities impact assessment has not found this to be the case but the changes will be monitored.</p>
	<p>Long-term non-secure tenants should be rehoused locally if they want to be under the current local connection rules. Lack of affordable housing supply needs to be addressed by building more affordable homes.</p>	<p>The change will ensure that long-standing residents can qualify for housing in the borough, including non-secure tenants on the regeneration estates when they need to move. The council is increasing housing supply by building new homes.</p>
<p>Applicants who need to move because there is a risk of violence or threat to life will have to apply as homeless and be placed away from the risk in temporary accommodation</p>	<p>This clause could cause a problem for those people with Learning disabilities who have support needs and been funded and placed out of borough for a number of years, either in residential care or college. Is there going to be an exception made for those individuals wanting to return to the Borough, where previously local provision was not available?</p> <p>These proposals unfairly penalise women fleeing domestic violence by removing their priority status and reduce the likelihood of them being placed back in council accommodation. It reduces their housing options by forcing them into emergency or temporary accommodation at a time when they need stable and secure housing.</p>	<p>As per section 3.5 Care leavers who were placed by the council in residential care outside of the borough will qualify for a residential connection. The council will look to include placements by Adult Social Care that are also out of borough.</p> <p>Existing social tenants have the option of going into temporary accommodation and claiming housing benefit on two homes for 52 weeks. This gives them time to pursue other options e.g.: management transfer, mutual exchange or a reciprocal agreement under the North London Housing Partnership Domestic Violence reciprocal protocol. They will obtain a new tenancy on the</p>

Proposal	Comment	Barnet Council response
<p>Applicants who need to move because there is a risk of violence or threat to life will have to apply as homeless and be placed away from the risk in temporary accommodation</p>	<p>Women and children made homeless through domestic violence should be recognised as a unique group fleeing crimes that take place in the home. This needs to be recognised through special measures including the offer of a social housing tenancy.</p> <p>All women in social housing in Greater London who flee domestic violence should be guaranteed a move to equivalent social housing within Greater London, unless they want to move out of the city.</p>	<p>same terms as they had before.</p> <p>The purpose of the proposal is to safeguard the women and children by placing them away from danger in alternative temporary accommodation. Depending on their banding, these households will be offered council, housing association or private rented sector accommodation depending on their assessed housing need and the available supply.</p> <p>For those who are secure tenants from other local authorities, Barnet Homes can discuss reciprocal agreements with other authorities so as to allow the applicant to retain their secure tenant status. The North London Housing Partnership which includes Barnet, Camden, Islington, Westminster, Enfield and Haringey has developed a DV reciprocal agreement that commenced in October 2013 which allows secure tenants to move across these boroughs.</p> <p>By staying in their current home on the basis that they may access social housing quickly by being placed in band 1 puts women and children at greater risk. It is better to be placed away from the danger in temporary accommodation while a permanent safe housing solution can be found.</p> <p>Barnet recognises that it may be safer to move to an alternative borough and is part of the North London Housing Partnership which includes Barnet, Camden, Islington, Westminster, Enfield and Haringey.</p> <p>The proposals do not force anybody to make a community contribution but they recognise that social housing is a very limited resource and that it is reasonable to offer additional priority to households who make a contribution. There will be discretion within the scheme for victims of domestic violence with exceptional needs to be placed in band 1 where community contribution</p>
	<p>Housing is not only a practical need for women and children who have to flee domestic violence but is integral to beginning to feel safe and being able to move forward with their lives. Access to safe, secure and stable accommodation is vital for all those forced to flee violence.</p> <p>The majority of women forced to flee their homes in London are unable to stay in their boroughs of origin. For most victims, staying local increases the risk of more severe violence or even death.</p> <p>Forcing women who have fled domestic violence to work, volunteer or be in training before they will be given additional priority for housing is a totally unreasonable expectation. Would it not be more sensible to make an exception for these women similar to the one being proposed for young people leaving care?</p>	



Proposal	Comment	Barnet Council response
<p>Applicants who need to move because there is a risk of violence or threat to life will have to apply as homeless and be placed away from the risk in temporary accommodation</p>	<p>This proposal would appear to be unfair on the basis that whilst someone in fear of physical violence is likely to want to be removed from the risk quickly, a person in fear of emotional or psychological violence might not. This proposal would therefore unfairly restrict a person experiencing emotional abuse. Further a person may be in fear of both physical and emotional violence to varying degrees this making it difficult to distinguish.</p> <p>More generally an applicant may have many reasons for wanting to move, they may have been waiting for council accommodation many years. For example a disabled applicant who wants to move near family. This proposal seems to suggest that if and when they suffer some additional harm they are then disadvantaged.</p> <p>Being required to self-declare as homeless could prevent victims of domestic violence from reporting their abuse, and lead to violence in the home continuing unchecked.</p> <p>Requiring victims of domestic violence to declare themselves homeless and leave their home risks the perception that the system rewards the abuser.</p>	<p>It is because of the need to remove the person from the risk quickly that the proposal has been made. Given the lack of supply placing somebody in band 1 does not necessarily mean that they will be rehoused immediately which is what needs to happen to remove them from the risk to their life.</p>
		<p>The whole range of an applicant's housing needs will be taken into account when being banded but through this proposal the applicant will be placed into accommodation away from the risk of harm. Housing officers will then assist them in finding more permanent housing.</p>
		<p>This is not the intention of the proposal. It is because of the need to safeguard victims of domestic violence that is proposed that they apply as homeless so they can be placed into emergency accommodation where they are safe. Their housing officer will assess their housing needs and offer them a property which may be private rented or social rented.</p>
		<p>The process of evicting perpetrators for ASB is not straight forward and will depend on their legal status in the property which includes tenancy and matrimonial rights of occupation. Courts are unlikely to end someone's rights of occupation unless there is strong evidence of the ASB which can be difficult to prove. It is better to move the victim to safety.</p>


Proposal	Comment	Barnet Council response
<p>Applicants who need to move because there is a risk of violence or threat to life will have to apply as homeless and be placed away from the risk in temporary accommodation</p>	<p>The proposals reduce the chance that women, men and children who are leaving a violent home will be placed into permanent, safe and secure council accommodation.</p>	<p>The form of accommodation offered will depend on available supply of accommodation as well as the outcome of a detailed homelessness, suitability and affordability assessment. It could therefore be either a private sector or social housing offer. Where the applicant is an existing secure tenant, they would not necessarily have to apply for rehousing through the Allocation Scheme's banding system. Rather their Housing Officer can highlight the case as having an exceptional need to move and apply to have the tenant moved as a management transfer. Once moved, the tenant will sign a secure tenancy on the same conditions as the previous tenancy that they held.</p>
<p>Applicants who need to move because there is a risk of violence or threat to life will have to apply as homeless and be placed away from the risk in temporary accommodation</p>	<p>The proposals could prevent victims of domestic violence from being re-housed in another London borough under the North London agreement and local authorities outside London.</p>	<p>The North London reciprocal arrangements are not affected by this proposal. Secure tenants would generally not surrender their tenancy until a long term solution is reached. If placed into temporary accommodation they can claim housing benefit on two homes whilst a reciprocal is explored.</p>
<p>Applicants who need to move because there is a risk of violence or threat to life will have to apply as homeless and be placed away from the risk in temporary accommodation</p>	<p>The allocations scheme needs to make clear that residents housed outside the borough because of domestic violence (in refuges, temporary accommodation or by another borough under a reciprocal scheme) will maintain their local connection once they return and not be penalised because they have had to leave the borough through no fault of their own.</p>	<p>The allocations scheme states that where the council places an applicant in another borough they will retain their residential connection to Barnet</p>
<p>Applicants who need to move because there is a risk of violence or threat to life will have to apply as homeless and be placed away from the risk in temporary accommodation</p>	<p>There has been no clear justification for this proposal and the council has not produced evidence that it will improve the lives of victims of domestic violence.</p>	<p>The proposal supports the vision set out in the Barnet Domestic Violence and Violence against Women and Girls (DV and VAWG) Strategy 2013-16. The strategy aims to ensure that people who suffer from domestic violence get the support they need through partnership, prevention, provision and protection. In particular, the housing allocations scheme will ensure that there is provision of alternative and safe accommodation</p>

Proposal	Comment	Barnet Council response
		<p>for the victim and their children away from the danger. In addition, Barnet Homes will continue to work in partnership with other agencies, including the Multi-Agency Risk Assessment Conference to ensure that high risk of harm cases are supported into safe accommodation.</p>
	<p>The council already has a legal duty to urgently re-house any resident that is homeless because of domestic violence - normally in emergency or temporary accommodation. Housing allocations policy should not be changed to force them into homelessness and strip them of their priority on the housing waiting list.</p>	<p>The council will continue to meet its statutory duty to homeless households. The proposal does not change this.</p>
<p>Applicants who need to move because there is a risk of violence or threat to life will have to apply as homeless and be placed away from the risk in temporary accommodation</p>	<p>These proposals look like an attempt to reduce the numbers of those eligible for social housing. All of the other major changes that are proposed in this consultation are designed to do just that. If the administration really felt they were making this change to help protect victims of domestic violence why has it taken them until now to propose it? In addition, it is being proposed without any evidence to back up the claim that it is to protect people. The council has not specifically highlighted the proposed change and sought the views of organisations that campaign around domestic violence prior to publishing the proposals – if they wanted support for this change they should have sought these organisations' views first.</p> <p>People fleeing or living with domestic violence need options and advice – these proposals gives them only one option – to make themselves homeless</p>	<p>There is high demand for housing in Barnet and limited supply and the council has to manage this demand through its allocations scheme.</p> <p>The proposed change for domestic violence victims is highlighted as one of the changes in the committee reports and the consultation documentation and the council has invited comments on this and the other changes.</p>
		<p>They will continue to get options and advice in order to find a home when they have been removed from the danger by being placed in temporary accommodation. In addition the Barnet Homes Sanctuary Scheme helps victims remain in their own home, if it is safe to do so, by increasing the security at their home so helping in the</p>

Barnet Council response		Comment	
Proposal			
Applicants who refuse a reasonable offer of accommodation that meets their needs will be excluded from the housing allocations scheme for two years.	Applicants are informed of their right to a review if they think that the offer of a property is unreasonable.	This proposal would seem to be in line with the Localism Act 2012 but I would suggest that if/when a notification as to suitability is sent by the council then it should confirm that the applicant can either a) accept the offer, b) reject the offer and request a review or c) accept the offer but request a review.	prevention of domestic violence.
Changes to the community contribution criteria, including increasing the number of hours that an applicant has to work, volunteer or attend training to 16 hours per week.	It needs to be made clear to applicants that there is a consequence of not accepting a reasonable offer of a property. Applicants have a right to a review.  The council wants to encourage residents to have a positive residence history, for example by working, training or volunteering and this proposal supports this. The disqualification categories have not been changed by this proposal but for example it is reasonable to exclude somebody with a history of non-welfare reform related rent arrears or ASB.	This change is overly punitive.	
	The 16 hours makes sense because this is the number of weeks a single person or single parent has to work to be able to obtain Working Tax Credit and be exempted from the benefits cap. Applicants on maternity and paternity leave who intend to go back to work will be given a community contribution. There is discretion for disabled and elderly people to not have to a community contribution by having the requirements reduced or removed. Foreign workers are unlikely to meet the residential connection requirements so there is no need for	The proposals reward those making a community contribution i.e. those that have a 'positive residence history' to the detriment of those who fall into one of the disqualified categories i.e. someone who might be labelled as having a 'negative residence history'.	
		This proposal rewards those making a 16 hours or more community contribution by taking away from those making a lesser community contribution. It does not take into account for example a young parent who may only be able to make a small community contribution due to child care commitments now, but intends to increase their contribution as the child grows older. Equally the disabled, recently sick or foreign worker applicant who is only able to make a small contribution for the time being but intends to make a greater contribution in due course.	

Proposal	Comment	Barnet Council response
	<p>It maybe that to make the scheme at least less unfair Band 2 could be split into a higher Band 2 (i) and lower Band 2(ii); the young working parent or recently ill applicant mentioned above would go into the lower Band 2 (ii). However, even that would still fail to take properly into account the intention of the young parent or disabled person who is otherwise making the best community contribution they can for the time being.</p>	<p>There is discretion in the scheme as described above. Individual circumstances will be taken into consideration on a case by case basis as part of the housing needs and affordability assessment.</p>
	<p>Further what happens if an applicant had a job and lost it and then got another, what sort of period of interruption of employment means you lose the community contribution? What about someone injured at work and who can never work again and needs to move house, how current does the community contribution have to be and over what period of time?</p>	<p>There is discretion in the scheme as described above.</p>
	<p>A full equality impact assessment has not yet been done. This should have been done first before consulting on proposals, so that people responding to the consultation could be aware of the impact on particular protected groups before responding. The initial workshop assessment of the equalities risks does not even mention domestic violence or the impact of the proposed changes on protected groups like women for example.</p>	<p>A full equalities assessment, including the proposal on domestic violence has been completed and is appended to the final committee report. The outcomes of the changes will be monitored closely. Any untoward trends will be followed up as the Council keeps the allocations scheme under regular review.</p>
	<p>The policy on working, volunteering and training needs to be flexible to accommodate people's different working, volunteering and training patterns – seasonal or sessional workers like school dinner ladies for example who do not work during school holidays and therefore may be placed in Band 2 if they apply in June but not if they apply in August. People on other working</p>	<p>The policy will be flexible in the way described. Each case will be considered on its merits, for example if an applicant only worked 16 hours during term time then this would qualify as a community contribution.</p>

Proposal	Comment	Barnet Council response
	<p>arrangements like zero hours contracts also need to be accommodated by the scheme if their working average over time meets the policy – but the policy needs to say that it will accommodate them.</p>	
	<p>In addition, caring for your own children if they are under 3 should count as a community contribution, and if they are disabled and under 5 and there is an on-going care need. Free child care is not available for children under 2.5 years, and this may make it difficult for parents to take on more work / training or volunteering.</p>	<p>There is discretion in the scheme for disabled people and carers.</p>
	<p>Will this apply to adults with learning disabilities needing to be housed in the same way as general needs population? Although many of the people we support would welcome the opportunity to volunteer or work, the reality of finding anything is a real challenge.</p>	<p>There is discretion in the scheme for disabled people and this would include adults with learning difficulties.</p>

	<p>AGENDA ITEM 10</p> <p style="text-align: center;"><b>Housing Committee</b> <b>27<sup>th</sup> October 2014</b></p>
<p><b>Title</b></p>	<p><b>Compulsory Purchase of Long Term Empty Properties</b></p>
<p><b>Report of</b></p>	<p>Enterprise &amp; Regeneration Lead Commissioner</p>
<p><b>Wards</b></p>	<p>Totteridge</p>
<p><b>Status</b></p>	<p>Public (with a separate exempt report)</p>
<p><b>Enclosures</b></p>	<p>None</p>
<p><b>Officer Contact Details</b></p>	<p>Belinda Livesey – Private Sector Housing Manager 0208 359 7438 Clive Dinsey – Environmental Health Officer 0208 359 2494</p>

<p><b>Summary</b></p>
<p>With the current pressures on the housing market, empty properties are a waste of housing resource. The Private Sector Housing Team try and work with the owners of these properties to bring them back into residential use through advice and financial assistance. Where this is not possible the appropriate enforcement action is taken. This report recommends Compulsory Purchase of two long term empty properties, both of which are in a poor condition. The alternative courses of action following the approval of this course of action are also detailed. Following the compulsory acquisition of any of the properties, an options paper on the onward disposal be brought to the Housing Committee for decision. The cost of purchase will be indemnified through the Corporate Capital Programme.</p>

## **Recommendations**

- 1. That the Committee approve the making of Compulsory Purchase Orders (CPOs), under Section 17 of the Housing Act 1985 and the Acquisition of Land Act 1981 in respect of the properties identified as 'A' and 'B' in the exempt report.**
- 2. That, subject to the authorisation for the making of the Compulsory Purchase Orders referred to in recommendation 1 above, the Orders be submitted to the Secretary of State at the Department for Communities and Local Government for consideration and confirmation.**
- 3. That, in the event of the Secretary of State at the Department for Communities and Local Government returning the Orders for confirmation by the Council, the Order be confirmed on behalf of the Council.**
- 4. Following confirmation of the Orders, that Housing Committee approve the entry into a Cross-Undertaking with the owner(s) of the relevant property not to implement the Order on the condition that the owner(s) agree(s) to bring their property back into use within a reasonable time.**
- 5. In the event that a Cross-Undertaking is not entered into as referred to in recommendation 4. above, or the terms of the Cross-Undertaking are not adhered to by the owner, that authority be delegated to the Strategic Director for Growth and Environment to proceed with the compulsory acquisition of the properties in question.**
- 6. That following the compulsory acquisition of any of the properties, an options paper on the onward disposal be brought to the Housing Committee for decision.**
- 7. That Housing Committee approve that the financial costs of the Compulsory Purchase Orders be indemnified through the Corporate Capital Programme.**

### **1. WHY THIS REPORT IS NEEDED**

- 1.1 Barnet currently has 3939 properties recorded with Council Tax as being long term empty. Some of these properties are in a poor condition and represent an environmental blight on the local neighbourhood and waste of the Borough's housing stock.
- 1.2 The Private Sector Housing Team work with empty property owners to secure property improvement and reoccupation. This is done through a combination of offering in the first instance advice, support and financial assistance to owners. Where this fails the appropriate enforcement action is taken depending. This ranges from minor enforcement action to improve and/or secure the property the properties to taking over of the property through Compulsory Purchase powers.



- 1.3 Two properties are being recommended for CPO action and the details relating to these are contained in the accompanying exempt report.
- 1.4 National and local experience of the Borough has shown that resolving to CPO a property focuses the minds of the current owners to either dispose of the property or bring it back into use without further need for intervention. In the majority of cases where the Compulsory Purchase process is started the Council rarely reaches the situation where purchase becomes necessary. As such, this is a very cost effective tool in bringing empty properties back into use.
- 1.5 After the Council has made the CPOs ('the Order'), they will be submitted to the appropriate Government Minister for confirmation. Where an objection to an Order is made by an owner or occupier and is not withdrawn, then, unless satisfied that the objection is exclusively related to compensation, the appropriate Minister must arrange for either a public local inquiry or a hearing before an inspector, appointed by the Minister. The time limit for the exercise of a Confirmed Order is three years from the time the Order becomes operative.
- 1.6 National experience of the use of Compulsory Purchase powers has demonstrated that once CPO action has been initiated, an owner may belatedly come forward with proposals. In such instances, a local authority can enter into an undertaking (in the form of a legally enforceable agreement) with the owner to bring the property back into use within an agreed reasonable time-scale and not object to the making of the CPO or to withdraw any objection and allow it to be confirmed unopposed. This would mean that the Council cross-undertakes not to implement the CPO within the agreed time period, but if the owner fails to carry out works, then the Council (the CPO having been confirmed at this stage) can move to possession. This negates the need for an Inquiry and all the costs involved in the Inquiry process.
- 1.7 Once the Orders are confirmed, and if there are no cross-undertakings (or the terms of the cross-undertakings are not adhered to by the owner), the Order can be implemented either by way of Notice to Treat or by General Vesting Declaration (GVD). The Notice to Treat procedure would enable the Council to take possession of the property very quickly. However, it would not give the Council legal ownership of the property. Ownership can only be transferred when compensation has been paid. If the level of compensation is disputed and the matter is referred to the Lands Tribunal for settlement, it may take up to two years for the Council to obtain ownership. Throughout this period it would not be possible to sell the property for refurbishment. The GVD procedure, which is the preferred route, enables possession to be obtained only three to four months after confirmation thus allowing prompt transfer and commencement of refurbishment without waiting for compensation issues to be settled. The owner can apply for 90% advance payment of the Council's valuation. The balance of the compensation (or the whole if no advance payment is claimed) is payable on completion of the transfer of ownership. Whether the Council proceeds by way of Notice to Treat or GVD, it will also have to pay interest on the compensation from the

date of entry to the date of completion of the purchase. The rate of interest is prescribed by regulation made under the Land Compensation Act 1961.

- 1.8 Once the Orders are confirmed, the property would be sold either with a mechanism to ensure that the house is brought back into repair and habitation, or following improvement with a mechanism to ensure that the property is occupied.

## **2. REASONS FOR RECOMMENDATIONS**

- 2.1 The making of a CPO is a last resort following extensive efforts by the Council to secure occupancy of the property.

## **3. ALTERNATIVE OPTIONS CONSIDERED AND NOT RECOMMENDED**

- 3.1 There are two other possible options for dealing with these properties:
- Making of an Empty Dwelling Management Order - due to the amount of work required to make these properties habitable, this option is considered to hold more financial risk for the Council.
  - Do nothing – this is not felt to be appropriate due to the drain on Council and Emergency Services resources caused by long term empty resources, and the pressure on the existing housing stock.

## **4. POST DECISION IMPLEMENTATION**

- 4.1 Once the recommendation has been approved the owner will be notified in writing. An application will then be made to the Secretary of State at the Department for Communities and Local Government for consideration and confirmation.

## **5. IMPLICATIONS OF DECISION**

### **5.1 Corporate Priorities and Performance**

- 5.1.1 The policy meets the Council's key Corporate Priorities detailed in the Barnet Corporate Plan 2013-2016 as follows:-
- Create the right environment to promote responsible growth, development and success across the borough: Bringing empty properties back into use preserves the housing stock and improves its energy efficiency. Renovating existing homes has around a 33% smaller carbon foot print than building new homes.

- Support families and individuals that need it, promoting independence, learning and well-being:- Increasing the available housing stock meeting minimum standards will help ensure that more families have access to accommodation which will enable stability in schooling, health care etc.
- Improve the satisfaction of residents and businesses within the London Borough of Barnet as a place to live, work and study: Empty properties can be a magnet to criminal behaviour leading to increased crime in the local area. Bringing empty properties back into residential use will reduce crime and reduce the fear of crime for local residents which will increase residents' satisfaction with their local community.

5.1.2 Barnet's Housing Strategy 2010-2025 key objective is to increase the housing supply, including family sized homes, to improve the range of housing choices and opportunities available to residents. This strategy contributes to this by improving the condition and sustainability of the existing housing stock.

5.1.4 Re has a Key Performance Indicator to bring 100 empty properties back into residential use on an annual basis. The approval of these CPOs will assist in meeting this target.

**5.2 Resources (Finance & Value for Money, Procurement, Staffing, IT, Property, Sustainability)**

5.2.1 The costs to the Council are divided into capital and revenue costs.

5.2.2 The capital costs are funded from the current capital programme. Costs are as follows:

<b>Property</b>	<b>Estimated Value in Present Condition</b>
Property 'a'	£887,000
Property "b"	£600,000

5.2.3 If the CPOs are confirmed, the next stage will be to proceed, if necessary, with the acquisition of the properties. Compensation will be payable to the owners based on the valuations on the date of possession, which could be higher or lower than the Council's valuations. At this time there is no way of knowing exactly whether or not the Council will be able to recover the compensation in full. In the current economic conditions it is anticipated that the risk to the Council could be high if property prices slide. There is, however, every chance that the pressure of initiating the Compulsory Purchase procedure will be sufficient to ensure that these property owners take the appropriate action to either repair and reoccupy their properties or sell the properties.

5.2.4 Revenue Costs – For these CPOs the revenue costs of making the Orders and associated administration has been provided by funds from the North London Housing Sub Region. In-house property disposal costs (including

inspection, valuation, liaison with legal services, negotiations with the owner and liaison with the purchaser throughout the CPO / disposal process) are estimated at around £17,000.

5.2.5 The acquisition and immediate disposal of these properties may result in nomination rights for the Council to meet the needs of accepted homeless families. This would only happen if the properties were sold to a Registered Social Landlord.

5.2.6 The Planning and Compulsory Purchase Act 2004 introduced an entitlement for non-occupying former owners of compulsorily acquired property to claim basic loss payments. The amount is 7.5% of the value of the person's interest in the land, subject to a maximum of £75,000. However, the Act provides that the entitlement to basic loss payment is lost if certain criteria are all met:

- One of the specified statutory notices/orders set out in subsections (4) and (5) of section 33D Land Compensation Act 1973 has been served on the owner;
- at the time the CPO is confirmed the statutory notice/order has effect or is operative; and
- The owner has failed to comply with any requirement of the statutory notice/order.

5.2.7 Bringing empty properties back into use represents excellent value for money for Barnet. For every property that moves from an unoccupied to occupied banding on Council Tax records, the Council is allocated New Homes Bonus for 5 years. This is in addition to Council Tax being paid by the new resident.

5.2.8 The Council has dedicated £600,000 per year 2012-2017 to assist in bringing empty properties back into residential use. Due to positive movements by property owners, funding has been rolled forward totalling £2.1million. This funding will be used to support the purchase of properties and any property security, repairs or improvements that need to be done prior to sale.

### 5.3 Legal and Constitutional References

5.3.1 Section 17 of the Housing Act 1985 ('the 1985 Act') empowers local housing authorities to compulsorily acquire land, houses or other properties for the provision of housing accommodation. Acquisition must achieve a quantitative or qualitative housing gain.

5.3.2 According to Government Circular 06/04<sup>1</sup>, 'compulsory purchase of empty properties may be justified as a last resort in situations where there appears to be no other prospect of a suitable property being brought into residential use. Authorities will first wish to encourage the owner to restore the property to full occupation. When considering whether to confirm a compulsory purchase order the Secretary of State will normally wish to know how long the property has been vacant; what steps the authority has taken to encourage the owner to bring it into acceptable use; the outcome; and what works have

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<sup>1</sup> Circular 06/04: Compulsory Purchase and the Crichel Down Rules

been carried out by the owner towards its re-use for housing purposes. Cases may, however, arise where the owner cannot be traced and therefore use of compulsory purchase powers may be the only method of acquiring the land.'

5.3.3 In reaching its decision, the Housing Committee should have regard to the relevant provisions of the Human Rights Act 1998, namely Article 1 to the First Protocol – 'no one shall be deprived of his possessions except in the public interest', and Article 8 to the Convention – 'the right to respect for private and family life, home and correspondence'

5.3.4 It is considered that the exercise of Compulsory Purchase powers is justified by reason of being in the public interest, authorised by law and both necessary and proportionate towards meeting the Council's Housing Strategy and the environmental, social and economic well-being of the area.

5.3.5 Local Authorities are given powers to dispose of housing land in accordance with *The General Consent for the Disposal of Land held for the purposes of Part II of the Housing Act 1985 - 2013 which came into force on 11 March 2013* which state:

A Local Authority may dispose of land for a consideration equal to its market value.

5.3.6 In the case of these empty properties held for housing purposes the relevant section of those general consents is A3.3.1 which states that a Local Authority may dispose of an unoccupied dwelling-house to a person who intends to use it as their only or principal home.

5.3.7 It should be noted that any transfer to the buyer will contain a restriction that the owner must having carried out works (where appropriate), occupy the property.

5.3.8 Council Constitution, Responsibility for Functions – sets out the terms of reference of the Housing Committee which includes "All matters relating to private sector housing including Disabled Facilities Grants"

## 5.4 Risk Management

5.4.1 There are risks associated with Compulsory Purchase that arise from two potential sources:

Financial risks – these arise if the resale value of the property, once acquired, is less than the compensation paid for it at the time that possession is taken. This is possible in the current unpredictable housing market. To reduce the risk, it is essential that the property be disposed of as soon as possible after acquisition. The corollary is that the Council would benefit from any increase in value in an appreciating market, which could be used to offset the costs of acquisition. Any shortfall would have to be funded from Council resources.

Risk of not dealing with empty properties – There is a risk both in the way

Central Government assesses our strategic housing performance and in the way residents see the ability of the Council to intervene in the problems which beset them.

Due to the current financial climate an options paper on the onward disposal of the property will be brought back to Cabinet Resources Committee for a decision to be made at the appropriate and opportune time.

## **5.5 Equalities and Diversity**

5.5.1 Empty and neglected properties can be a blight on the area and the local community that can lead to residents having an increased level of area insecurity and fear of crime in their neighbourhood. Bringing these properties back into use will benefit all members of the Borough's diverse communities.

5.5.2 Any regulatory activity will be carried out in accordance with the current Development and Regulatory Services Enforcement Policy to ensure the objective application of powers and responsibilities.

## **5.6 Consultation and Engagement**

5.6.1 The Exempt report contains details of all consultation completed with the owners of these properties regarding the CPO process and grants available from the Council to assist with carrying out works to enable occupation of these properties.

## **6. BACKGROUND PAPERS**

6.1 Cabinet Resources Committee, 28 April 2008, (Decision item 1 exempt) in relation to the making of Compulsory Purchase Orders (CPOs).

6.2 Cabinet Resources Committee, 1 December 2008, (Decision item 7) in relation to the making of CPOs.

6.3 Decision of the Cabinet Resources Committee, 5 March 2009 (Decision item 8) in relation to the making of CPOs.

6.4 Decision of the Cabinet Resources Committee, 30 March 2009 (Decision item 9) in relation to the making of CPOs.

6.5 Decision of the Cabinet Resources Committee, 2 September 2009 (Decision item 6) in relation to the making of CPOs.

6.6 Decision of the Cabinet Resources Committee, 16 March 2010 (Decision item 12) in relation to the making of CPOs.

6.7 Decision of the Cabinet Resources Committee, 17<sup>th</sup> June 2010 in relation to the making of CPOs.

6.8 Decision of the Cabinet Resources Committee, 25<sup>th</sup> February 2014 in relation to the making of CPOs.

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AGENDA ITEM 12



**Housing Committee**  
**27 October 2014**

<b>Title</b>	<b>Housing Committee Work Programme</b>
<b>Report of</b>	Housing and Environment Lead Commissioner
<b>Wards</b>	All
<b>Status</b>	Public
<b>Enclosures</b>	Appendix A - Committee Work Programme October 2014 to May 2015
<b>Officer Contact Details</b>	Andrew Charlwood, <a href="mailto:andrew.charlwood@barnet.gov.uk">andrew.charlwood@barnet.gov.uk</a> , 020 8359 2014

**Summary**

The Committee is requested to consider and comment on the items included in the 2014/15 work programme

**Recommendation**

**That the Committee consider and comment on the items included in the 2014/15 work programme**

## **1. WHY THIS REPORT IS NEEDED**

- 1.1 The Housing Committee Work Programme 2014/15 indicates forthcoming items of business.
- 1.2 The work programme of this Committee is intended to be a responsive tool, which will be updated on a rolling basis following each meeting, for the inclusion of areas which may arise through the course of the year.
- 1.3 The Committee is empowered to agree its priorities and determine its own schedule of work within the programme.

## **2. REASONS FOR RECOMMENDATIONS**

- 2.1 There are no specific recommendations in the report. The Committee is empowered to agree its priorities and determine its own schedule of work within the programme.

## **3. ALTERNATIVE OPTIONS CONSIDERED AND NOT RECOMMENDED**

- 3.1 N/A

## **4. POST DECISION IMPLEMENTATION**

- 4.1 Any alterations made by the Committee to its Work Programme will be published on the Council's website.

## **5. IMPLICATIONS OF DECISION**

### **5.1 Corporate Priorities and Performance**

- 5.1.1 The Committee Work Programme is developed in accordance with the Council's strategic objectives and priorities as stated in the Corporate Plan 2013-16.

### **5.2 Resources (Finance & Value for Money, Procurement, Staffing, IT, Property, Sustainability)**

- 5.2.1 None in the context of this report.

### **5.3 Legal and Constitutional References**

- 5.3.1 The Terms of Reference of the Housing Committee are set out in the Constitution, Responsibility for Functions, Annex A.

#### **5.4 Risk Management**

5.4.1 None in the context of this report.

#### **5.5 Equalities and Diversity**

5.5.1 None in the context of this report.

#### **5.6 Consultation and Engagement**

5.6.1 None in the context of this report.

### **6. BACKGROUND PAPERS**

6.1 Housing Committee Work Programme:  
<http://barnet.moderngov.co.uk/mgListPlans.aspx?RPId=699&RD=0>

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**London Borough of Barnet  
Housing Committee Work  
Programme  
October 2014 - February 2015**

Contact: Andrew Charlwood 020 8359 2014 andrew.charlwood@barnet.gov.uk

<b>Subject</b>	<b>Decision requested</b>	<b>Report Of</b>	<b>Contributing Officer(s)</b>
<b>27 October 2014</b>			
Housing Strategy	To consider the draft Housing Strategy prior to a period of public consultation	Housing and Environment Lead Commissioner	Head of Strategy and Performance (Re) / Housing Strategy and Business Improvement Manager (Re)
Business Planning	To approve five year commissioning priorities, proposals for meeting financial targets set out in the Medium Term Financial Strategy and proposed Management Agreements	Strategic Director for Growth and Environment / Housing and Environment Lead Commissioner	
Housing Allocations Scheme	To approved the revised Housing Allocations Scheme following a period of public consultation	Housing and Environment Lead Commissioner	Head of Strategy and Performance (Re) / Housing Strategy and Business Improvement Manager (Re)
Empty Properties Compulsory Purchase Orders (1)	To compulsorily acquire underused or ineffectively used property for residential purposes where there is a compelling case in the public interest for its acquisition to meet general housing need in the area	Housing and Environment Lead Commissioner	Private Sector Housing Manager (Re)

<b>Subject</b>	<b>Decision requested</b>	<b>Report Of</b>	<b>Contributing Officer(s)</b>
Houses in Multiple Occupancy	<p>To receive a verbal update from the Chairman on the:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Review of options for Houses in Multiple Occupancy (HMOs) licensing in Barnet; and</li> <li>• Process for establishing an evidence base on the impact of HMOs in order to support the introduction of a borough-wide Article 4 Direction removing permitted development rights for a change of use from C3 (Dwellinghouses) to C4 (HMOs)</li> </ul>	Housing and Environment Lead Commissioner	Private Sector Housing Manager (Re)
2 February 2015			
Management Agreements (Business Planning)	To review management agreements for the commissioning and delivery of housing services including the approval of the Barnet Group Management Agreement 2015/16 for management of the Barnet housing stock	Strategic Director for Growth and Environment / Housing and Environment Lead Commissioner	
Commissioning Priorities	To agree commissioning priorities for 2015/16.	Strategic Director for Growth and Environment / Housing and Environment Lead Commissioner	

<b>Subject</b>	<b>Decision requested</b>	<b>Report Of</b>	<b>Contributing Officer(s)</b>
Empty Properties Task and Finish Group Update	To consider a 12-month update report, including an implementation action plan, from officers on the approved recommendations of the Empty Properties Task and Finish Group.	Housing and Environment Lead Commissioner	Private Sector Housing Manager (Re)
Article 4 Direction on Houses in Multiple Occupancy	To consider a report on the process for establishing an evidence base on the impact of Houses in Multiple Occupancy (HMOs) in order to support the introduction of a borough-wide Article 4 Direction removing permitted development rights for a change of use from C3 (Dwellinghouses) to C4 (HMOs)	Housing and Environment Lead Commissioner	Private Sector Housing Manager (Re)
Review of Regulation of Houses in Multiple Occupation	To consider a policy for licensing Houses in Multiple Occupancy (HMO) in Barnet	Housing and Environment Lead Commissioner	Private Sector Housing Manager (Re)
Greater London Authority (GLA) Housing Framework Agreement	To approve the agreement of a framework between the London Borough of Barnet and the Greater London Authority to guide the operation of the Mayor's Housing Covenant 2015-18 programmes to deliver affordable housing. It is intended that these principles will guide the delivery of affordable housing on schemes delivered in the borough	Housing and Environment Lead Commissioner	Head of Regeneration (Re)



<b>Subject</b>	<b>Decision requested</b>	<b>Report Of</b>	<b>Contributing Officer(s)</b>
Tenancy Strategy Review	An initial review of the Local Tenancy Strategy considering the number of fixed term secure tenancies that have been issued and any lessons learned that can be taken forward in the review of the council's Housing Strategy	Housing and Environment Lead Commissioner	Head of Strategy and Performance (Re), Housing Strategy and Business Improvement Manager (Re)
Annual Review of Council Dwelling Rents and Service Charges for 2015/16	To approve recommendations relating to the for the Annual Review of Council Dwelling Rents and Service Charges for 2015/16.	Housing and Environment Lead Commissioner	Director of Growth & Development, The Barnet Group
Review of Regulation of Houses in Multiple Occupancy in Barnet Following Consultation	To approve a Houses in Multiple Occupancy (HMO) licensing scheme following a period of public consultation	Housing and Environment Lead Commissioner	Private Sector Housing Manager (Re)
Empty Property Compulsory Purchase Orders (2)	To compulsorily acquire underused or ineffectively used property for residential purposes where there is a compelling case in the public interest for its acquisition to meet general housing need in the area	Housing and Environment Lead Commissioner	Private Sector Housing Manager (Re)
22 April 2015			
Housing Strategy	To approve the revised Housing Strategy following a period of public consultation	Housing and Environment Lead Commissioner	Head of Strategy and Performance (Re), Housing Strategy and Business Improvement Manager (Re)

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## AGENDA ITEM 15

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