

<u>Meeting</u>
Cabinet
<u>Date and time</u>
Tuesday 18th July, 2023
At 7.00 pm
<u>Venue</u>
Hendon Town Hall, The Burroughs, London NW4 4BQ

Dear Councillors,

Please find enclosed additional papers relating to the following items for the above mentioned meeting which were not available at the time of collation of the agenda.

Item No	Title of Report	Pages
11	Connected Places Transformation Programme	3 - 28
18	Housing Strategy, Homelessness and Rough Sleeping Strategy, Tenancy Strategy, and Housing Allocation Scheme	29 - 408
24	Connected Places - Transformation Programme [Exempt]	409 - 498

Salar Rida
Salar.Rida@Barnet.gov.uk

This page is intentionally left blank



Cabinet

Title	Connected Places Transformation Programme
Date of meeting	18 th July 2023
Report of	Leader of the Council and Cabinet Member (Portfolio Holder) for Resources and Effective Council
Wards	All Wards
Status	Public (with an exempt appendix)
Key	Yes
Urgent	No
Appendices	Appendix A [exempt]
Officer Contact Details	<p>Cath Shaw, Deputy Chief Executive <i>[Tel: 020 8359 4716, Email: cath.shaw@barnet.gov.uk]</i></p> <p>Ian Edser, Director of Highways (Prog. Sponsor) <i>[Tel: 020 8359 3228, Email: ian.edser@barnet.gov.uk]</i></p> <p>Barry May, AD Resident Experience and Digital <i>[Tel: 020 8359 7628, Email: barry.may@barnet.gov.uk]</i></p> <p>Adam Driscoll, Commissioning Lead (Prog. Mgr.) <i>[Tel: 020 8359 4922, Email: adam.driscoll@barnet.gov.uk]</i></p> <p>Witek Wojas, Digital and Smart Cities Lead <i>[Tel: 020 8359 3828, Email: witek.wojas@barnet.gov.uk]</i></p> <p>Sam Jordan, Digital Place Business Partner <i>[Tel: 020 8359 4042, Email: sam.jordan@barnet.gov.uk]</i></p>
Summary	
<p>This report seeks authority to develop and deliver a Connected Places Transformation Programme, aligned to the national ‘Connected Places’ agenda, aimed at delivering enhanced organisational capability for the deployment of connectivity infrastructure and technology. It will unlock service innovation and help leverage investment into the borough that will maximise the economic, social, and environmental opportunities for the council, residents, and businesses.</p>	

The programme will create a new digital innovation service for place-based telecoms-related improvements. It builds upon the existing CCTV fibre network deployment partnerships providing a step-change in resourcing for digital skills and telecoms related capabilities. The team will secure greater leverage over public and commercial investment opportunities, through a new focus on capturing of council-wide telecoms expenditure.

The programme will unlock private sector direct and indirect investment and improvements to connectivity infrastructure across the borough, including Full Fibre Broadband deployment, enhanced 4G and 5G cellular networks, Public Wi-Fi, and a new LoRaWAN Internet of Things (IoT) network.

By aligning the deployment of connectivity programmes within this overall transformation programme, the council can harness the capabilities of different state-of-the-art digital infrastructure for 'layered' connectivity benefits, increasing the opportunity for public services and residents to secure transformation efficiencies and service innovation.

Recommendations

That the Cabinet:

- 1) Approves the creation of a new 'Connected Places Transformation Programme', as set out in Figure 2, and the allocation of the required budget as set out in the exempt appendix.**
- 2) Agrees that the Chief Finance Officer approves allocation of £2.35m of prudential borrowing towards the creation of a new 'Connected Places Transformation Programme' in line with the 2023/24 Treasury Management Strategy Statement.**
- 3) Delegates authority to the Executive Director for Assurance to revise or vary the proposed CCTV fibre network contract with BT to include the deployment of a boroughwide Public Wi-Fi network, provided that the cost of such deployment to the council is broadly in line with the terms as set out in the exempt report.**
- 4) Approves the development of an outline business case for consideration by Cabinet, relating to deployment of an Internet of Things (IoT) Network across the borough, including exploration of potential commercial and service innovation opportunities by public sector and commercial partners.**
- 5) Delegates authority to the Director of Highways, or any Director/Assistant Director with responsibility for the relevant asset, to:
(a) define the corporate requirements for, and
(b) to grant any subsequent required permission/authorisation to, attach connectivity-related equipment or infrastructure onto council assets such as street furniture and buildings.**
- 6) Delegates authority to the Assistant Director for Resident Experience and Digital to develop and consult with partners and residents on draft proposals for a data ethics framework that will support and inform data**

protection compliance and provide oversight arrangements for new and emerging uses of data, including how emerging sources of data can be used and/or shared within the council and partners, to enable a more data informed and holistic approach to service transformation, that will support resident needs. The framework proposals will to be brought back to Cabinet for approval.

1. Purpose of the report

Introduction

- 1.1 This report defines a new 'Connected Places' programme of work for the council for the four-year period 2023/24 - 2026/27 that will create a lasting transformational legacy for the council and enable improvement to services for residents and businesses. This new agenda, arising from previous 'Smart Cities' thinking, focuses on developing capabilities and creating opportunities at the intersection of innovation relating to *data, technology, and telecommunications*.
- 1.2 Guidance from the society for innovation, technology and modernisation (SOCITM) provides a simple explanation of this Connected Places agenda, as fundamentally about improving quality of life in our communities. As shown in figure 1, they argue we have reached a critical juncture for public services as change to culture, processes, business models and technology in the internet era begin to connect people, communities, and create the opportunity to shape better outcomes for all.
- 1.3 Transformation, in this space, comes from a 'whole system' approach to public service design and delivery at a local level, where services work together with integrated plans, prioritisation, policies, and resources to find ways of delivering public services that are more efficient and make the most of available data.

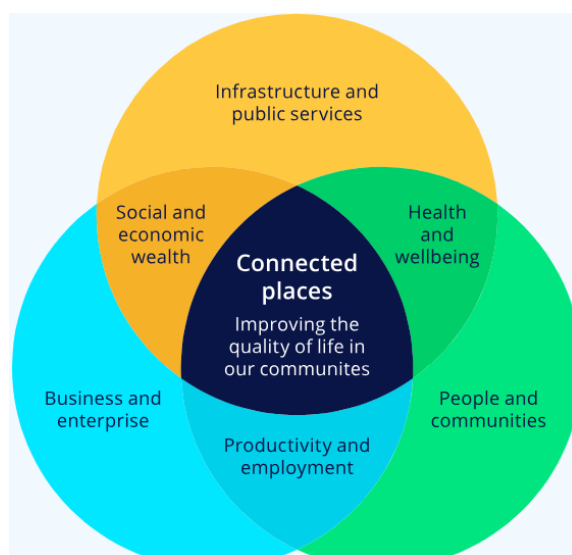


Figure 1: SOCITM view of the role of Connected Places in public services¹

¹ See: [Connected Places - collection prospectus - Socitm](#)

1.4 The purpose of this report is to make the case for establishing the Connected Places Programme and standing up a new Connected Places Transformation Team that will deliver a connectivity-related transformation agenda. This agenda is proposed to comprise:

- 5 overarching network deployment / infrastructure investment programmes
- 5 corporate integration workstreams, to ensure effective integration of the programme into broader projects, programmes, and agenda.

The overarching ‘Connected Places’ programme is set out in Figure 2 overleaf.

Theme	Proposed programme or workstream
Network Deployment / Infrastructure Investment Programmes:	
Gigabit Broadband Programme	Continuation of workstreams related to the ‘Gigabit Broadband Programme’ including development of a corporate full fibre (CCTV) network across the whole borough and further work to maintain and develop wayleave-related and other partnerships.
4G/5G Cellular Networks Programme	Development of existing West London Alliance (WLA) workstreams into an internal programme to drive improved 4G/5G cellular networks, including reviewing corporate systems and processes, and leveraging assets for small cells deployment.
Public Wi-Fi Programme	A new programme to deliver a boroughwide outdoor free Public Wi-Fi network, and then to explore opportunities to integrate and improve existing Wi-Fi services.
Imagery Analytics Programme	A new programme to deliver improved service outcomes through the use of imagery analytic tools that enable service innovation, such as highways enforcement without the need to pay for a standalone camera and developing our own town centre footfall data.
‘Internet of Things’ (IoT) Network Programme	A new programme to develop the business case for deployment of a council IoT network and consideration of the associated service transformation opportunities such as smart metering and environmental sensors.
Corporate Integration Workstreams	
Strategic Alignment and Engagement Workstream	Agree alignment to, and proactive engagement with, sub-regional, regional, and national ‘Connected Places’ programmes. Secure related network and use case innovation opportunities.
Connectivity Use Case Development Workstream	Work with service areas and/or third-party partners to develop and deliver the business cases for proposed savings and income generation; helping to identify and address the barriers to service transformation.

Data Ethics and Citizen Engagement Workstream	Supplementary workstream alongside planned citizen engagement programmes to ensure that appropriate engagement takes place with residents, businesses, public sector stakeholders, relating to opportunities and ethical considerations required in relation to delivering the Connected Places programme.
Social Value Workstream	Ongoing engagement with commercial partners and interested third parties to secure additional social value outcomes for tackling inequality and digital exclusion.
Cyber Security workstream	Supplementary workstream for existing cyber security activities to ensure that technology investments and connectivity networks and improvements are procured and deployed with an understand, design, and manage approach from a security-based mindset.

Figure 2 – Table of Proposed Connected Places Transformation Programme

Background

- 1.5 Creation of a **Gigabit Broadband Programme** was approved by *Housing and Growth Committee* in September 2020, which resourced a programme of work until March 2023 that enabled the council to support the enhancement of fibre broadband services within the borough. This included a **Wayleave Framework Agreement** workstream for the council to implement a common way of working in partnership with broadband network service providers to install gigabit-speed fibre infrastructure across the council housing stock, and through that to secure as many wider benefits as possible. The programme to date has included delivery by Community Fibre Ltd.
- 1.6 In addition, through the **Fibre West Project**, delivered through our partnership with West London Alliance (WLA) boroughs, the Council has contracted BT to secure deployment of a fibre network to over 200 existing and future CCTV columns and 39 buildings. This project is currently in the delivery phase, creating a connectivity capability for the CCTV capital programme while also generating a corporate fibre network that can be leveraged for wider connectivity benefits.
- 1.7 In February 2023, *Community Leadership and Libraries Committee* considered the opportunities created through the **CCTV Full Business Case**, including approval to contract a secure full fibre network from BT that in turn secures social value opportunities for an ‘at cost’ Public Wi-Fi network, alongside the opportunity for a parallel largescale rapid deployment of small cells across the council’s CCTV assets. To help facilitate this, the committee delegated authority for the approval of attachments to CCTV assets.
- 1.8 Through our parallel work, as part of the WLA, the council has also benefitted from participation in the **Digital Connectivity Infrastructure Accelerator (DCIA) project** within the ‘**Expanding Opportunities for All**’ programme that has focused on developing the tools to unlock 4G/5G investment in cellular networks that will help improve capacity, to keep up with increasing demand. The council has especially focused on the role that small cells will play in unlocking the true potential of 5G for innovation. Moreover, achieving a more widespread and early deployment

of small cells across Barnet will enable the volume of 5G macro cells and masts to be kept lower.

National Context

- 1.9 There is currently a UK Government drive to speed-up the deployment of connectivity infrastructure and address risks in the Connected Places agenda. It ranges from Project Gigabit - linked to full fibre broadband, to a new Wireless Infrastructure Strategy - to unlock 5G network deployment, to Smart Infrastructure and Cyber Security.
- 1.10 Coordinated by Building Digital UK (BDUK), the ongoing **Project Gigabit** programme is focused on delivering full fibre broadband into harder to reach areas, which to date is focused on deployment in rural areas. Recognising the practical challenges that have limited and held up deployment across Barnet, the Council has begun working with the GLA to engage with BDUK around the day-to-day barriers affecting the pace of urban broadband deployment. We hope that such efforts will enable the government to re-think their understanding of what constitutes a hard-to-reach community.
- 1.11 In April 2023, the [UK Wireless Infrastructure Strategy](#) was published to drive forward both demand for, and deployment of, 5G networks across the UK. It highlights that:
- “5G will be the cornerstone of our digital economy. With higher capacity and lower latency, standalone 5G will drive growth in the industries of today and tomorrow, including in emerging sectors like artificial intelligence”.*
- As part of the West London Alliance, we will seek to define West London as a UK hub for 5G Innovation, building on the previous DCIA and Expanding Opportunities programmes to define opportunity projects for demonstrating the use cases for 5G technologies.
- 1.12 In June 2023 the Department for Science Innovation and Technology (DSIT) published a call for its [Smart Infrastructure Pilots Programme](#), as a small UK-wide competition between local authorities for match grant funding to demonstrate the benefit of using street furniture for connectivity network deployment. This highlights the importance of seeking to deliver ‘layered connectivity’ opportunities within the borough by utilising local authority assets; reinforcing confidence that the council’s proposed business case for Connected Places is strongly aligned with the emerging national agenda.
- 1.13 In May 2023 DSIT published a **Connected Places Security Playbook**, that highlights how the diversity and interconnectedness of technologies needed for connected places will make them an area that is vulnerable to cyber-attacks. Such incidents could therefore lead to reputational damage, the loss of sensitive data, and damage to connectivity or physical infrastructure assets that residents are reliant upon. Building new connectivity capabilities from a ‘security-engaged mindset’ will be crucial for the council to ensure that new and existing networks and technologies are secure, that citizen’s data is protected, and that the provision of critical services is not interrupted.

The Strategic Outline Case (SOC)

1.14 The proposed journey will involve securing external investment, and delivering specific direct interventions, that will enable the council to harness the potential of different types of connectivity infrastructure and emerging technologies for:

- Improving the capability of telecoms services available to residents and businesses,
- Ensuring council services and related decisions are more data-informed, and
- Unlocking public sector innovation through better connectivity and new technology.

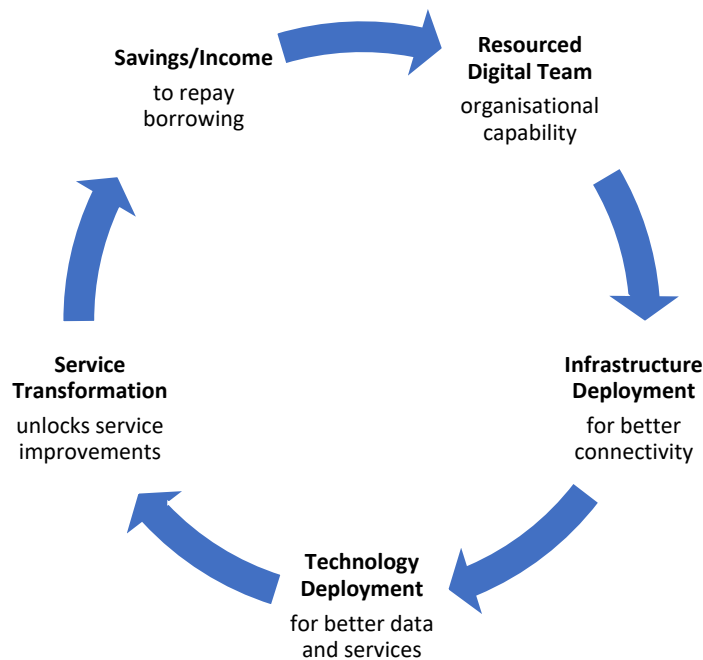


Figure 3 – Connected Places Business Case Concept

1.15 Figure 3 sets out the business concept that supports a virtuous cycle of investment, which comprises:

- (i) The recognition of future income/savings as justifying the resourcing of a team with the right knowledge and skills, alongside specific network/equipment investments.
- (ii) the team facilitates the deployment of new networks and infrastructure to deliver more affordable and effective connectivity services in the borough,
- (iii) the new infrastructure enables cost effective corporate deployment of technologies such as computer vision software or sensors to unlock new ways of working,
- (iv) the new technologies enable a combination of service transformation activities that unlock operational savings, or directly generate new sources of income,
- (v) The new sources of income and operational savings are used to pay back both the initial investment in staff and equipment, as well as the ongoing operational costs.

- 1.16 The proposed team will include bringing together a suitably sized team for the scale of the programme, that will include programme and project management skills, technology deployment and network infrastructure expertise, smart cities and telecoms expertise, organisational change / business process engineering skills, and administrative support.
- 1.17 There are five key connectivity network investment programmes that will deliver connectivity or place data improvements through this business case, namely:
- **Gigabit Broadband Programme**
 - **Cellular 4G/5G Networks Programme**
 - **Public Wi-Fi Programme**
 - **Imagery Analytics Programme**
 - **IoT Network Programme**
- 1.18 Supporting these programmes are two underpinning technological capabilities that are intended to be developed and delivered at a more corporate level, rather than the currently more siloed approach currently operated by service areas:
- **Layered connectivity:** utilising the new (CCTV) fibre network and related columns as a shared asset and backhaul for not just the corporate collection and transfer of imagery data for both static and redeployable cameras, but to facilitate new public Wi-Fi and LoRaWAN networks. Combined with new environmental sensors, as these uses will all be collocated, they will create 'Smart Poles' from the council's fibre-connected fixed CCTV assets.
 - **Imagery analytics:** linking the existing and new cameras to software capable of processing imagery into data for viewing and analysis, including for potential future use as a 'digital twin' of the borough will unlock service innovations.
- 1.19 The SOC defines a long list of over 35 potential savings or income opportunities that could be explored further in relation to the Connected Places programme. These cover a wide range of council and public service / commercial opportunities to secure benefits, utilising a range of different connectivity solutions. However only some of the proposals will unlock financial savings and some are untested. Any such opportunities will be brought back to Cabinet for consideration.
- 1.20 From the longer list, a shortlist of 7-8 specific council service use cases were explored in detail, relating to: Estates, Highways, Housing, Social Care and Street Scene services, as shown in Figure 4 below. It is proposed that these initial use cases be developed into an Outline Business Case with detailed proposals.

Service Area	Shortlisted Innovation Proposals	Potential Benefit
Estates	Connected building management systems (BMS) for improved energy use and management.	Savings (IoT)
Estates	Becoming the responsible party for water metering of the council's own estate using smart meters.	Savings (IoT)

Health/care	Capture current council expenditure on connectivity for assistive technologies, by deploying a council IoT network.	Income (IoT)
Highways	Improve road surface condition monitoring and reporting, by using imagery from council vehicle movements automatically processed by analytics software to identify, categorise, and report issues.	Savings (5G & Imagery Analytics)
Highways	Improved traffic counting and movement analysis using existing CCTV camera network and analytics technology, supplemented with mobile cameras.	Savings (Fibre, 5G, WiFi & Imagery Analytics)
Housing	Capture planned council connectivity expenditure for sensors linked to monitoring damp and mould, by deploying a council IoT network.	Income (IoT)
Street Scene	Deploy a network of temperature sensors to deliver more granular understanding of road surface temperature to enable more data informed gritting.	Savings (Fibre/IoT)
Street Scene	Deploy sensors in public litter bins to optimise the frequency and timing of collection activity.	Savings (IoT)

Figure 4 – Table of proposed direct savings or income opportunities

- 1.21 The Connected Places programme is expected to unlock a far wider programme of opportunities for the council and its partners, but from the perspective of the business case contained in the exempt Appendix A, only the innovation opportunities / use cases that could generate a direct saving to the council's budget are considered as the purpose of the SOC is to demonstrate the virtuous cycle of investment from standing up a new capability within the council alongside delivery of connectivity network investments.
- 1.22 The financial context set out in the SOC is based on confidential information from other local authorities, for most savings use cases, alongside network deployment pricing figures from confidential soft market engagement with a sample of network operators across the telecoms market. As such, all financial information shared with the council and therefore informing the SOC is commercially sensitive, and hence why the SOC has only been included as an exempt appendix.
- 1.23 To successfully deliver the connected place agenda will require a parallel process for developing arrangements and tools for considering data ethics, data protection and privacy matters. The council will need to be ready to answer questions such as:
- “How and when can one data source be appropriately brought together with another data source to allow for comparative analysis?”

- “How can council services be fairly delivered and prioritised as they become increasingly data informed and dependent on technological enhancement?”

The council will begin to explore ways of holding such conversations with residents from Autumn 2023.

2. Reasons for the recommendations

- 2.1 **Creation of a new ‘Connected Places Transformation Programme’, and support for £2.35m of prudential borrowing, is recommended because** it will resource new internal digital skills and technical capabilities that are required within the council to coordinate activity relating to a Connected Places agenda. This team will help the council to align with the growing national and regional agenda around Connected Places; and to increase organisational readiness for delivering technological transformation of public services.
- 2.2 Securing inward investment and addressing known barriers to the improvement of full fibre broadband and cellular network deployment, will improve the underlying telecoms infrastructure across the borough that most residents and businesses entirely rely upon in their daily lives. Furthermore, new network and technological capabilities across different areas of the spectrum and utilising wider connectivity tools and opportunities will deliver improved economic, social and environmental outcomes within the borough.
- 2.3 The SOC case demonstrates that the proposed Connected Places capabilities detailed in paragraph 1.16 can be resourced at no additional cost to the council over the coming decade. This is linked to a portfolio of realistic direct council savings or income generation opportunities exemplified in figure 4. The estimated savings have been adjusted down to mitigate for optimism bias or are based on a real-world case from other local authorities. In all cases they have been linked to more efficient ways of delivering the same service, or an improved service, so there will be no identifiable detriment resulting from service transformation.
- 2.4 Supporting an appropriately resourced team to deliver this agenda will ensure the council can also give attention to related considerations like *cyber security risks* from connected assets and infrastructure, as well as *data ethics considerations* relating to the collection, and use of new kinds of data like video imagery. Resourcing for such capabilities will ensure that residents and stakeholders have confidence in the safeguards that are being put into place.
- 2.5 Additionally, a more corporately joined-up capability for leading engagement around this agenda will stand a far greater chance of (a) securing effective engagement with public sector partners and government leaders to maximise opportunities for the borough, and (b) securing broader-based partnership opportunities with commercial and third-sector organisations that will provide space to explore opportunities and leverage additional social, economic and environmental outcomes from any planned investments.
- 2.6 **Deployment of a Public Wi-Fi network is recommended because** it has been demonstrated to be viable, in the exempt appendix, linked to favourable commercial terms secured as social value outcomes from the fibre overlay contract for the CCTV network. Such a network will deliver a range of non-cashable corporate benefits including: a network across town centres for all connected equipment, and a mechanism to transfer data back from redeployable cameras when located near

to the existing fixed camera network, something that is being considered in relation to large event spaces in public parks.

- 2.7 However, most importantly, it will generate additional intangible added value opportunities for residents and businesses, by creating new opportunities for direct citizen engagement through the Wi-Fi arrival page (for example which may appear on a mobile telephone), while helping to address digital exclusion across the borough by providing free data and access to internet services. Such benefit will be available to all, but will be especially important for people living in, working in, or visiting the borough, who may be dependent on pay as you go access to data.
- 2.8 The operation of a new free Public Wi-Fi network, at a scale not seen in many, if any cities, will provide a transformative infrastructure anchor to support Barnet's intention to become a destination for visitors and tourists, demonstrating that all are welcome. Importantly it will unlock opportunities for digital creative and cultural activities to be developed in public spaces as part of a 2026 bid for Borough of Culture.
- 2.9 ***Developing a business case for deployment of an IoT Network is recommended because*** the emerging world of 'smart devices' is opening new doors to a data informed approach to real time service monitoring and delivery, provided that such deployment of sensors and devices can be achieved at both a sufficient scale, and within the existing service budgets, to enable service transformation to be viable and to achieve savings.
- 2.10 Inevitably such savings are only likely to be possible if a local authority can scale up the use of various 'sensors' in the public realm and within its buildings, in a way that will enable the maximum number of devices to become remotely connected for real time monitoring to ensure human resources are targeted only where and when they are required. Evidence from other UK programmes has demonstrated that this must go further than simply securing a fair commercial rate by leveraging the purchasing power of local authority expenditure on IoT connectivity across a wide range of sensors and devices.
- 2.11 To go a step further, our SOC recommends deploying a Council-owned IoT network, to enable the 'per sensor/device' cost to be fixed at the lowest possible unit price. With the potential for service transformation through mass migration to sensor networks then more likely cost-in when business cases for change are individually assessed. To achieve this outcome, it is recommended that the unlicensed 'Long Range Wide Area Networks' (LoRaWAN) spectrum is utilised; and presently there is no alternative network gateways available within Barnet.
- 2.12 ***Delegation of arrangements for granting permission to attach connectivity-related equipment to council assets is recommended because*** it is more straightforward to approve delegation for all types of connectivity-related equipment attachments, for all types of council asset, in one go. Previously individual delegations have been agreed in relation to each type of asset, as demonstrated by the Feb 2023 Community Leadership and Libraries Committee (CLLC) grant of delegated authority to the Executive Director for Assurance to define contractual arrangements and entering into them, in relation to the installation of attachments to CCTV assets.
- 2.13 ***Delegation of authority to develop and consult on draft proposals for a data ethics framework that will support and inform data protection compliance, and associated oversight arrangements, is recommended because*** it will demonstrate that the Council understands the importance of engaging both

positively and proactively with citizens and stakeholders around proposals for future data collection activities and greater sharing and use of collated data from smart assets and infrastructure. This will ensure the council has an ethical framework to support existing data protection duties in order to guide and inform delegated decision-making around ensuring the best possible outcomes for residents are secured through the deployment of new connectivity infrastructure and technologies within the public realm.

3. Alternative options considered and not recommended

- 3.1 **Do nothing:** Although this approach will on paper cost nothing, in terms of up-front expenditure on infrastructure delivery and resourced organisational capacity; it would result in a failure to realise income and savings opportunities, carbon-saving opportunities, and to avoid piecemeal future purchasing of connectivity. Without the programme of work proposed in this SOC, the council will continue to have to compromise on the technology that can be deployed linked to the limitations of commercially available IOT infrastructure.
- 3.2 Moreover, by doing nothing, the Council will lose the opportunity for its own expenditure on telecoms to be used to leverage inward investment, to achieve wider additional social value outcomes, and to secure economic development across the borough. As demonstrated by the extent to which Barnet has fallen behind other local authority areas in London, the 'do nothing' option is not recommended as it will fail to ensure the council has the digital skills and projects needed to secure a pace of telecoms' investment that is now required.
- 3.3 **Develop a Connected Places Programme (resourced by income):** In early 2023, a fully commercial proposition was internally considered and tested as the method for funding the delivery of the Connected Places agenda. This was based on the potential to secure a commercial income from third parties from the proposed new network capabilities within the borough. While the business case for such investment was appealing, the level of risk associated with securing a return on investment was, after detailed consideration by officers, deemed too high to be able to justify funding the programme through prudential borrowing.
- 3.4 This does not mean that opportunities to secure income have been ruled out, but rather that it was judged to be more appropriate to pivot the entire business case to instead focus only on opportunities for securing direct cashable savings based on the current cost of delivering council services. Such an approach ensures that the ability to repay borrowing, to cover expenditure related to delivery of the business case, is within the council's control.

4. Post decision implementation

Recruiting to / resourcing of the team

- 4.1 By Autumn 2023 the council will ensure proposed new posts have been approved and the recruitment to roles, especially technical roles, can get underway. Ideally such new roles will be appointed to by the end of the Autumn and therefore successful candidates could be arriving into post by circa January-March 2024, provided that the council finds suitable candidates first time around.

- 4.2 Where proposed roles are suitable and appropriate for an internal candidate, then this will be explored to help speed up the recruitment of the team and to ensure that the team has a suitable balance of knowledge and skills, including awareness of how the council works.
- 4.3 Current interim capabilities will be sustained over the short-medium term to support delivery of the IoT outline business case, alongside the delivery of outcomes relating to the existing Gigabit Broadband and 4G/5G Cellular Networks work programmes.
- 4.4 If suitable additional interim support emerges in the short term, then this can be considered where it could boost the team capacity with appropriate/complementary skills/experience that would enable new workstreams to be commenced without detriment to existing workstreams and work on business case development.
- 4.5 There is a desire to deliver the overall programme at pace, to help unlock corporate savings opportunities as rapidly as possible. It is equally recognised that to achieve this outcome will require delivery of most, if not all, Connected Places workstreams, in parallel. Such an approach would increase the risk of individual project failure and require greater focus and time on programme management.
- 4.6 Further accelerating the programme would involve a greater reliance on suitable interim / consultancy staff who would need to be available for a more extended period than has been costed within the current SOC business case.

Delivering the business case

- 4.7 Opportunities for grant funding will be explored, for example the governments new Smart Infrastructure Pilot Programme. If the council can successfully secure grant funding, this will help to scale up projects such as the Public Wi-Fi programme and enable the council to consider delivery of smarter and more integrated network infrastructure, together with enabling the council to appoint the further staff needed to resource the commencement of more workstreams within the programme in parallel and therefore overall acceleration of the Connected Places programme.
- 4.8 During summer 2023 there are two other key workstreams, namely finalising the contract for overlay services for the fibre network, that can then be varied to enable Public Wi-Fi deployment. Alongside work to soft market test the proposed small cells framework that the council intends to use as a mechanism for network operators to secure approval for the attachment of small cells and connectivity-related network equipment, onto council assets and street furniture.
- 4.9 The Outline Business Case (OBC) for deployment of an IoT network, and the associated savings projects to help resource it, will be developed over the course of Autumn 2023. This IoT programme and use cases workstream will require not just intensive work with several service areas across the council to develop the detail of proposed savings projects. But will also require the development of the related citizen engagement and cyber security workstreams in preparation for consideration of the Outline Business Case by Cabinet.
- 4.10 The imagery analytics-linked savings opportunities in Figure 4 will need to be carefully explored during 2023/24 to ensure that new software and tools are deployed safely and appropriately. In 2023/24 the focus will be where this supports existing services to simply capture and utilise imagery more efficiently.

4.11 From 2024/25 onwards it is then likely that there will be opportunities to realise wider savings and benefits from bringing together and cross-referencing different sources of data, or by utilising imagery data that is collected to meet the needs of multiple service areas. This later programme will rely upon wider work to explore and implement an ethical framework, in support of data protection and related obligations for handling data across the council, as well as a programme of related citizen and stakeholder engagement.

5. Corporate Priorities, Performance and Other Considerations

Corporate Plan

5.1 The Transformation programme will support the objectives of 'Our Plan for Barnet':

"We care for people by tackling inequalities to promote digital inclusion and helping people to have the skills, tools, and confidence to thrive in a digital era; as well as reducing poverty by taking advantage of growth sectors like digital industries to support investment in infrastructure and skills. We care for our places through safe and attractive neighbourhoods and town centres, as well as quality affordable homes that integrate well with surrounding areas, that together are supported by state-of-the-art digital infrastructure. By investing in digital placemaking transformation we will enable Barnet to be a more efficient and effective council"

Corporate Performance / Outcome Measures

5.2 In addition to the above Corporate Plan alignment, there are two relevant performance indicators proposed within the emerging delivery and outcomes framework. Namely:

- (i) reporting quarterly on digital inclusion with a written statement about activities delivered and outcomes achieved linked to tackling inequalities, and
- (ii) reporting quarterly on connectivity-related infrastructure delivery, and network / technology deployment, with a written statement demonstrating how quality affordable homes will be supported by 'state-of-the-art digital infrastructure'.

Overall, both outcomes are linked to the requirement to publish an annual report. This is to be measured as a KPI/PI outcome and the associated annual reports are expected to include various indicators, some of which may not be within the council's control but should help to explain progress in relation to these themes.

Sustainability

5.3 There will be various intangible benefits through the network investments and technology deployments that are proposed in the SOC, including a wide range of service efficiency measures linked to reducing the use of materials, demand for energy, both officer time and travel, and various other benefits compared to current service delivery. Such improvements will be assessed more fully at the OBC stage

to ensure the benefits are tracked in relation to actual planned service changes rather than case studies.

- 5.4 Rough initial calculations suggest that over 100 tCO₂ per annum of carbon savings could be achieved by 2030 through the proposed service innovations. A more detailed assessment will be prepared for the OBC stage.

Corporate Parenting

- 5.5 There will be no specific effect on Corporate Parenting responsibilities, other than the benefits that would arise for all residents and businesses in the borough, such as the opportunity to access the internet and to have free use of data in town centres and other locations where the Public Wi-Fi network will be deployed.

Risk Management

- 5.6 The key risks to successful delivery of the programme are:
- a) Timely securing of external additional technical staff resources to expand the capacity and capabilities of the team.
 - b) Sustaining effective corporate-level cross-council engagement and coordination around programme delivery, to ensure both continued alignment with corporate objectives, as well as shifting service plans in response to operational needs.
 - c) Procuring suitable partners for LoRaWAN network planning, deployment, and maintenance, together with computer vision software, will be crucial to the delivery of new capabilities that will unlock service innovation.
 - d) Failure to successfully implement a particular project or secure a forecast level of savings for any one specific use case could prejudice the resourcing or operation of a council service if savings are not initially treated as sitting across the wider programme until subject to more detailed consideration and testing for OBC/FBC.
 - e) That as assets become smarter and connected, they are increasingly recognised as potential new locations for cyber security incidents and a risk of associated data breaches incurring fines from the Information Commissioner, and therefore corporately we will need to broaden the focus of council cyber security activities. The new playbook recommends an 'Understand, Design, and Manage' approach within its guidelines.

Insight

- 5.7 At the heart of the Connected Places agenda is a programme to enable the whole council to secure better quality, more comprehensive, real-time data about buildings, places and the public highway that will enable the council to be increasingly data informed in the way that it delivers services to residents and businesses, and how it delivers public investment.
- 5.8 The programme will enable the council to bring together new capabilities to ensure services become even more data informed and efficient. This will include ensuring data is captured, stored, analysed, and shared in better and more efficient ways.

- a) Capturing data in a more joined-up way will enable services to access new sources of data and better utilise existing data to deliver cost efficiencies. Such changes include shared use of imagery data and wider deployment of sensors.
- b) Taking advantage of improved mechanisms for storing data in a more useful and collaborative way, such as use of the new corporate data lake.
- c) Implementing tools for improving the understanding and analysis of information, such as computer vision software that can transform imagery into metadata.
- d) Enabling greater data transparency and visibility of services and activities through the combined impact of real time data collection and new mechanisms for making data more visible and available to the public.

5.9 The proposed programme is underpinned by comprehensive analysis of available data relating to connectivity infrastructure and its impact / benefit within the borough. Due to the competitive commercial nature of the telecoms market in the UK, access to strong data about capacity and deployment plans is limited, and often is only shared with the council by commercial partners on a confidential basis.

5.10 Historically, Barnet has underperformed regarding telecommunications infrastructure deployment, mobile network capability and fibre availability; for example, Barnet still has the lowest percentage of gigabit speed broadband coverage in London, and overall, as shown in figure 5, the second slowest broadband speeds. The gigabit speed statistic is lower than other London Boroughs due to the more limited extent of the Virgin Media O2 network in Barnet from 2014, and the limited future deployment plans from Openreach.

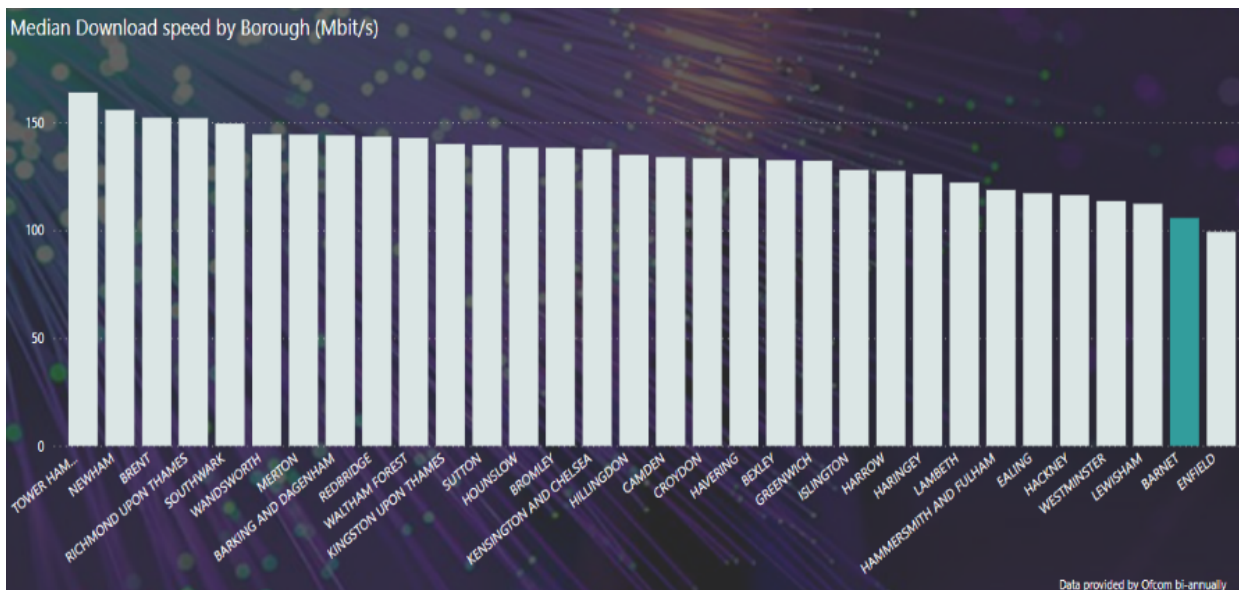


Figure 5 – Average Broadband Speeds between London Boroughs

5.11 As a result of the Gigabit Broadband Programme and more recent ‘Alternative Network’ (Alt-Net) investments, the amount of full fibre connected premises across the borough is increasing, but this is also happening across London and therefore Barnet needs to secure a step change in how wider parties focus on deployment in Barnet. Identified possible causes of slower broadband network investments include the need to challenge national plans and narratives about the ease of deployment in urban areas, and the understanding of practical issues that create barriers to commercial investment.

5.12 Through our wayleaves, figure 6 shows that the council has secured connections for 7335 council dwellings in the two years since January 2021. These partnerships designed to leverage housing assets to secure broadband investment have sought for no one to be left behind, and that there is special focus on ensuring that households with a greater level of vulnerability are the priority for support and receive the benefit of investment, including consideration of the affordability challenges for such households. However, the commercial basis for fibre broadband has been changing and future expectations may equally need to change, to focus around achieving a more rapid deployment of the fibre broadband service itself in the future.

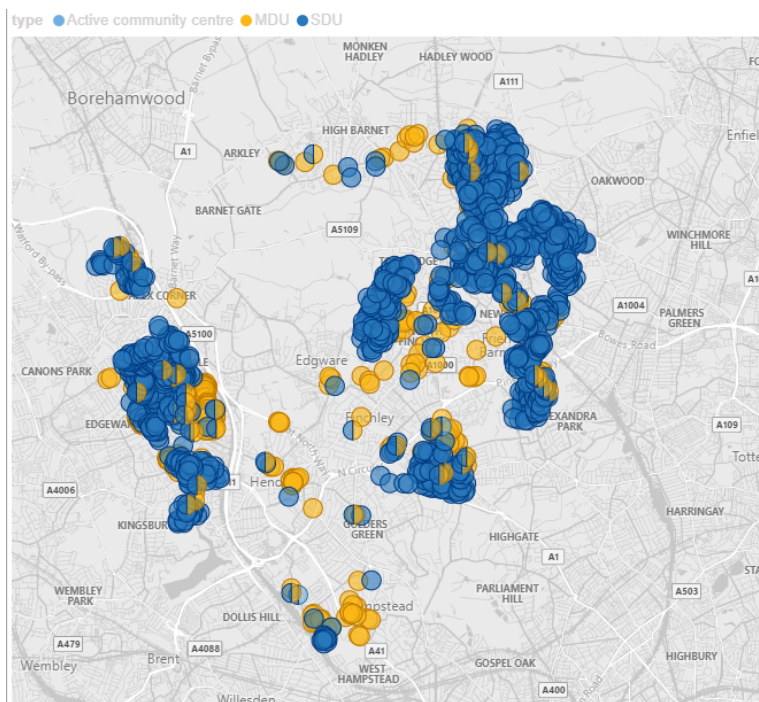


Figure 6 – Connected Council Housing Blocks (Wayleaves)

5.13 Sustaining this programme through commercial investment alone has been challenging as industry commercial controls have tightened around the cost per premises passed, and 2021 commitments to complete by 2023 must now be revised. Through this programme the council will work with the GLA and BDUK to address the identified barriers that are delaying the pace of commercial investment.

Social Value

5.14 Through the **Gigabit Broadband Programme**, the council has to date focused energy on securing additional social value outcomes by leveraging the access to its assets, and the investment of grant funding, to secure wider digital inclusion benefits. Such benefits have included free and reduced-price connectivity for households and community centres, as well as jobs and skills opportunities.

5.15 In recognition that *The Public Services (Social Value) Act 2013* requires people who commission public services to think about how they can also secure wider social, economic and environmental benefits. It is noted that the *Fibre West* procurement, secured discounted rates, and a suite of employment and skills benefits for

residents, and some wider social value proposals from BT that are being delivered sub-regionally.

- 5.16 Proceeding to agree an overlay services contract for the extension and operation of a CCTV-related fibre network within the borough enabled the council to layer-in further social value commitments that will enable the viable deployment of a Public Wi-Fi network and more rapid deployment of Small Cells that contributed to the Connected Places business case.
- 5.17 Looking forward, there are three key kinds of social value benefit available through procurements in relation to the Connected Places agenda, and these will be sought as part of any procurement or partnership programme to deliver investment:
- a) Digital Inclusion support through free or affordable services, devices, or skills support.
 - b) Employment and Training opportunities for residents to access jobs/apprenticeships.
 - c) Direct connectivity network benefits in the form of scaled-up investment programmes, discounted network deployment or management costs, and trialling of new technology.

The two key future social value investment opportunities from the Connected Places programme will be (a) ensuring the delivery of existed committed benefits, and (b) securing social value commitments in relation to the LoRaWAN network procurement.

6. Resources Implications (Finance and Value for Money, Procurement, Staffing, IT and Property)

- 6.1 The programme will require funding over a 4-year period to support the planning, procurement, and deployment of new Public Wi-Fi and IoT network capabilities, alongside the resourcing of the staff required to deliver the programme and support services across the council to unlock savings opportunities. Details are set out in the exempt report.
- 6.2 For reasons of commercial sensitivity, and especially to ensure the council can achieve best value from negotiations with potential commercial partners in relation to proposals for network deployment and technology implementation, the detail of the potential use cases for innovation and transformation, and the nature of the longer list of opportunities, and the amount of forecast savings cannot be shared to protect commercial confidentiality.
- 6.3 The 83-page Strategic Outline Case (SOC) has been included for publication as an exempt appendix to ensure members are informed in their decision. The elements of the report that were appropriate to share publicly have been captured within the text of this public report. Greater detail about the savings opportunities will be explored for publication as part of the Outline Business Case provided that this does not undermine the council's commercial position.
- 6.4 In general terms, it can be recognised that the modelled potential savings and capture of expenditure set out in the SOC, demonstrates there is sufficient future income/savings to justify the required level of borrowing is stood up to support the proposed new capabilities, even after accounting for the likely future costs for ongoing service delivery. Such income/savings are based on proposed transformation projects linked to connectivity and/or technology investments.

- 6.5 There are also indirect savings opportunities from the Connected Places programme, that are mainly associated with opportunities for cost avoidance or to improve how enforcement is delivered within the public realm.
- 6.6 Approval of this report will result in the opportunity for the cost of the Connected Places programme and service to be funded annually from the allocated prudential borrowing proposed in the SOC.
- 6.7 Public procurement and contract procedure rules will need to be adhered to when considering the procurement of a LoRaWAN network for the borough. In terms of the procurement of the Public Wi-Fi network, this has been treated as an exceptional case due to the best value offer secured in relation to the fibre overlay contract.

7. Legal Implications and Constitution References

- 7.1 Under Schedule 3A of the *Communications Act 2003*, an *Electronic Communications Code (ECC)* is defined, and the rights designed to facilitate installation and maintenance of electronic communications networks. This is the key instrument that allows network operators to work in the public highway and deliver connectivity network infrastructure.
- 7.2 Under the *Localism Act 2011*, The ‘General Power of Competence’ (GPC) provides a basis in law for the Council to decide to deliver against a Connected Places agenda. There is presently no statutory requirement for a local authority to engage in the Connected Places agenda, although recent Government messaging has indicated strong interest in local authorities taking a more active / facilitation role in relation to network development. Recent guidelines for local authorities advise around managing the Cyber Security risks and therefore recognise the increasing role of place-based digital technologies.
- 7.3 The *Digital Economy Act 2017* makes provision about electronic communications infrastructure and services, including the creation of a broadband Universal Service Order (USO), to give all premises in the UK a legal right to request a minimum standard of broadband connectivity, now defined as 10 megabits per second (Mbps). More significantly it brought about sweeping changes including updates to the ECC and it is important for landowners like the council to note that the modifications more heavily favour network operators, and that this situation was reinforced, against the interests of public bodies like local authorities in further changes to regulations and the ECC in Spring 2022.
- 7.4 *Data capture, storage, analysis, and sharing* must ensure compliance with the UK General Data Protection Regulation, the Law Enforcement Directive, and the *Data Protection Act 2018*.
- 7.5 The *Telecommunications (Security) Act 2021*, amending the *Communications Act 2003*, ensures that all public electronic communications networks and services are now to be protected against significant security risks by placing a requirement for security measures on the network and service providers. The accompanying *Electronic Communications (Security Measures) Regulations 2022* and associated draft code of practice includes the technical rules and guidance for how providers can meet their legal obligations. These will be relevant considerations when the council deploys its own networks.

7.6 The *Product Security and Telecommunications Infrastructure Act 2022* introduced several further changes to the Electronic Communications Code, including: the introduction of a "sharing" right, a new power to fly lines from apparatus, including poles, and related rights to upgrade or share them, as well as to upgrade and share underground apparatus. Collectively this will hopefully help minimise the extent of future street clutter from competitive networks for full fibre broadband being deployed in the streetscape.

7.7 In the Council's constitution, the Terms of Reference, and Delegation of Duties to the Cabinet (Part 2D) provides instruction and authority for this report as follows:

At paragraph 3.4 it states that:

"The Cabinet is responsible for the following functions:

...Approving policies that are not part of the policy framework".

At paragraph 4.1 it states that:

"an executive decision which is likely to result in the Council incurring expenditure which is, or the making of savings which are, significant having regard to the budget for the service or function to which the decision relates".

At paragraph 4.3 it states that:

"a decision is significant for the purposes of above if it involves expenditure or the making of savings of an amount in excess of £1m for capital expenditure or £500,000 for revenue expenditure or, where expenditure or savings are less than the amounts specified above, they constitute more than 50% of the budget attributable to the service in question".

7.8 At paragraph 6 and 6.1 it defines the Leader of the Council, and Portfolio Holder for Resources and Effective Council, as having the following responsibilities:

Leading on Council Transformation.

Leading on the Council's Digital Strategy.

Therefore, the Leader of the Council and Portfolio Holder Resources and Effective Council has responsibility for the Connected Places Transformation Programme.

8. Consultation

Data Ethics and Citizen engagement

8.1 An engagement through the council's citizen's panel in Autumn 2023, will be used to test several fictional example case studies for considering ways the council could better share and use data, some of which relate to this connectivity agenda. This will provide a baseline understanding about how residents feel about being asked about how data is used, to understand what appears to matter most to residents.

8.2 In parallel to the development of the new network capabilities and implementation of technological innovations, there will be a data ethics workstream. This will need to involve careful thinking around policies and process, internal challenge around enhanced methods of data collection and integration, as well as appropriate ways of ensuring citizen engagement and transparency around the information that is collected, how it is analysed, and how the council uses data; to ensure an ethical and legally compliant approach is maintained.

- 8.3 The two key programmes that will require appropriate consultation and engagement with citizens are:
- a) The imagery analytics programme - to ensure that there is acknowledgement of the way data will be collected and processed to deliver better service outcomes.
 - b) The IoT business case - especially the nature of the service transformation delivered where this has a relevance to citizen experience or access to services.
- 8.4 A programme for supporting the delivery of these two workstreams will need to be developed in 2023/24 and 2024/25. The next steps on that journey will involve:
- Developing a data charter for Barnet
 - Developing an ethics board including residents to discuss the planned programmes and potential analytics tools amongst interested residents alongside appropriate external input and expertise to ensure full legal compliance.
 - Ensuring appropriate broader communications are provided at the right stages in the process to the wider community across the borough, for example to reflect changes to privacy notices or similar matters that will need to be appropriately shared and discussed with or explained to residents.

Digital Inclusion and public engagement

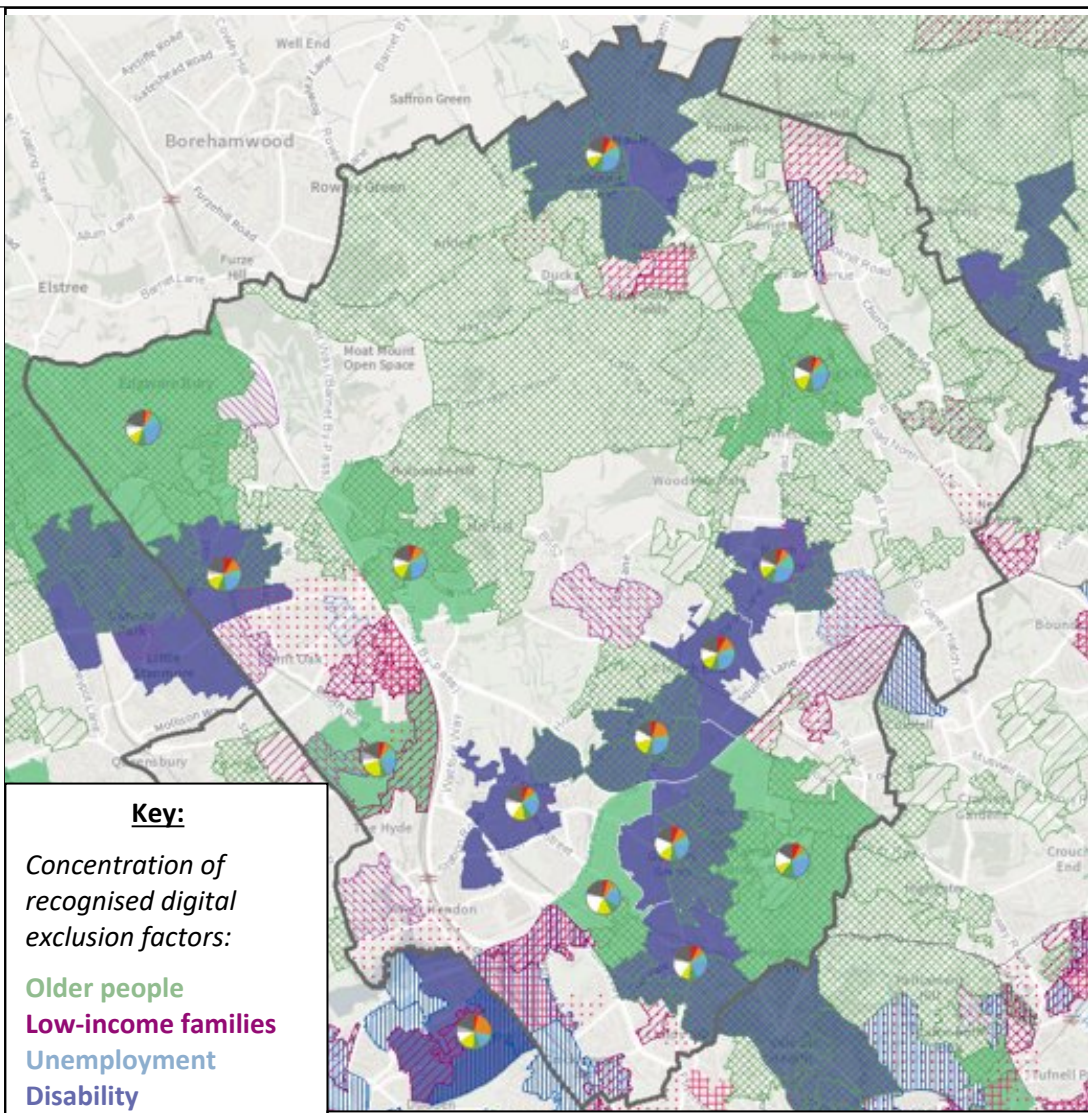
- 8.5 Presently the council delivers several 'Get Online' weeks each year as promotional events where Digital Inclusion opportunities are highlighted to residents by our partner BOOST; these include mechanisms for accessing free/affordable devices, low-cost connectivity packages (home broadband and mobile data), as well as volunteer-led digital skills support and training programmes across the borough.
- 8.6 Resident engagement and awareness workstreams will be developed to make sure that residents are aware of opportunities to improve their experience of connectivity and to ensure residents are aware they can secure services affordably or for free. This will be crucial to realising the digital inclusion benefits from free Public Wi-Fi.

9. Equalities and Diversity

- 9.1 The public sector equality duty at section 149 of the Equality Act 2010 has been considered in relation to the preparation of the business case and the drafting of this report, and it is noted that:
- having due regard to the need to:
- advance equality of opportunity between persons who share a relevant protected characteristic and persons who do not share it,*
- involved giving due regard to the need to:
- Remove or minimise disadvantages suffered by persons who share a relevant protected characteristic,*
- in relation to the Connected Places agenda this mainly relates to 'digital exclusion'.
- 9.2 It is the view of officers that digital exclusion is closely linked to the protected characteristics of *age* and *disability*, as well as all other protected characteristics. There may also be a link to the more financially vulnerable households in the borough, especially where this financial vulnerability is linked to a higher incidence

of either low household income and/or unemployment, which tends in practice to be most correlated and therefore concentrated in areas of social housing. It will be important to explore whether digital exclusion is more closely correlated with other protected characteristics such as *the incidence of pregnancy and maternity*, as well as *race, religion or belief, sex, sexual orientation, and gender reassignment* in the context in which these specific protected characteristics are more disproportionately reflected within social housing. It would be beneficial to consider such alignments as part of preparation for the OBC stage. At this stage an updated EQIA will be put before Cabinet for consideration.

- 9.3 In relation to the business community digital exclusion tends to correlate with types of microbusinesses that are not currently reliant/dependent on day-to-day use of technology, such as food and beverage retailers, but where such businesses risk being left behind by economic and technological shifts within their industry. Digital exclusion for businesses tends to most closely link to educational attainment, with language limitations and the level of exposure to technology from a young age factor that are most closely aligned. Therefore, digital inclusion for businesses correlates less with any specific protected characteristic, and more with the skills and experience of the business owner and/or employees.
- 9.4 Figure 7 highlights the council's understanding of the geographical prevalence across the borough associated with recognised factors linked to Digital Exclusion.



Key:
 Concentration of recognised digital exclusion factors:
 Older people
 Low-income families
 Unemployment
 Disability
 Microbusinesses (coloured circles)

Figure 7 - London Office of Technology & Innovation (LOTI): Extract from the 2021 'Pan London Digital Exclusion Map'

- 9.5 The detail of the savings projects and imagery-based analytics opportunities will be defined at Outline Business Case (OBC). At this stage an EQIA will be required to assess the potential implications for residents of a protected characteristic in relation to the relevant planned network investments and the savings use cases. It is likely there will be a positive outcome in all cases; but it will be important to properly assess this to ensure the savings opportunities do deliver transformation and improvement without an identifiable negative impact for residents.
- 9.6 Recognising the risks in relation to sustaining equality of opportunity and avoiding the risks of bias emerging in relation to the sharing and use of existing and newly emerging sources of data, this report has set out the intention to ensure there is careful consideration of data ethics and appropriate systems for oversight to ensure the council acts appropriately in the context of new opportunities to share and analyse data from multiple sources.
- 9.7 It is relevant to note here that consideration of the CCTV Full Business Case by Community Leadership and Libraries Committee in February 2023 noted that:
“the camera estate will see modernisation through new equipment and technological innovation, such as the use of computer imagery, all new publicly

beneficial use cases will be appropriately assessed for their impacts and related data capture and other council policies will be appropriately updated and communicated. Through membership of the London Office for Technology and Innovation, the council has access to a data ethics service, which will provide advice and support for decision-making.”

- 9.8 Acknowledgement of the potential benefits and risks from technological innovation around computer imagery, as well as other sources of data, has informed the recommendation in this report to consult with partners and residents in relation to a new data ethics framework.

EQIA assessment for a Public Wi-Fi network

- 9.9 The proposed Public Wi-Fi network across town centres, parks and more widely around the borough in the vicinity of CCTV columns, will provide a new, free, means of accessing the internet and accessing digitally oriented public and commercial services. Data from Barnet’s libraries indicates a sustained level of demand for the use of public computers and especially free internet access, despite the currently low bandwidths available in most libraries.
- 9.10 The expected outcome of current projects within the *Gigabit Broadband Programme* includes upgrading the library broadband lines to improve service and Wi-Fi bandwidth, and therefore could provide significant benefit to people who depend on this service.
- 9.11 The Connected Places programme envisages taking such improvements two steps further by firstly creating the opportunity for outdoor free Wi-Fi across destination locations such as town centres, but furthermore by delivering seamless interoperability between outdoor and indoor public Wi-Fi. Such interoperability would open up a more seamless experience of connecting with the council and benefitting from access to online services.
- 9.12 The use of splash screens when entering the proposed Public Wi-Fi network will create new, more accessible and interactive ways of securing direct citizen engagement with a localised dimension. This could for example allow for simple interactive single question surveys to be asked or campaigns banners to be flashed up on entry. Such opportunities will hopefully encourage some people with a relevant protected characteristic that are currently more limited in their ability or willingness to participate in public life, to be able to explore a greater level of engagement.
- 9.13 It will be important to consider how the needs of disabled persons may be different from the needs of people who are not disabled including any measures that are required to take account of the relevant disabilities that might otherwise present a barrier to accessing this benefit. Like particular considerations for older residents may well need to be designed-in to the way that sign-up and promotional/engagement messaging appears within the proposed Public Wi-Fi service.
- 9.14 Overall, it is recognised that the proposed Public Wi-Fi network has considered the equalities duty and given due regard to the need to foster good relations between persons who share a relevant protected characteristic and persons who do not share it, and that in particular the proposed network will actively help contribute towards tackling inequalities and also will help to promote a shared sense of community. Further work on opportunities to directly benefit older residents and

those with disabilities will be required in preparation for the Outline Business Case stage and an updated EQIA will accompany this report to Cabinet.

10. Background Papers

10.1 London Borough of Barnet, Housing and Growth Committee - 14 September 2020
- *Item 10: Enabling Investment in Digital Infrastructure*

[Agenda and Minutes for Enabling Digital Infrastructure.](#)

10.2 London Borough of Barnet, Delegated Powers: Director for Growth – 11th December 2020. *Enabling Investment in Digital Infrastructure – Approval of Wayleave Framework Agreement*

[Wayleave Framework Template Agreement](#)

10.3 London Borough of Barnet, Delegated Powers: Director for Growth – 18 January 2021 – *Enabling Digital Infrastructure – Wayleave Framework Agreement with Community Fibre Limited.*

[Wayleave Framework Agreement with Community Fibre Ltd](#)

NB/ There have been many subsequent, multi-property, wayleave decisions granted in relation to the above framework agreement with Community Fibre Ltd.

10.4 London Borough of Barnet, Delegated Powers: Director for Growth – 29 June 2021 – *Enabling Digital Infrastructure – Wayleave Framework Agreement with Hyperoptic Limited.*

[Wayleave Framework Agreement with Hyperoptic Ltd](#)

10.5 London Borough of Ealing, Cabinet – 22 September 2021 – *Item 20: West London Alliance SIP 1 High Speed Fibre Funding and Delivery*

[West London Alliance SIP 1 High Speed Fibre Funding and Delivery.](#)

10.6 London Borough of Barnet, Delegated Powers: Director for Growth – 28 January 2022 - *Approval of sites for connection to Fibre Broadband using grant funding*

[Approval of sites for connection to Fibre Broadband using grant funding](#)

10.7 London Borough of Barnet, Delegated Powers: Director of Growth – 29 April 2022 – *Work with West London Alliance to implement the Fibre West and Outcomes Accelerator Projects*

[WLA Collaboration Agreements Fibre West and DCIA.](#)

10.8 London Borough of Barnet, Community Leadership and Libraries Committee - 20 June 2022, *Decision Item 11: CCTV Programme – Revised Outline Business Case & Update on the Strategic Review.*

[Agenda and Minutes for CLL Committee on 20th June 2022](#)

10.9 London Borough of Barnet, Policy and Resources Committee - 19 July 2022, *Decision Item 9: Revised Budget 2022/23 and Business Planning 2023-2027*

[Agenda and Minutes for P&R Committee on Tuesday 19th July 2022](#)

10.10 London Borough of Barnet, Delegated Powers Report: Executive Director for Assurance – 16 December 2022 - *CCTV Fibre Network and Services*

[Decision - CCTV Fibre Network and Services](#)

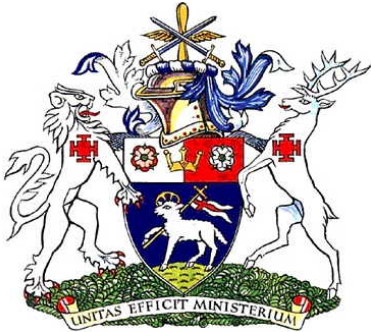
10.11 London Borough of Barnet, Delegated Powers Report: Executive Director for Assurance – 20 December 2022. Replacement and upgrade of CCTV cameras & maintenance contract

[*Decision - Replacement and upgrade of CCTV cameras & maintenance contract*](#)

10.12 London Borough of Barnet, Community Leadership and Libraries Committee – 7th February 2023. *Decision Item 12: CCTV Full Business Case*

[*Agenda for CLL Committee on Tuesday 7th February 2023*](#)

Cabinet

	
Title	Housing Strategy, Homelessness and Rough Sleeping Strategy, Tenancy Strategy, and Housing Allocation Scheme
Date of meeting	18 July 2023
Report of	Deputy Leader and Cabinet Member (Portfolio Holder) for Homes and Regeneration
Wards	<i>All</i>
Status	Public
Key	Key
Urgent	No
Appendices	<p>Appendix A – Draft Housing Strategy</p> <p>Appendix B – Draft Homelessness and Rough Sleeping Strategy</p> <p>Appendix C - Draft Tenancy Strategy</p> <p>Appendix D – Draft Housing Allocation Scheme</p> <p>Appendix E – Housing Strategy and Homelessness and Rough Sleeping Strategy Evidence Base</p> <p>Appendix F – Housing Strategy Summary Consultation Report</p> <p>Appendix G – Homelessness and Rough Sleeping Strategy Summary Consultation Report</p> <p>Appendix H – Tenancy Strategy Summary Consultation Report</p> <p>Appendix I – Housing Allocation Scheme Summary Consultation Report</p> <p>Appendix J – Housing Strategy Equality Impact Assessment</p> <p>Appendix K – Homelessness and Rough Sleeping Strategy Equality Impact Assessment</p> <p>Appendix L – Tenancy Strategy Equality Impact Assessment</p>

	Appendix M – Housing Allocation Scheme Equality Impact Assessment
Lead Officer	Cath Shaw, Deputy Chief Executive Officer; Laura Giles, Head of Strategy and Compliance (The Barnet Group)
Officer Contact Details	cath.shaw@barnet.gov.uk laura.giles@barnethomes.org

Summary

The council has developed new drafts of the Housing Strategy, Homelessness and Rough Sleeping Strategy, Tenancy Strategy, and Housing Allocation Scheme to take account of changes to the administration’s priorities and the current context (including changes in the housing sector, demographics, and economic factors, as summarised for the Housing and Growth Committee in March 2023), and to ensure key documents are updated in line with statutory expectations. The draft documents were approved for public consultation by the Housing and Growth Committee in March 2023. The consultations have now been completed and revised drafts of the documents are presented for Cabinet’s consideration, along with a summary of the consultation outcomes.

Recommendations

1. That Cabinet approves the revised draft Housing Strategy attached at Appendix A.
2. That Cabinet approves the revised draft Homelessness and Rough Sleeping Strategy attached at Appendix B.
3. That Cabinet approves the revised draft Tenancy Strategy attached at Appendix C.
4. That Cabinet approves the revised draft Housing Allocation Scheme attached at Appendix D.

1. Reasons for the Recommendations

Introduction

- 1.1 The Housing and Growth Committee approved the development of a new Housing Strategy, Homelessness and Rough Sleeping Strategy, and Tenancy Strategy, and a review of the Housing Allocation Scheme in June 2022. In March 2023, Housing and Growth Committee approved all four draft documents for public consultation.
- 1.2 Public consultation has now been completed, and this report summarises the changes that have subsequently been made and presents the updated documents for approval. The main changes to and the priorities within the four documents take forward the council’s aims as set out in the Labour Group’s election manifesto in the 2022 local elections. The public consultation provided additional opportunity to gain feedback from residents and stakeholders to help shape the documents.
- 1.3 Officers have also updated the evidence base (Appendix E) that supports the Housing Strategy and Homelessness and Rough Sleeping Strategy to reflect the latest performance information where relevant.

Housing Strategy

- 1.4 The Housing Strategy includes the following themes:

- Prevent homelessness and support rough sleepers off the streets. [Note: to be articulated through the Homelessness and Rough Sleeping Strategy]
- Deliver the right homes in the right places.
- Ensure safe, sustainable council housing.
- Raise quality and standards in the private rented sector.
- Support living well by promoting healthy homes and wellbeing.

1.5 A summary report on the public consultation is included at Appendix F. No significant changes have been made to the strategy as a result of the consultation. There was no substantial feedback to suggest that changes were necessary, and there was strong support for the vision, themes, and priorities within the strategy. The majority of the comments concerned matters that do not fall directly under the scope of the Housing Strategy; in particular concerns about infrastructure. In response to this, the existing references to infrastructure and the need to shape places and secure healthy, resilient, and cohesive communities through the council's regeneration and development plans have been slightly expanded upon.

1.6 The consultation period also saw continued engagement with stakeholder council services, and the following additions have also been made to the strategy:

- Foreword from the Portfolio Holder for Homes and Regeneration added.
- Recognition of the contributions and collaborative working with partner organisations added to the introduction section.
- Existing text on the standards for accessible properties amended to ensure accuracy in line with the Local Plan provisions (theme 2).
- Additional information added about diverse types of housing across all tenures that the borough aims to deliver through its Local Plan, to improve the Planning Department's ability to manage the new Local Plan and for the provision of homes across tenures (theme 2).
- A commitment added on better understanding the needs of the Gypsy, Roma, and Irish Traveller community within Barnet, in line with the London Housing Strategy and to support the new Local Plan (theme 2).
- A commitment added on improving the approach to tackling housing fraud (theme 2).
- Brent Cross case study updated with the latest copy from the developers (theme 2).
- Key charts and performance information updated throughout to reflect latest data.
- Diagram added to the end of the strategy to put the Housing Strategy into context alongside other key council strategies and plans.

Homelessness and Rough Sleeping Strategy

1.7 The Homelessness and Rough Sleeping Strategy includes the following themes, which were influenced by the Government's 'Homelessness Code of Guidance' on publishing a homelessness strategy:

- Prevent homelessness
- Ensure a sufficient supply of accommodation

- Provide support for people who are or have been homeless

1.8 A summary report on the public consultation is included at Appendix G. No significant changes have been made to the strategy as a result of the consultation as there was no substantial feedback to suggest that changes were necessary, and there was very strong support for the themes and priorities within the strategy. Some of the suggestions made during the consultation will be considered as the supporting implementation plan is developed.

1.9 The following changes have been made to the strategy:

- Foreword from the Portfolio Holder for Homes and Regeneration added.
- Key charts and performance information updated throughout to reflect latest data, including key achievements since the previous strategy.
- Priority 2 aim expanded to clarify that funding will be sought to meet diverse needs.

Tenancy Strategy

1.10 The Tenancy Strategy sets out the matters to which the registered providers of social housing operating within a local authority area, including the local housing authority itself, are to regard in formulating policies relating to:

- the kinds of tenancies they grant;
- the circumstances in which they will grant a tenancy of a particular kind;
- where they grant tenancies for a fixed term, the lengths of the terms; and
- the circumstances in which they will grant a further tenancy on coming to the end of an existing tenancy.

1.11 A summary report on the public consultation is included at Appendix G. There was very strong support for the proposals and no changes have been made to the strategy as a result of the consultation.

1.12 The following changes have been made to the strategy:

- Key charts and performance information updated throughout to reflect latest data.

Housing Allocation Scheme

1.13 Under Section 166A of the Housing Act 1996, as amended by the Localism Act 2011, every local housing authority in England must have a scheme (their “allocation scheme”) for determining priorities and the procedure to be followed in allocating housing accommodation. The Housing Allocation Scheme is one of the most important policy documents for the council. It makes a real difference to people’s lives, but inevitably there are far more residents seeking social housing than there are properties available to let. Barnet is the second largest London borough in terms of population but has one of the smallest social housing stocks in the capital with just over 9,000 council-owned homes for rent, for allocation to those in need of social housing. The 2021 Census indicated that only 13.5% of all Barnet’s housing is social housing.

1.14 A summary report on the public consultation is included at Appendix I. No significant changes have been made to the strategy as a result of the consultation as there was no substantial feedback to suggest that changes were necessary, and there was strong support for each of the main proposed changes within the policy.

1.15 The consultation period also saw continued engagement with stakeholder council services. As a result of initial feedback from the Housing Options service, a large number of minor changes

were made to the policy in the version approved for public consultation; these were intended to provide greater clarity about the approach taken and ensure the policy is up to date with the latest legislative and operational requirements. During the consultation period a detailed review of the draft policy was undertaken with Housing Options officers, and this has led to the changes below. All changes are to improve clarity and consistency for applicants and officers and do not represent major policy changes.

- Section 1.8 - Clarification of the role that will take decisions to allocate properties outside of band and date order.
- Section 2.6 - Correction of the residential connection requirement to read “for the applicant or their partner” (rather than “and their partner”).
- Section 2.7 - Clarification that housing related debt of under £100 will not be considered.
- Section 2.8 - Clarification added regarding former social housing tenancy rent arrears for former Barnet Council tenancies and other former social housing tenancies.
- Section 2.8 - Clarification added that the council will not monitor whether the applicant has set up or adhered to a payment plan once a decision has been taken that they do not qualify for this rule.
- Section 2.9 - Additional information about how and when applicants can request discretion.
- Section 3.2 - Correction of (non-related) live in carers being added as household members on the application in the first draft; this has been moved instead to bedroom need considerations; this would allow for carers to change, and does not bestow succession rights to carers.
- Section 3.8 - Additional detail added regarding the level of authorisation needed regarding applicants with connections to the council or The Barnet Group.
- Section 3.9 - Clarification regarding applications being cancelled if the applicant has had their homelessness resolved through Let2Barnet, an offer of accommodation, or finding their own private rented sector accommodation.
- Section 3.10 - Clarification regarding instances where the council does not accept justification for household members moving in added to the “worsening circumstances” rules.
- Section 3.12 - Clarification added that the 21 days to request formal review of a decision comes from the date of being informed of the outcome of the informal review.
- Section 3.16 - Additional information added regarding size of accommodation to allow for households with a child under 5 with a need for two-bedrooms to be considered for a one-bedroom property if they request this.
- Section 3.16 - Additional information added regarding size of accommodation to allow for transferring households with a child living in a one-bedroom property who are not considered to be statutorily overcrowded to be allocated a two-bedroom property where there is availability and if they agree.

- Section 3.16 - Clarification added regarding how additional communal living rooms will be treated as a bedroom for the measurement of overcrowding and assessment of size of accommodation.
- Section 4.2 - Clarification added to summarise the requirements of applicants in order to be banded.
- Annex 1 - Clarification added to summarise the requirements of applicants in order to be banded.
- Annex 2 - Addition of live in carer (where evidenced) resulting in a requirement for an additional bedroom.
- Annex 2 - Addition of detail from section 3.16 regarding consideration for a property that is one bedroom size less than their assessed need.
- Annex 2 - Addition of detail from section 3.16 regarding potential discretion for allocation of a two-bedroom property for transferring households currently living in a one-bedroom property that are not considered to be statutorily overcrowded.
- Annex 3 - Correction to Community Contribution to remove all household members as needing to meet the qualification rules.
- Annex 3 - Education added to section title on evidence of training.
- Annex 6 - Personal Independence Payment added.

1.16 In March 2023, Housing and Growth also requested a change to Annex 2's bedroom size requirements. The consultation draft had been updated to allow for households with a child aged over 6 months old to have a two-bedroom need; the policy has been updated to allow for households with one child of any age to have a two-bedroom need. Other size of property determinations based on size of family remain as per the outgoing policy.

Reasons for the recommendations

- 1.17 The Homelessness Act 2002 places a statutory duty on each local authority to carry out a review of homelessness and develop a strategy every 5 years.
- 1.18 The Localism Act 2011 places a statutory duty on local housing authorities to keep their tenancy strategy under review.
- 1.19 The Housing Act 1996, as amended by the Localism Act 2011, places a statutory duty on each local authority to have an allocation scheme for determining priorities and setting out the procedure to be followed in allocating housing accommodation.
- 1.20 The draft documents have been reviewed following the public consultations that took place between April 2023 and June 2023. The responses to the consultations were positive and it is recommended that the draft documents are approved by Cabinet.
- 1.21 The reports to Housing and Growth on 23 March 2023 set out the reasoning for the changes between the current documents and the consultation drafts.

2. Alternative Options Considered and Not Recommended

- 2.1 Cabinet could decide not to approve the revised draft Housing Strategy, Homelessness and Rough Sleeping Strategy, Tenancy Strategy, and Housing Allocation Scheme; however, at Housing and Growth Committee's meeting in June 2022 it instructed officers to prepare these, and subsequently approved the draft versions for consultation in March 2023. The responses

received during the public consultation about the proposed documents have largely been positive.

- 2.2 Not revising the statutory Homelessness and Rough Sleeping Strategy, Tenancy Strategy, or Housing Allocation Scheme, or not having a revised Housing Strategy is not recommended because the current ones would not be reflective of the changes noted earlier in this report nor of the administration's manifesto commitments, nor would the council meet the statutory requirement to prepare and publish a Homelessness and Rough Sleeping Strategy, Tenancy Strategy, and Housing Allocation Scheme and keep these under review.

3. Post Decision Implementation

Housing Strategy and Homelessness and Rough Sleeping Strategy

- 3.1 The Housing Strategy and Homelessness and Rough Sleeping Strategies will be implemented by the council. Implementation Plans will be finalised and delivered, with regular updates on progress provided to appropriate stakeholders, including through the implementation of relevant priorities in Our Plan for Barnet (the council's Corporate Plan) and the Transformation Programme. The approved strategies will be art-worked and published on the council's website.

Tenancy Strategy

- 3.2 The Tenancy Strategy will be implemented by the council and as from 1 August 2023, Barnet Homes will start to issue secure periodic tenancies to all new council tenants. In some instances, as set out in the draft strategy, these will continue to be preceded by an introductory tenancy. In the period between Cabinet approval of the new strategy and the implementation date, Barnet Homes will agree processes and documentation to deliver the change in approach.
- 3.3 The approved Tenancy Strategy will be published on the council's website, and communications will be issued to private registered providers in the borough to make them aware of the new strategy.
- 3.4 Barnet Homes will also implement a tenancy migration plan to issue new secure periodic tenancies to existing tenants on fixed-term tenancies. Based on the legal advice received, to vary the tenancy the council will be required to ask tenants to agree a variation of the terms of their existing flexible tenancies in order to convert this to a secure periodic tenancy. Flexible tenancies held jointly and where one of the joint tenants is no longer around will be required to be surrendered before a secure periodic tenancy is issued.
- 3.5 Where the tenant does not sign, their current tenancy will prevail. Experience shows that not all flexible tenants will sign the variation and therefore a proportion will remain on their current flexible tenancy until it is either brought to an end at the expiry of the fixed term or becomes a secure periodic tenancy. The variation exercise will target tenants with flexible tenancies and provide them with the information on the process and their rights to help them with their decision. The variation exercise is expected to run over a 12-month period. Those households that a) have the longest remaining duration periods on their existing introductory tenancy that would become a flexible tenancy and b) have the longest remaining duration period on their existing flexible tenancy, will be prioritised first in the variation exercise. In the period between Cabinet approval of the new Tenancy Strategy and the implementation date of 1 August 2023, seven introductory tenancies that would become flexible tenancies are due to reach their review date; these are expected to become flexible tenancies and they will be picked up in the variation exercise to become secure periodic tenancies.

- 3.6 The aim following the approval of the draft Tenancy Strategy is to migrate the current flexible tenancies to secure periodic tenancies over as short a period as possible and to stop granting new ones at the earliest possible opportunity. The migration model will cover the following and is expected to affect approximately 1,500 existing council tenants who currently have a flexible tenancy or an introductory tenancy that was due to become a flexible tenancy:
- Introductory tenants who were previously told their tenancy would become secure periodic tenancies after the initial 12 months will be allowed to convert as normal.
 - Introductory tenants who were previously told their tenancy would become flexible tenancies after the initial 12 months will be asked to sign a variation to allow the tenancy to become a secure periodic tenancy.
 - Flexible tenancies with 9 months or less to go will be allowed to convert to secure periodic tenancies.
 - Flexible tenancies with more than 9 months will be asked to sign a variation to allow the tenancy to change to a secure periodic tenancy with immediate effect.
 - Joint flexible tenancies with more than 9 months, and where one of the joint tenants is absent, will be asked to serve 4 weeks' notice and then granted a new secure periodic tenancy; we cannot legally vary the tenancy with only one of the joint tenants.

Housing Allocation Scheme

- 3.7 The Housing Allocation Scheme will be implemented by the council and as from 1 October 2023, the changes will come into effect. The approved Housing Allocation Scheme will be published on the council's website, and communications will be issued to private registered providers in the borough to make them aware of the new policy. Prior to the policy's implementation, Barnet Homes' Housing Options service will undertake preparatory activities including required process and system changes, staff training, and updates to letter templates.

4. Corporate Priorities, Performance and Other Considerations

Corporate Plan

- 4.1 Our Plan for Barnet 2023-26 is centred around being a council that cares for people, our places, and the planet.
- The Housing Strategy will play a key role in helping to achieve the ambitions under the People priority to care for people by tackling inequalities, being family friendly, and living well. Under the Places priority it will help to achieve the ambitions to deliver quality, affordable homes. Under the Planet priority it will support our journey to net zero.
 - The Homelessness and Rough Sleeping Strategy will play a key role in helping to achieve the ambitions under the People priority to care for people by tackling inequalities. Under the Places priority it will help to achieve the ambitions to deliver quality, affordable homes.
 - The Tenancy Strategy will play a key role in helping to achieve the ambitions under the People priority to care for people by tackling inequalities, being family friendly, and living well.
 - The Housing Allocation Scheme will play a key role in helping to achieve the ambitions under the People Strategy by tackling inequalities and being family friendly.

4.2 The Housing Strategy context diagram on page 32 of the draft strategy sets out the links between the Housing Strategy and other key council strategies, including Our Plan for Barnet 2023-26.

Corporate Performance / Outcome Measures

4.3 The council's key housing-related strategies will contribute to the delivery of Our Plan for Barnet and the Transformation Strategy. The outcomes framework includes the below measures, which are a combination of statutory requirements, Barnet Homes Delivery Plan targets, and outcomes or outputs that are expected to demonstrate delivery of the priorities within the Housing Strategy and Homelessness and Rough Sleeping Strategy.

- % of tenanted council homes that meet the Decent Homes Standard;
- % of tenanted council homes for which all required gas safety checks have been carried out;
- % of tenanted council homes for which all required fire risk assessments have been carried out;
- Council tenant satisfaction that the home is well-maintained;
- Council tenant satisfaction that the home is safe to live in;
- % repeat homelessness applications;
- % rough sleepers returning to the streets;
- Number of homelessness preventions;
- Number of affordable homes completed;
- 1,000 homes at 50% of market rent;
- Number of social housing lettings per annum.

Sustainability

4.4 There are no direct environmental or sustainability implications from approving the recommendations. The draft Housing Strategy includes aims that support the delivery of the council's Sustainability Strategy, the BarNET Zero campaign, and the council's Net Zero targets regarding its social housing stock, and these would be expected to have a positive impact on sustainability.

Corporate Parenting

4.5 Foster carers are included in the group that would receive highest priority (if their housing prevents them from being able to start, or continue, to provide foster care) through the council's Housing Allocation Scheme. Council housing also remains the most affordable housing option for care leavers. Care leavers are placed into suitable accommodation when leaving care to allow a successful transition to independent living whilst also developing their skills by providing the right support to help them maintain their tenancies.

4.6 As a corporate parent to all children in care and care leavers, the council must have regard to the need to act in the best interests and promote the physical and mental health and wellbeing of those children and young people, help them gain access to and make the best use of services provided, promote high aspirations and seek to secure the best outcomes for them, help ensure

they are safe and have stability in their home lives, and prepare them for adulthood and independent living.

Risk Management

- 4.7 There is a risk if the Housing Strategy, Homelessness and Rough Sleeping Strategy, Tenancy Strategy, and Housing Allocation Scheme are not updated that the current documents do not reflect the significant contextual changes summarised in this report, that the housing requirements of the borough are not met, and the statutory expectations associated with the Homelessness and Rough Sleeping Strategy, Tenancy Strategy, and Housing Allocation Scheme are not met. There are no identified significant risks associated with taking these decisions as recommended.
- 4.8 Regarding the Tenancy Strategy, when the council decided to move to issuing flexible tenancies in 2012, risks were identified regarding a potential negative impact on community cohesion with tenants feeling less of a commitment to the area in which they live, the potential for flexible tenancies to curtail their aspirations in order to keep their homes, and for increased administration in assessing whether a tenancy should be extended. The proposed move to issuing secure periodic tenancies and ceasing to offer flexible tenancies removes these risks.
- 4.9 The move to issuing secure tenancies instead of fixed-term tenancies is expected to have a positive impact on community cohesion, with tenants likely to feel more of a commitment to the areas in which they live. It will also relieve the administration in managing fixed-term tenancies, including assessing whether tenancies should be extended.
- 4.10 The intention of implementing fixed-term tenancies was to provide local flexibility in the granting of tenancies that would help to ensure that, in a borough with high demand for social housing and relatively low availability of homes each year, the council's housing stock could be managed effectively and more homes could be provided for those most in housing need by dealing effectively with under-occupation so that such households could be offered properties more suited to their housing need.
- 4.11 In practice, it has been found that the use of fixed-term tenancies has not been an effective tool in reducing the number of under-occupiers, with none offered a smaller property due to under-occupation. The majority of households upon review of their fixed-term tenancy have had it continued at the same property for a further five years, with a total of only 5 tenancies ending or being reissued at an alternative property. The review process has highlighted that the majority of households under-occupying are elderly tenants who, through the outgoing Tenancy Strategy, hold secure tenancies and therefore are not subject to the review process.
- 4.12 There is a low risk that ceasing to offer fixed-term tenancies could remove a tool for taking action against tenants who are in breach of their tenancy agreement. However, tenancy is not a tool for tackling issues such as anti-social behaviour, and breaches of tenancy will continue to be managed through effective tenancy management practices.
- 4.13 Regarding the Housing Allocation Scheme, the move to two offers of social housing instead of one is expected to have a positive impact on residents who qualify under the Housing Allocation Scheme, as they will be afforded more choice in the home they are allocated. Under the current one offer policy, the number of cases in Barnet where applicants are removed from the Housing Needs Register for refusing one offer is relatively low at just over 40 cases on average each year, which is around 5% of all lettings, with 95% of applicants accepting the property they are offered. This low refusal rate is understandable when set against the fact that Barnet is an area where demand for social housing far outweighs availability. To mitigate the risk of delays to the

letting of properties as a consequence of introducing a two-offer policy, Barnet Homes' Housing Options service will review its lettings procedures with the aim of minimising the turnaround times on empty properties.

Insight

- 4.14 The Housing Strategy and Homelessness and Rough Sleeping Strategy have been informed by the evidence base at Appendix E which includes insight gained through the Healthy Workplan's Homelessness Prevention and Insight Project.
- 4.15 More and more local authorities are ceasing to grant flexible tenancies following the enactment of the Localism Act 2011 when the first tenancy strategies were issued. Registered providers are following suit. The main reason for this is the management of flexible tenancies is resource heavy and unless they are administered in accordance with the legislation, they cease to have the effect they were intended for. Barnet's new Tenancy Strategy reflects this.

Social Value

- 4.16 There are no social value implications; however, outcomes that are ultimately delivered through the new Housing Strategy and Homelessness and Rough Sleeping Strategy will take into account the delivery of social value through any procurement that is undertaken. It should be noted that the strategies themselves will additionally secure wider social, economic, and environmental benefits through delivery of its objectives.

5. Resource Implications (Finance and Value for Money, Procurement, Staffing, IT and Property)

- 5.1 There is limited supply of social housing in Barnet. In 2022/23 there were over 2,700 homeless applications and only 609 social housing properties available to let, of which 298 were council homes. There are significant costs associated with social housing generally, including managing the allocations service, managing the provision of council housing and providing services to those experiencing homelessness or the threat of homelessness. All of these are affected over time by the demand for housing.
- 5.2 The Housing Strategy aims to increase the supply of suitable affordable accommodation in Barnet for those in most housing need who cannot afford home ownership or high private sector rents, will support the council to work with partners to meet the housing and support needs of residents, and will promote the health and wellbeing of individuals and build sustainable, balanced, and cohesive communities.
- 5.3 The Homelessness and Rough Sleeping Strategy aims to increase the supply of suitable affordable accommodation in Barnet for those in most housing need who cannot afford home ownership or high private sector rents, will support the council to work with partners to meet the support needs of residents, and will deliver earlier interventions to prevent homelessness.
- 5.4 The Tenancy Strategy will provide council homes in Barnet for those in most housing need who cannot afford home ownership or high private sector rents, will support the council to work with social landlords to meet the housing and support needs of residents, and will promote the health and wellbeing of individuals and build sustainable, balanced, and cohesive communities.
- 5.5 The Housing Allocation Scheme is the means by which that demand is allocated to existing properties. The revised Housing Allocation Scheme will assist in managing those pressures and assist officers in making the best use of the resources available to them. The Housing Allocation Scheme is intended to ensure the available social housing is allocated fairly to those who are most in need. The Housing Allocation Scheme will support the council to work with social

landlords to meet the housing and support needs of residents, and will promote the health and wellbeing of individuals and build sustainable, balanced, and cohesive communities.

- 5.6 Following approval, the documents will be delivered within the existing budgetary frameworks within the Housing Revenue Account and the General Fund, and where applicable from the budgets of key service areas as appropriate including Adult Social Care, Family Services, and Public Health. As options for targeted service development and improvement are identified under the Housing Strategy and Homelessness and Rough Sleeping Strategy, these will be appraised and business cases will be managed to secure their delivery.
- 5.7 It should be noted that there is a shortfall in funding to address some of the challenges set out in the Housing Strategy and Homelessness and Rough Sleeping Strategy, including achieving national and local decarbonisation targets, increasing housing supply to meet all of the borough's demand, providing sufficient specialist housing to meet likely needs, and providing specialist support and accommodation for those who are homeless or at risk of homelessness, including those who are survivors of domestic violence. The strategies therefore acknowledge the need to apply for competitive funding to deliver a range of outcomes, and they emphasise the need for increased funding from Central Government, regarding which the council sets out that it will play a role in campaigning and lobbying for. This uncertainty of funding for some aspects of the strategies means that there is a chance that some of the aims will not be possible to deliver, either in full or partially, during the lifetime of this strategy; however, in the event that relevant funding cannot be secured, other options for achieving positive outcomes in line with the aims will be explored, including the potential for allocation of resource from existing budgets where possible. Barnet Council and Barnet Homes have a strong track record of successfully applying for funding where opportunities have arisen, and the council has no reason to anticipate that it would not achieve future success in the event of new funding streams becoming available.
- 5.8 The additional resource required to undertake the variations for existing flexible tenancies under the Tenancy Strategy will be met through existing resource in Barnet Homes.
- 5.9 The move to issuing secure period tenancies instead of flexible tenancies will remove the administrative burden associated with managing flexible tenancy reviews. This is presently undertaken by half a full-time equivalent post. Barnet Homes will use this post to initially deliver the tenancy migration exercise, and will then deploy the resource to further the aim of providing tenants with guaranteed security through ending fixed term tenancies by enabling officer time to be focused on tenancy management issues such as supplementing the resourcing available to provide an empathetic and effective anti-social behaviour service.
- 5.10 Alongside the review of the Tenancy Strategy, Barnet Homes is reviewing its Tenancy Management Policy; this sets out the principles and practices in place regarding a range of tenancy-related matters including sole and joint tenancies, tenancy fraud, introductory and demoted tenancies, ending a tenancy, right to appeal, changes to a tenancy, and succession.

6. Legal Implications and Constitution References

Housing Strategy

- 6.1 Section 29 of the Deregulation Act 2015 abolished the statutory requirement for English authorities to produce a housing strategy as previously required by section 87 of the Local Government Act 2003.

6.2 Where a Greater London authority has a local housing strategy, section 333D of the Greater London Authority Act 1999 provides that this should be in general conformity with the Mayor's London Housing Strategy.

Homelessness and Rough Sleeping Strategy

6.3 Section 1 of the Homelessness Act 2002 provides that a local housing authority in England may from time to time

- (a) carry out a homelessness review for their district; and
- (b) formulate and publish a homelessness strategy based on the results of that review.

The legislation also expects that the homelessness strategy will be renewed within five years of the last one being published.

6.4 The Homelessness Reduction Act 2017 significantly reformed England's homelessness legislation by placing duties on local authorities to intervene at earlier stages to prevent homelessness in their areas. It also requires housing authorities to provide homelessness services, in some form, to all those affected, not just those who have 'priority need'.

Tenancy Strategy

6.5 Section 150 of the Localism Act 2011 sets out that:

(1) A local housing authority in England must prepare and publish a strategy (a "tenancy strategy") setting out the matters to which the registered providers of social housing for its district are to have regard in formulating policies relating to—

- (a) the kinds of tenancies they grant,
- (b) the circumstances in which they will grant a tenancy of a particular kind,
- (c) where they grant tenancies for a term certain, the lengths of the terms, and
- (d) the circumstances in which they will grant a further tenancy on the coming to an end of an existing tenancy.

6.6 A housing authority must have regard to its tenancy strategy in exercising its housing management functions (section 150(3) of the Localism Act 2011). A local housing authority must keep its tenancy strategy under review and may modify or replace it from time to time (section 150 (5) of the Localism Act 2011).

6.7 Section 150(6) of the Localism Act states that if a local housing authority modifies its tenancy strategy, it must publish the modifications or the strategy as modified (as it considers appropriate).

6.8 Under Section 151 of the Localism Act 2011, before adopting a tenancy strategy, or making a modification to it reflecting a major change of policy, the authority must:

- (1)(a) send a copy of the draft strategy, or proposed modification, to every private registered provider of social housing for its district, and
- (b) give the private registered provider a reasonable opportunity to comment on those proposals.

6.9 Under Section 151 of the Localism Act 2011, when preparing or modifying its tenancy strategy, a local authority must have regard to:

- (3)(a) its current allocation scheme under section 166A of the Housing Act 1996,

- (b) its current homelessness strategy under section 1 of the Homelessness Act 2002, and
- (c) in the case of an authority that is a London borough council, the London housing strategy.

6.10 Under section 2.2 (Tenure) of the Tenancy Standard provided by the Regulator of Social Housing, registered providers of social housing are required to publish clear and accessible policies which outline their approach to tenancy management, including interventions to sustain tenancies and prevent unnecessary evictions, and tackling tenancy fraud, and set out:

- (a) The type of tenancies they will grant;
- (b) Where they grant tenancies for a fixed term, the length of those terms;
- (c) The circumstances in which they will grant tenancies of a particular type.
- (d) Any exceptional circumstances in which they will grant fixed term tenancies for a term of less than five years in general needs housing following any probationary period.
- (e) The circumstances in which they may or may not grant another tenancy on the expiry of the fixed term, in the same property or in a different property.
- (f) The way in which a tenant or prospective tenant may appeal against or complain about the length of fixed term tenancy offered and the type of tenancy offered, and against a decision not to grant another tenancy on the expiry of the fixed term.
- (g) Their policy on taking into account the needs of those households who are vulnerable by reason of age, disability or illness, and households with children, including through the provision of tenancies which provide a reasonable degree of stability.
- (h) The advice and assistance they will give to tenants on finding alternative accommodation in the event that they decide not to grant another tenancy.
- (i) Their policy on granting discretionary succession rights, taking account of the needs of vulnerable household members.

Housing Allocation Scheme

6.11 Part 6 of the Housing Act 1996 regulates the allocation of social housing by local housing authorities in England. A local housing authority must “comply with the provisions of [Part 6] in allocating housing accommodation” (Section 159 (1) of the Housing Act 1996); however, subject to this compliance, authorities otherwise may “allocate housing in such manner as they consider appropriate” (Section 159 (7) of the Housing Act 1996).

6.12 Section 166A (1) of the Housing Act 1996, as amended by the Localism Act 2011, provides that every local housing authority must “have a scheme (their “allocation scheme”) for determining priorities, and as to the procedure to be followed, in allocating housing accommodation.” For this purpose, “procedure” includes all aspects of the allocation process, including the persons or descriptions of persons by whom decisions are taken.

6.13 Section 166A (3) through (14) of the Housing Act 1996 requires the scheme to be framed so as to secure that reasonable preference is given to certain categories of person. Section 166A (5) and (6) list factors which the authority may take into account under the scheme. Section 166A (9) requires certain information to be available. Under section 166A (10) the Secretary of State may make regulations as to the principles to be reflected in a scheme. Section 166A (12) requires the authority in preparing or modifying their allocation scheme, have regard to —

- (a) their current homelessness strategy under section 1 of the Homelessness Act 2002

- (b) their current tenancy strategy under section 150 of the Localism Act 2011, and
- (c) in the case of an authority that is a London borough council, the London housing strategy.

Section 166 (14) requires the authority not to allocate housing except in accordance with their allocation scheme.

6.14 Section 166 (13) of the Housing Act 1996 sets out that:

“Before adopting an allocation scheme, or making an alteration to their scheme reflecting a major change of policy, a local housing authority in England must—

- (a) send a copy of the draft scheme or proposed alteration, to every private registered provider of social housing and registered social landlord with which they have nomination arrangements, and

- (b) afford those persons a reasonable opportunity to comment on the proposals.

6.15 Section 160ZA of the Housing Act 1996, as amended by the Localism Act 2011, specifies that social housing may only be allocated to ‘qualifying persons’ and in subsection (7) provides that subject to subsections (2) and (4) of Section 160ZA and any regulations under subsection (8), local housing authorities are given the power to decide what classes of persons are, or are not, qualified to be allocated housing.

6.16 Local housing authorities are obliged to have regard to the Government’s statutory guidance on social housing allocations, “Allocation of accommodation: guidance for local housing authorities in England”, when devising and implementing their allocation schemes, and to the Department of Levelling Up, Housing, and Communities’ Homelessness Code of Guidance for Local Authorities (February 2018). The Allocation of accommodation guidance was first published in June 2012, and updates are routinely made to it.

Council’s constitution

6.17 The council’s Constitution (Part 2D – Terms of reference and Delegation of Duties to the Cabinet) sets out the responsibilities of Cabinet which include:

- 3. Responsibility for the following functions:

- 3.3 Recommending major new policies (and amendments to existing policies) to the Council for approval as part of the Council’s Policy Framework and implementing those approved by Council;

- 3.4 Approving policies that are not part of the policy framework

- 4. All key decisions – namely:

- 4.2 an executive decision which is likely to be significant in terms of its effects on communities living or working in an area of two or more wards of the Borough

7. Consultation

7.1 Following the approval for public consultation by Housing and Growth Committee on 23 March 2023, formal public consultations began for eight weeks; the consultations on the Housing Strategy, Homelessness and Rough Sleeping Strategy, and Housing Allocation Scheme were extended to just over ten weeks. The consultations included online surveys and focus groups, in addition to targeted communications with key affected parties for some of the documents. Whilst focus groups were held with relatively small numbers of residents, these are a valuable

approach to genuine engagement that provides the opportunity for detailed discussion about aspirations and the aims of the documents that lends itself to more qualitative feedback.

7.2 The outcomes of the consultations indicated that there was strong support for the four documents. Summary reports on the consultation are contained in Appendices F-I.

8. Equalities and Diversity

8.1 Decision makers should have due regard to the public sector equality duty in making their decisions. The equalities duties are continuing duties they are not duties to secure a particular outcome. Consideration of the duties should precede the decision. It is important that Cabinet has regard to the statutory grounds in the light of all available material such as consultation responses. The statutory grounds of the public sector equality duty are found at section 149 of the Equality Act 2010 and are as follows:

8.2 A public authority must, in the exercise of its functions, have due regard to the need to:

- Eliminate discrimination, harassment, victimisation and any other conduct that is prohibited by or under this Act;
- Advance equality of opportunity between persons who share a relevant protected characteristic and persons who do not share it;
- Foster good relations between persons who share a relevant protected characteristic and persons who do not share it.

8.3 Having due regard to the need to advance equality of opportunity between persons who share a relevant protected characteristic and persons who do not share it involves having due regard, in particular, to the need to:

- Remove or minimise disadvantages suffered by persons who share a relevant protected characteristic that are connected to that characteristic;
- Take steps to meet the needs of persons who share a relevant protected characteristic that are different from the needs of persons who do not share it;
- Encourage persons who share a relevant protected characteristic to participate in public life or in any other activity in which participation by such persons is disproportionately low.

8.4 The steps involved in meeting the needs of disabled persons that are different from the needs of persons who are not disabled include, in particular, steps to take account of disabled persons' disabilities.

8.5 Having due regard to the need to foster good relations between persons who share a relevant protected characteristic and persons who do not share it involves having due regard, in particular, to the need to:

- Tackle prejudice, and
- Promote understanding.

8.6 Compliance with the duties in this section may involve treating some persons more favourably than others; but that is not to be taken as permitting conduct that would otherwise be prohibited by or under this Act. The relevant protected characteristics are:

- Age

- Disability
- Gender reassignment
- Pregnancy and maternity
- Race
- Religion or belief
- Sex
- Sexual orientation
- Marriage and civil partnership

- 8.7 Equality Impact Assessments have been undertaken after consultation to assess the potential impacts of the documents. The EIAs have indicated a potential positive impact on all groups due to the aims to increase access to affordable, quality housing across tenures, aims to prevent homelessness and provide support to those at risk of or affected by homelessness, proposed increased security of tenure, and increased choice to those applying for social housing. Summary EIAs are included for the Housing Strategy and the Homelessness and Rough Sleeping Strategy at Appendices J and K, and full EIAs are included for the Tenancy Strategy and Housing Allocation Scheme at Appendices L and M.
- 8.8 Further Equalities Impact Assessments may be undertaken as part of the planning or delivery of activities and projects that may arise from the implementation of the Housing Strategy and/or Homelessness and Rough Sleeping Strategy, as required, and adjustments or mitigations will be made as appropriate.

9. Background Papers

- 9.1 Housing and Growth Committee, 13 June 2022, Item 10, approved to instruct officers to explore the emerging housing allocation priorities of the new administration and, where considered appropriate, review and propose amendments to the Housing Allocation Scheme and Tenancy Strategy, and noted proposed timetable for the review of the Housing Strategy and Homelessness and Rough Sleeping Strategy: [Agenda for Housing and Growth Committee on Monday 13th June, 2022, 7.00 pm \(modern.gov.co.uk\)](#)

Housing Strategy

- 9.2 Housing and Growth Committee, 23 March 2023, Item 12, approved the draft Housing Strategy for consultation: [Agenda for Housing and Growth Committee on Thursday 23rd March, 2023, 7.00 pm \(modern.gov.co.uk\)](#)
- 9.3 Housing Committee, 1 April 2019, Item 8, approved Housing Strategy 2019-24: [Agenda for Housing Committee on Monday 1st April, 2019, 7.00 pm \(modern.gov.co.uk\)](#)

Homelessness and Rough Sleeping Strategy

- 9.4 Housing and Growth Committee, 23 March 2023, Item 13, approved the draft Homelessness and Rough Sleeping Strategy for consultation: [Agenda for Housing and Growth Committee on Thursday 23rd March, 2023, 7.00 pm \(modern.gov.co.uk\)](#)
- 9.5 Housing Committee, 1 April 2019, Item 9, approved the Homelessness and Rough Sleeping Strategy 2019-24: [Agenda for Housing Committee on Monday 1st April, 2019, 7.00 pm \(modern.gov.co.uk\)](#)

Tenancy Strategy

- 9.6 Housing and Growth Committee, 23 March 2023, Item 11, approved the draft Tenancy Strategy for consultation: [Agenda for Housing and Growth Committee on Thursday 23rd March, 2023, 7.00 pm \(moderngov.co.uk\)](#)
- 9.7 Housing Committee, 29 June 2015, Item 11, approved changes to the Local Tenancy Strategy: [Agenda for Housing Committee on Monday 29th June, 2015, 7.00 pm \(moderngov.co.uk\)](#)
- 9.8 Cabinet, 4 April 2012, Item 6, approved the new Local Tenancy Strategy: [Cabinet Briefing Note: \(moderngov.co.uk\)](#)

Housing Allocation Scheme

- 9.9 Housing and Growth Committee, 23 March 2023, Item 14, approved the draft Housing Allocation Scheme for consultation: [Agenda for Housing and Growth Committee on Thursday 23rd March, 2023, 7.00 pm \(moderngov.co.uk\)](#)

Housing Strategy | 2023 - 2028



a council that cares for people, our places, and the planet

Contents

Foreword from Councillor Ross Houston, Cabinet Member for Homes and Regeneration	
Introduction	
Tackling the housing crisis	
Our vision for housing in Barnet	
Principles for how we will work	
Priority 1: prevent homelessness and support rough sleepers off the streets	
Priority 2: deliver the right homes in the right places	
Priority 3: ensure safe, sustainable council housing	
Priority 4: raise quality and standards in the private rented sector	
Priority 5: support living well by promoting healthy homes and wellbeing	
Next steps	

DRAFT

Foreword

Barnet is a great place where people take pride in their area, neighbours support one another, and diverse communities flourish. However, along with the rest of London, Barnet is facing an unprecedented housing crisis.

Incomes have not kept pace with the rising cost of housing, home ownership is out of reach for many residents in the borough, and private sector rents continue to rise. The cost-of-living crisis means that many households are struggling now more than ever, especially following the COVID-19 pandemic which placed enormous pressure on resources. A key council priority is support vulnerable people and households.

We know the shortage of genuinely affordable housing is a concern for Barnet residents. We share those concerns and are committed to addressing this issue.

Over the next five years, our Housing Strategy will shape our response to the range of significant challenges we face. Our vision is for everyone to have a safe, secure, and affordable home where they and their families can thrive.

Housing was central to Labour's manifesto for the 2022 local elections, and we have pledged to put in place an ambitious programme to deliver 1,000 new, genuinely affordable council homes within Barnet. We will also invest in the homes we own to keep residents safe and tackle issues such as damp and mould. We are committed to championing the rights of the growing number of Barnet residents who rent their homes privately. We want to make sure that everyone living in the borough can access good quality housing that meets their needs.

Earlier in 2023 we shared our draft Housing Strategy for your input. Thank you to every one of you who responded to that consultation; your involvement has been vital in shaping our final strategy and helping us to make sure it focuses on the things that are important to Barnet residents.

We are committed to doing all we can to make a difference to the people of Barnet in tackling the housing crisis. We cannot achieve our goals alone, and we firmly believe that national problems need national solutions. We will call upon central Government to increase investment in new homes, to urgently invest in the decarbonisation of existing housing as well as construction of sustainable new housing, to reduce the inequalities faced by so many, and to support local authorities with the funding and resource necessary to ensure everyone has the opportunity to live well.

I am confident that with determination, innovation, creativity, and strong partnership working we can rise to meet the challenges we face and deliver an approach to housing that makes a real difference to our residents. As Cabinet Member for Homes and Regeneration, I am pleased to introduce the borough's new Housing Strategy 2023-28 and I am excited about the opportunity it brings.

Councillor Ross Houston
Cabinet Member for Homes and Regeneration

Introduction

Everyone deserves a place to live. A home is not only a source of shelter, but a safe place to live, relax, work, and develop roots within a community. It is a protected place for children to grow up, play, and learn. Our housing ambitions are not just related to homes and bricks and mortar; we are focused on building communities and creating neighbourhoods where people feel safe and want to be. Barnet's Housing Strategy sets out the strategic direction for housing activity in the borough.

We do not work alone in the provision of housing services within Barnet, and we recognise and celebrate the significant contributions and achievements of our key partner organisations, including The Barnet Group, private registered providers of social housing, public and third sector organisations, and private developers. These partner organisations will continue to play a key role in the delivery of this strategy and its success is dependent upon sustained strong collaborative working.

Barnet Council is committed to making the borough fairer and tackling inequality, and for people in the borough to start well, live well, and age well. Good housing contributes to good physical and mental health and is an important factor in people's overall wellbeing. Substandard or insecure housing is a significant cause of health inequalities and, working in partnership, we need to do all we can to fight inequalities between different groups and make Barnet a fairer, more equal place in which to live.

London's housing crisis is felt most keenly by those who have no home at all, and Barnet, like all councils, faces a great challenge to reduce the harms associated with this. We will deliver our aims to prevent homelessness, ensure a sufficient supply of accommodation, and provide support for people who are or have been homeless through our Homelessness and Rough Sleeping Strategy 2023-28, which is supported by this Housing Strategy.

The shortage of affordable housing creates significant challenges to reducing the number of households that are homeless. We know that some groups are disproportionately affected, and the shortage of suitable affordable housing most significantly affects those in need of larger family-sized homes and those who need a wheelchair-accessible home. At the time of writing this strategy, the cost-of-living crisis affects all residents in Barnet, in particular those households on low incomes with higher-than-average energy bills, and the ongoing housing crisis deepens its impact.

Barnet's population is growing, and particularly the proportion of residents who are older. We have a duty to help residents to remain independent within their own homes for as long as they wish to stay there. We also aspire to making sure Barnet is a place where people who have grown up here want and are able to stay and make their own lives, as well as welcoming new people to join our communities.

The legislative and regulatory landscape for housing has changed in recent years and will continue to evolve during the life of this strategy. The safety of the residents living in the council's housing stock is one of our highest priorities, and we will continue to invest in the building and fire safety of the homes we own. We will also be responsive to tackling issues such as damp and mould, whether this is in our own housing stock or through working with registered providers of social housing and private sector landlords in the borough to ensure all residents in Barnet live in a healthy home. During this period of unprecedented challenge and change, it is essential that our approach to delivering this strategy remains flexible and responsive, and that we continue to listen to and engage our residents.

In setting a vision for housing, we need to make sure it supports the broader aims for the borough as set out in Our Plan for Barnet 2023-2026. A programme of transformation is underway to deliver our commitment to be a council that cares for people, our places, and the planet. Our strategy for housing must support the collective aims and help achieve our goals in all areas. This Housing Strategy plays a key role in achieving the ambitions within Our Plan for Barnet 2023-2026 to care for people by tackling inequalities, being family friendly, and living well, to care for our places by delivering quality, affordable homes, and to care for the planet by supporting our journey to net zero. It will also support us to deliver our community participation aims by empowering our communities, working in partnership on things they care about, and involving our residents in having a say and shaping the things we do and how we do them.

Tackling the housing crisis

There is not currently enough suitable housing in Barnet for everyone to have a safe, secure, and affordable home. We want Barnet's people and communities to thrive, and to achieve this we need to work with our partners to deliver solutions to a range of housing problems.

Barnet is the second most populated borough in London, with over 389,300 residents. The population is expected to grow to over 451,000 by 2041, placing further pressure on housing within the borough. Since 2011, the borough's population has grown by 9.2%, with an 18.3% increase in those aged over 65. The total increase was greater than that for the overall population of London (7.7%) and the overall population of England (6.6%).

Incomes in Barnet are relatively high compared to the rest of London; however, there is a wide gap between those with the highest incomes and those who live in poverty. The median income decreased between 2017 and 2021, indicating a squeeze on standards of living that is likely to be worsened by the ongoing cost-of-living crisis.

It is expensive, and becoming increasingly more expensive, to buy or privately rent a home in Barnet, with average house prices in October 2021 fifteen times the average income, and average rent prices higher than that of Outer London. Renting privately is less affordable than before, and private rents have more than doubled since 2011 from an average of £1,202 to £2,810 in 2019. As house prices have increased, the proportion of Barnet households relying on the private rented sector has more than doubled in the last 20 years, and now accounts for a third of the homes in the borough.

There is not enough social housing to meet the demand within Barnet. As of January 2023, there were over 3,000 households on the housing needs register waiting for permanent homes, and of these just over 1,800 households were homeless and living in suitable long-term temporary accommodation. A 'banding' system is used in the Housing Allocations Scheme, with Band 1 representing the highest priority households and Band 4 the lowest priority; priority is determined by individual needs and circumstances as set out in the scheme. Whilst the number of households on the housing needs register decreased slightly between April 2022 and December 2022, this was largely driven by a reduction in the number of households in Band 4 and in Band 4 in long-term temporary accommodation; there was an increase in the number of households in Bands 1, 2, and 3.

If Barnet were to not build or procure any additional social housing properties, based on the number of re-lets of social housing homes in Quarters 1 and 2 of 2022/23 it would take 6.5 years to provide a permanent social housing home to all those currently on the Housing Needs Register who need a studio or 1-bedroom home, 7.2 years to those who need a 2-bedroom home, 16.2 years to those who need a 3-bedroom home, and 32.7 years to those who need at least a 4-bedroom home. This

does not take into account the particular difficulties of securing suitable accommodation for those who require a wheelchair-adapted property, which are in very small supply.

Time (in years) it would take to provide social housing to all residents on the Housing Needs Register if the supply of social housing is not increased

	Studio & 1-bed	2-bed	3-bed	4+ bed
Projected social housing re-lets 2022/23	184	116	48	8
Households in bands 1-4 (excluding long-term temporary accommodation)	528	213	336	149
Time to re-house (years)	2.9	1.8	7.0	18.7
Households in bands 1-4 (including long-term temporary accommodation)	1,195	840	779	261
Time to re-house (years)	6.5	7.2	16.2	32.7

The council’s social housing stock is managed by its arms-length management organisation, Barnet Homes, which is part of the council’s local authority trading company, The Barnet Group. Homelessness remains high in Barnet, although in September 2022 Barnet Homes had successfully reduced the number of households living in temporary accommodation to the lowest it has been in a decade. This was a considerable achievement at a time when the number of households living in temporary accommodation across London increased by around 70%. However, with challenges in the available supply of not just social housing but also suitable and affordable private sector housing and homes for private ownership, even though we have improved how we support people earlier on we face a significant challenge to continue delivering these positive outcomes for households in crisis.

Our vision for housing in Barnet

Our vision is that everyone has a safe, secure, affordable home where they can thrive. Our approach is focused on five themes that shape the key priorities and actions that will help us to achieve this vision.

In developing this strategy, we have reviewed housing needs and supply, performance, and the resources available to the council and its partners. We have also taken into account the Mayor’s London Housing Strategy. This Housing Strategy supports an overarching transformation programme across the council, and will support and is supported by other council strategies including Homelessness and Rough Sleeping, the Barnet Plan, the Tenancy Strategy, the Sustainability Strategy, the Growth Strategy, the Children and Young People’s Plan, the Adult Social Care Reform Plan, and the Right Home commissioning plan.



As well as making sure our own approach and actions drive us towards our vision, we must call on central government to help us address Barnet’s housing needs. In all that we do we are committed to providing a strong lobbying voice to help inform the Government on the changes that are needed to provide better, more affordable homes, improve the quality and condition of existing homes,

improve building and fire safety, improve the sustainability of housing, and increase flexibility around borrowing and the management of grant funding. We will do this individually and as part of regional groups through responses to consultations, calls for evidence, and commissioned pieces of work.

Further information about the context in which we are working can be found in our supporting evidence base.

Principles for how we will work

Meeting diverse needs and challenging inequalities

We want Barnet's people and communities to prosper, and for the borough's young people to have the best start in life and the right support when they need it. A safe, secure home can help to provide this and ensure they can achieve their potential.

Equality is at the foundation of all that we do. We aspire for Barnet to be a borough where all communities are treated equally and with understanding and respect, and we will work to empower residents to look after their own homes and be active in their community. We will proactively tackle inequalities by actively listening to and considering different perspectives and needs when designing our services. We recognise that everyone's experience is not the same, and that it is easier for some to access services and take advantage of opportunities, and we will work to improve how we care for people according to their individual needs and circumstances.

We know there is more we can do to fight inequality, so that residents have access to quality services and the right support at the right time and based on their needs, and to ensure that no one is held back. We are committed to fighting these inequalities by working together with local communities and our partners to break the barriers for access to a good life. Wherever we find that people have experienced inequality or disproportionate impact due to their background or identity we will tackle this.

Sustainability

In May 2022, we declared a climate and biodiversity emergency in Barnet. Housing is the cornerstone of our commitment to sustainability, and a key part of our work to future-proof our borough, safeguard our environment, and enrich and protect our green spaces and biodiversity for future generations to come. Sustainability is at the heart of what we will do in delivering this Housing Strategy to take action to tackle the pressing environmental challenges affecting our borough and go further and faster than ever before to make Barnet a more socially, economically, and environmentally sustainable borough.

Working in partnership with residents

We want to be a council that listens. We aim to enable and empower our residents, communities, and partners, and to work together for a better Barnet. We are committed to providing excellent resident experiences in all that we do, and to removing barriers and improving access, as well as acting on residents' concerns and involving them in decision-making. We know that residents of all ages and backgrounds and community groups have the experience, skills, and insight to improve their lives and environment, and that we will get better solutions for problems residents and communities face by designing them in partnership with those communities.

In all that we do, we care, and we want Barnet's residents to have access to the right support at the right time to enable people and communities to prosper. As part of this, in delivering this strategy we are committed to community-led regeneration, co-design of local services, and working in partnership on the things residents care about.

Priority 1: Prevent homelessness and support rough sleepers off the streets.

We will deliver this priority through our Homelessness and Rough Sleeping Strategy 2023-28, which has the following aims:

Prevent homelessness by focusing on identifying those who are most at risk, tackling the root causes of homelessness, working in partnership to ensure early intervention and 'upstreaming' this where possible, preventing recurring homelessness, and improving awareness, advice, and information.

Ensure a sufficient supply of accommodation by focusing on accessing social housing and the private rented sector, making effective use of the council's housing assets, continuing to try to reduce the use of temporary accommodation, bringing empty properties back into use, and looking to address specialist needs including supported housing, domestic abuse, and accessible properties.

Provide support for people who are or have been homeless by focusing on working in partnership provide support, particularly to single people at particular risk, rough sleepers, families, victims of domestic abuse, and households in temporary accommodation. This includes housing-related support and personal support including with domestic abuse, mental health problems, drug and alcohol addiction, poverty, debt, and unemployment.



Priority 2: Deliver the right homes in the right places.

Barnet has a rising and ageing population, high house prices and private rent levels, and a lack of genuinely affordable housing to meet need, with growing challenges in the supply of accommodation. Barnet's Local Plan sets the policy framework and targets for new homes, and this Housing Strategy focuses on how we will deliver new, genuinely affordable homes in the right places to meet diverse needs. The delivery of this priority will help us to achieve the aim of our Homelessness and Rough Sleeping Strategy to ensure a sufficient supply of accommodation, and our sustainability and net zero goals under our Sustainability Strategy.

Our plans for growth set out that good quality housing that is attractive to all generations and is supported by the right infrastructure such as schools, community and health facilities, open spaces, and access to transport and employment opportunities is key to creating healthy, resilient, and cohesive communities. Delivering new housing in areas with good public transport connections; with the focus on town centres and major road corridors will be key to this.

There is a need for a range of affordable housing within the borough, including adaptable and supported housing for people with care, support, and accessibility needs, and general needs homes to rent and buy. The demand for social housing in Barnet far exceeds the available supply of affordable housing, so there is also a need to ensure appropriate temporary accommodation is provided for households in crisis to alleviate and prevent homelessness.

From 2018 to February 2023, 1,461 affordable homes for rent have been developed within the borough.

Delivery of affordable homes in Barnet from 2018 to February 2023

Provider Type	Number of Homes	Rent Level
Barnet Council (Barnet Homes)	53	Affordable Rent
Opendoor Homes	295	Affordable Rent
Opendoor Homes	15	London Affordable Rent
Other Housing Associations	404	Affordable Rent
Other Housing Associations	146	Social Rent
Other Housing Associations	57	London Affordable Rent
Total Rented	970	
Opendoor Homes	6	Shared Ownership
Other Housing Associations	485	Shared Ownership
Total Affordable Home Ownership	491	

Homes to be delivered in Barnet on regeneration sites (affordable and total)

Regeneration sites (affordable housing)	2023	2024	2025	2026	2027	2028	2029	2030	2031	Total
Dollis Valley	4	89	7							100
Granville Road		46								46
West Hendon	78	72	34	96						280
Grahame Park		209			403	225	72		366	1,257
Total	82	416	105	160	505	225	72		566	1,701

Regeneration sites (all tenure)	2023	2024	2025	2026	2027	2028	2029	2030	2031	Total
Dollis Valley	4	89	71	64						228
Housing type: Market			64	64						128
Housing type: S/O			7							7
Housing type: A/R	4	89								93
Granville Road		132								132
Housing type: Market		86								86
Housing type: S/O		46								46
West Hendon	324	161	115	116						716
Housing type: Market	246	89	81	20						436
Housing type: SO/SE	78	72	34	96						280
Grahame Park		209			150	354	72	106	166	1,057
Housing type: Social/LAR		149							88	237
Housing type: A/R					253				200	453
Housing type: S/O		60				225	72		78	435
Housing type: Market					402	129		106	200	837
Total	328	591	186	180	150	354	72	106	166	2,133

The regeneration of Dollis Valley, Grahame Park, and West Hendon is improving the quality of homes and public realm and creating places for residents that integrate better with surrounding areas. These schemes will continue to be delivered, with over 3,000 homes still to complete.

The loss of existing social housing also impacts upon the available supply of affordable housing, with fewer council homes replaced than sold each year. The number of council homes sold under the Government’s Right to Buy increased each year from 2017 to 2019. Although the number reduced as a result of the COVID-19 pandemic, 69 council homes were sold in 2022, a significant increase compared to previous years.

At the same time as refreshing Barnet’s Housing Strategy we are reviewing the Housing Allocation Scheme and Tenancy Strategy. Through these we will make sure council tenants have lifetime tenancies that give them the security and confidence to put down roots and feel a part of their community, make sure regeneration benefits existing residents first and foremost through a new local lettings policy, and offer those in housing need more choice about where they live by increasing the number of offers of housing we will make from one to two.

Our ambitions

We will continue to progress and develop plans for the delivery of new homes on council land, with an aim of delivering 1,000 new council homes to be let at 50% or less of the average market rent.

We will ensure new homes meet the diverse needs of Barnet's residents by increasing the provision of supported and wheelchair accessible housing to meet demand, particularly for those with mobility needs. At least 10% of new council homes will meet higher standards of wheelchair accessibility, and we will seek to be more targeted in accessible properties' bedroom size and the flexibility of the accommodation.

We will work in partnership to continue to seek other opportunities to deliver new homes across tenures, including through our delivery partner Opendoor Homes, such as acquiring homes on the open market for rent as social housing, or exploring other, innovative solutions to deliver the different types of homes that are needed for social housing and home ownership.

We will ensure all new homes are designed to a high-quality standard with a strong emphasis on sustainability.

How we will deliver

Delivering new, genuinely affordable homes

Delivering more quality, affordable homes in the borough is a priority for the council that will help us continue to prioritise caring for people, our places, and the planet. We will use the framework of Barnet's new Local Plan to ensure the right mix of homes is built, and to maximise the supply of affordable homes. To deliver the right homes in the right places, we need to ensure we understand the tenures being delivered across all development within the borough. This includes having a clearer view of the type and size of homes that are needed and are being delivered, and the council seeking to influence the supply from registered providers and private developers against the levels of housing need. We will undertake a mapping exercise to further this work and will seek to learn from good practice from other London boroughs. We will also work in partnership to ensure a strong understanding of the low-cost home ownership and other rent products that are available, such as Build to Rent and Shared Living Accommodation, and we will look to take an innovative approach to delivering a range of housing to meet the diverse needs of the borough.

We must be open to delivering homes in new and innovative ways that help us ensure every avenue to address Barnet's housing issues is being explored, and as part of this we will investigate examples of good practice and innovative housing models that could be adopted in Barnet through the provisions of our Local Plan and could provide suitable housing of all tenures for people with a range of needs and tenure requirements, including affordable housing. We will also take into account specific needs such as student accommodation as required. At the time of developing this strategy, housing products that could be considered innovative include modular housing, intergenerational housing, community or self-build, and discounted and intermediate housing including First Homes. We recognise that this landscape is constantly evolving and that not all innovative approaches will be right for the borough, and we therefore need to be flexible in our approach to deciding which housing products should be explored. We will regularly review and publish position statements on levels of housing need to give guidance to developers and establish the potential housing types that may be explored.

We will also review whether there is a basis for exploring further Community Infrastructure Levy relief through a Discretionary Social Housing Policy to stimulate and incentivise new discounted affordable housing products that provide homes at 80% of market value in perpetuity.

We have committed to delivering 1,000 new council homes to be let at 50% or less of the average market rent. As part of the 'Barnet family', Opendoor Homes (a charitable private registered provider of social housing that is a subsidiary of Barnet Homes), will support us to reach our target. We recognise that the current environment is challenging for delivering new homes, with the viability and deliverability of schemes being compromised by increasing build costs and rising inflation, as well as increasing pressures on the Housing Revenue Account to deliver this ambition. To achieve our commitment, we will look to:

- secure additional grant, where possible, to change the rents on homes being delivered from Barnet Affordable Rents to London Affordable Rents or social rents;
- explore entrepreneurial cost-mitigating solutions, including delivering through partnerships or joint ventures with contractors, developers, or Private Registered Providers within the borough; and
- commission external consultants to ensure all potential funding and delivery routes have been explored and understand best practice examples across London.

When delivering new homes, we want to create thriving, cohesive, successful communities. It is important that diverse communities are supported through the provision of a range of homes, and on larger schemes we will explore the potential to deliver mixed tenure, including providing opportunities to help people into home ownership through shared ownership and other affordable home ownership schemes. We will also continue to review our land and asset optimisation to ensure we are making the most effective use of the council's land.

The supply of affordable accommodation from the private rented sector is contracting, and we are aware that a potentially increasing number of private landlords may be looking to leave the market due to challenges including rising mortgage rates, rising quality standards and costs associated with these, the cost-of-living crisis and welfare reform affecting tenants' ability to pay their rent, and high retrofitting costs to meet net zero targets. Whilst we will continue to review the incentives we offer to landlords to help secure accommodation for those who are most in need, we will also monitor the market and may take opportunities to acquire properties for use as temporary accommodation where we are able to identify a clear plan and funding for any works needed to bring them up to the required standards.

Delivering high quality, affordable homes in Barnet

The council's local authority trading company, The Barnet Group, is committed to providing good quality, contemporary new homes across the borough. These include homes for social rent, Affordable Rent, and shared ownership, as well as extra care schemes.

Barnet Homes

In addition to having 236 general needs homes on site at the time of writing this strategy, Barnet Homes is dedicated to supporting Barnet residents with extra care needs. Opened in 2019, Ansell Court in Mill Hill is the borough's first publicly owned extra care scheme and provides dedicated support for residents in 53 individual homes. A second extra care scheme on the former Stag House site in Burnt Oak (pictured right) is due to open in summer 2023, and a third scheme is under construction on the Fosters Estate in Hendon.



Opendoor Homes

Through its charitable Private Registered Provider Opendoor Homes, The Barnet Group is building homes for affordable rent on underused sites such as disused garages. Completed in summer 2021, Gracie House in East Finchley represents the biggest single construction of social housing in Barnet in a generation. The 50 new homes provide modern and affordable living for its residents.



Schemes like Burgundy Court (pictured left) in Finchley (14 homes) and Pyrus Court (pictured below) in East Finchley (ten homes) have been built with eye-catching contemporary design, which remains faithful to the architecture of the surrounding areas, and contribute to a programme which will deliver 320 new homes in total.

The Artisan in Cricklewood is a boutique development of 31 new homes, of which six will be for shared ownership, and will be the first scheme to contribute to the council's target of 1,000 new homes for social rent.



Development that empowers communities

We don't want to just deliver new homes in Barnet; we also want to make sure we are building communities where people can thrive. It is essential that our new homes are supported by the right infrastructure, including good transport connections, access to jobs, green spaces, local businesses, schools, community and health facilities, and state-of-the-art digital infrastructure, and this will form an important part of our planning processes and growth and regeneration strategies.

We know that building can be disruptive for local residents, so we will consult and engage with them throughout the process, working in partnership to co-design our new developments, whilst being realistic about what disruption there may be and how we will seek to mitigate against any intrusion.

We want to ensure any regeneration of estates within the borough is focused on building social cohesion, improving environmental conditions, and improving housing. In delivering these schemes a co-design approach will ensure communities are involved from the outset in helping to shape design proposals, and residents have the opportunity to contribute their ideas and detail their aspirations. We will work with our design teams to ensure we use plain language, and that a range of ways are provided for residents to engage in the design process, including making sure residents can see how their feedback has been considered and how this has been incorporated into proposals. Barnet's communities are diverse, and to ensure we communicate with all the groups that may have an interest in these schemes, including the young and those who may not have English as their first language, we will use a multi-media approach aimed at meeting a variety of needs, and we will hold events to celebrate existing communities and shaping their futures.

Understanding and better meeting housing needs

A big factor in keeping people well and promoting independence is living in a home that works for them. Partnership working across the council and its partners is essential to making sure we are better able to meet the diverse needs of housing applicants within the borough, and we aim to increase the number of homes that meet residents' care and support needs. We also know that to provide family friendly housing, we need to work to increase the supply of affordable larger, family-sized homes.

There is presently higher demand for wheelchair-accessible social housing homes than are available. As of February 2023, there were 46 households on the Housing Needs Register that were in need of a wheelchair-accessible home, with the greatest need within direct offers or Band 1 (the highest priority group) (70%, or 32 households), and the highest level of need being for a 3-bedroom property (41%, or 19 households). The households currently on the Housing Needs Register have waited for an average of 1.6 years for an offer of suitable accommodation. In 2020/21 eight wheelchair-accessible adaptations were completed, and two were completed in 2021/22.

We will support Barnet Homes and our housing delivery partner Opendoor Homes to ensure at least 10% of new homes meet higher standards of wheelchair accessibility. At the time of writing this strategy, Opendoor Homes has plans to deliver 34 wheelchair accessible homes, and Greater London Authority-funded new build schemes for the council, delivered by Barnet Homes, include the development of 11 wheelchair accessible homes including larger wheelchair accessible homes which are in demand. Opendoor Homes will also continue to explore options for adapting homes through its acquisitions programme, with 5 homes presently being adapted. To ensure the continued supply of wheelchair accessible and adaptable homes, we will ensure planning for provision is incorporated in the design stage of Barnet Homes and Opendoor Homes new build plans, as well as in the business case for acquiring new properties. Housing and Adult Social Care will also work in partnership to ensure the demand for accessible homes is well-understood, and to make the case for land and funding decisions to help meet housing needs.

At the time of writing this strategy, the council requires all new homes in the borough to be accessible and adaptable, complying with M4 (2) of the Building Regulations 2015. We also require 10% of new homes to meet M4 (3) of the Building Regulations 2015 standards for wheelchair user dwellings, however we recognise that this requirement is not exclusive to affordable homes, and that many M4 (3) homes are sold on the open market. We will work with partners to explore ways to increase the supply of wheelchair user homes for use as affordable housing, and to develop to the enhanced M4 (3) standard, such as including automated doors, to ensure presently unmet need within the borough is addressed.

There is a range of needs within Barnet that are challenging to meet with limited supply of affordable housing, including for young people leaving care, people with care and support needs, and people with health needs. There are no easy solutions to these challenges, and our services will need to work in partnership and cooperate to understand pressing levels of need and determine a fair and equitable approach to providing specialised affordable accommodation. To help facilitate targeted programmes, we will apply for additional grant where available from the Greater London Authority or Central Government to help meet specialist housing needs within the borough.

Barnet Homes will continue to work closely with Children's and Family Services to develop innovative solutions to increase the supply of suitable accommodation for young people leaving care, including exploring a range of options to increase affordability and maximise the likelihood of positive tenancy sustainment such as shared accommodation where this is suitable.

Barnet Homes will also work closely with Adult Social Care to ensure specialised housing needs are understood and delivered within the programme of increasing the supply of affordable accommodation. We will look to set up a multi-service working group aimed at reviewing existing supply and housing stock and levels of need, to explore in partnership what we need more of and how we can increase the supply of supported housing for older and disabled residents across all tenures including in the private rented sector and home ownership. Adult Social Care's The Right Home commissioning plan will set out the council's commissioning intentions for accommodation and support services for adults with additional needs, including those who are aged over 65+ with dementia and learning disabilities, and those aged 18-64 with learning disabilities and autism, physical disabilities and sensory impairment, and/or mental health needs.

We recognise that many households that have support needs and/or require aids and adaptations to ensure their accommodation is suitable for their needs live in the private rented sector or are homeowners. Our Adult Social Care The Right Home commissioning plan will set out our vision for and approach to increasing the range of accommodation and support services commissioned in the borough to better meet needs. Through the Adult Social Care Physical and Sensory Disability Strategy we will work with disabled people to co-produce design guidance for accessible housing.

We are committed to continuing to be responsive to the needs of and supporting and empowering refugees and asylum seekers within the borough. In January 2023, Barnet made a public commitment to work towards becoming a Borough of Sanctuary. This means that we will work with our statutory partners, the voluntary and community sector, and faith groups to make sure that those feeling displacement and persecution are welcomed and able to integrate well into and thrive in Barnet. A key challenge for us in this area is securing suitable housing, particularly for very large families. We will work with our partners including the private rented sector to meet the housing needs of refugees, and we will look to secure available funding from Central Government to support this work.

We will work in partnership to improve our understanding of the needs of the Gypsy, Roma, and Irish Traveller community within Barnet, including identifying any need for provision of culturally

appropriate accommodation or to seek funding for new sites so that we can take steps to meet this through our approach to planning.

Tackling over- and under-occupation

Where households have more bedrooms than they need, we will support our tenants to ‘downsize’ to more suitable properties so that we can use our existing housing stock more efficiently and provide family homes to those who are in need. We have achieved some success to date in our ‘Fresh Start’ scheme, with 144 households supported to downsize to smaller properties, freeing them up for households on the Housing Needs Register that needed a larger property. We will review the incentives and support we offer and monitor the success of our scheme to ensure we are able to maximise its success, with the aim of particularly encouraging trade-downs from 3-bedroom to 1-bedroom properties, and 4-bedroom to 2-bedroom properties.

Number of homes freed up under the ‘Fresh Start’ scheme

Year	2-bedrooms	3-bedrooms	4-bedrooms	5-bedrooms
2019/20	30	23	4	
2020/21	17	11	1	1
2021/22	15	15	2	
2022/23			36	

Buying back homes sold through the Right to Buy

Whilst the Right to Buy scheme, which is governed by the Housing Act 1985, gives social housing tenants the opportunity to purchase their home at a discount, it has contributed to a major decline in the number of social housing properties across the country. It is becoming increasingly challenging for Barnet Homes, on the behalf of the council, to purchase homes on the open market due to the constraints of the Housing Revenue Account and high interest rates; however, we will seek to put in place a viable and sustainable scheme to, wherever possible, buy back former council homes that have been sold under the right to buy, to help increase the supply of social housing within the borough. Where grant is available to support this, we will seek funding. Barnet Homes presently has plans to purchase 60 homes with support from funding by the Greater London Authority.

Bringing empty homes back into use

Homes being left unoccupied can have a detrimental impact on the local community, and reduces the available accommodation in Barnet at a time when homes are very much in need. There are currently over 2,000 long-term empty homes (for six months or more) in the borough, and over 2,000 properties registered as second homes. Our experience shows that these can sometimes be incorrectly registered empty properties. Since 2019, through advice, enforcement, and grants, the council has worked with owners to bring 525 empty homes back into residential use.

Barnet’s Empty Property Grant scheme is intended to support homeowners within the borough to bring empty properties back into use to be occupied by people in housing need, to provide a source of income to those going into care and assist people to return home from care. The scheme is presently underused, and we will explore ways to make it more attractive. In recognition of rising build costs, we will review the level of grant that can be made available, taking into consideration how empty homes within the borough could potentially be used to help meet the unmet need for adapted properties. We will continue to take the appropriate enforcement action including Compulsory Purchase or Empty Dwelling Management Orders where appropriate to ensure that properties do not remain empty for long periods of time. Our Enforcement team will also work closely with the Council Tax department to ensure data on empty properties is accurately recorded.

Tackling housing fraud

We will continue to work to increase housing fraud detection rates to ensure the best possible use is made of the limited social housing within the borough. Our Corporate Anti-Fraud Team will

implement robust counter-fraud measures to identify all fraudulent activity with the aim of safeguarding the council's housing stock.

Ensuring high-quality, sustainable development

It is essential that we ensure all new builds are designed to a high-quality standard with a strong emphasis on sustainability that takes into consideration residents' needs by delivering energy-efficient solutions. Our Local Plan sets out how we will ensure all new homes in Barnet will be constructed to zero-carbon standards, as well as how we require good design of new homes. We will ensure that emerging development standards, such as the Future Homes Standard which will require CO2 emissions produced by new homes to be 75-80% lower than those built to current standards from 2025, are incorporated into our requirements and form the basis of our own development standards where we are building new homes.

We will drive high standards for the design of new homes through Barnet Homes' and Opendoor Homes' new build schemes, which follow the higher sustainability standard of the Mayor's design guide to meet grant requirements.

We want to help enable development across the borough to meet stretching sustainability standards as part of our approach to achieving net zero. We will regularly engage with private developers and our regeneration partners to understand where they could do more without the viability of schemes being detrimentally affected, and to enable the sharing of good practice to help raise standards and quality within Barnet.

We will comply with the Home Energy Conservation Act 1995's requirement for all local authorities in England to submit reports to the Secretary of State demonstrating what energy conservation measures they have adopted to improve the energy efficiency of residential accommodation within their area.

Brent Cross Town – a net zero carbon town by 2030

The Brent Cross Cricklewood programme is the biggest redevelopment and growth programme Barnet Council has ever undertaken. It is one of the Mayor of London’s key growth projects and amongst the most ambitious across Europe.

The currently underused industrial land will transform into a vibrant new town called Brent Cross Town, which is an £8bn development that is being delivered in partnership by Barnet Council and Related Argent at the heart of the Brent Cross Cricklewood regeneration scheme. Brent Cross Town will provide up to 6,700 new homes including affordable, private sale, and private rental homes, 3 million square feet of new offices generating up to 27,000 jobs, as well as improved schools, new parks, and community facilities. The scheme is also partnering with Sheffield Hallam University, which is scheduled to open a campus in Brent Cross Town in 2025/26 with an aim of reaching a target of up to 5,000 students by 20230, giving people a greater choice of local higher education.

Major road and public transport improvements are also included in the redevelopment programme, as well as new cycling, walking, and bus routes. A new station on the Thameslink line, Brent Cross West, is expected to open in Autumn 2023 and will be the first major new mainline station in London in over a decade. The new station, which is part of the redevelopment programme, will improve local connections to central London and beyond, connecting passengers to King’s Cross in just 12 minutes.



We have committed to the Brent Cross Town development being a net zero carbon town by 2030. The development includes an on-site energy centre and one of the largest air source heat pump installations in Europe, which will provide low-carbon heating and cooling to homes and offices in the new town. The planned 6,700 new homes will be built with low-carbon construction. They will have low carbon heating and all landlord supplied energy will come from renewable sources.

Priority 3: Ensure safe, sustainable council housing.

We are a landlord to over 9,000 Barnet households and the freeholder to a further approximately 3,500 leasehold properties. These homes are managed on the council's behalf by Barnet Homes, which provides all property- and tenancy-management services.

Nationally there has been a heightened focus on fire safety since the Grenfell Tower tragedy in 2017. A range of new regulatory and legislative requirements have been introduced over the past two years, including the Fire Safety Act 2021 and Building Safety Act 2022, both of which introduce reforms to give residents more rights, powers, and protections to ensure homes are safer.

We have made significant investment in our stock to achieve the Decent Homes Standard, which is the Government's minimum standard for the quality and state of repair of a home. Based on recent stock condition survey data of 80% of the retained housing stock, as of January 2023, 99% of the council's stock met the Decent Homes Standard.

There is no more government funding for stock investment, so budget pressures mean we have to prioritise how we use our limited resources in the most effective and efficient way. The safety of those living in our homes is one of our highest priorities, and we are committed to ensuring high standards of safety and quality in our existing council homes, and to investing in and improving our council housing stock for current and future residents.

We are also committed to ensuring our new and existing housing stock is sustainable by reducing its carbon footprint and increasing its energy efficiency, and we recognise that measures to retrofit properties may have a positive impact upon our tenants in light of the ongoing cost-of-living crisis. In May 2022, Barnet Council declared a climate emergency. Building emissions account for roughly 60% of the borough's carbon emissions, and we know that bringing our housing stock up to the highest sustainability standards and ensuring new homes are designed to a high quality with a strong emphasis on sustainability will make a significant contribution to achieving our net zero carbon commitments.

Our ambitions

We will continue to invest in fire and building safety to keep council residents safe in their homes.

We will ensure and improve the quality of council housing in Barnet.

We will tackle the climate emergency through increasing the energy efficiency of our existing homes and working to achieve the council's zero carbon targets.

How we will deliver

Ensuring the safety of Barnet's housing blocks

We are committed to keeping our residents safe, adhering to safety regulations including the Fire Safety Act 2021 and Building Safety Act 2022, and investing in and improving our council stock for current and future residents. Barnet Homes' Asset Management Strategy sets out how the council's housing assets will be used in the best way possible, ensuring the safety of our homes, blocks, and estates.

Meeting enhanced safety standards increases the challenge of providing services on a tight budget; however, we have made considerable investment in building and fire safety over the past six years, with strengthened structures and resources to meet the new regulatory and legislative obligations.

Through our £52m fire safety delivery programme Barnet Homes has delivered a range of safety works including cladding removal and recladding, category 1 high priority works and additional fire safety works to high rise buildings, installation of sprinkler systems, works to low and medium rise blocks, and the replacement of composite fire doors.

We will continue to work with the Government and the London Fire Brigade to ensure the safety of our homes, and to invest in our buildings to keep our residents safe, ensuring we comply with the regulatory framework for fire and building safety. As a fundamental part of our approach, we will ensure the resident voice is heard and is at the heart of our decision-making.

Providing high quality council homes

We know the standard of our repairs and maintenance service has the biggest effect on residents' quality of life, and that residents are concerned about the safety and condition of their homes. Whilst Barnet Homes' rolling stock condition surveys provide confidence that our homes meet the Decent Homes Standard, we must continue to invest in the condition of our homes to ensure minimum standards are met and wherever possible exceeded. The Government is currently reviewing the Decent Homes Standard, and we will ensure adequate resources and investment are prioritised so we can be responsive to any new requirements once the revised standard has been published.

Living with damp and mould can have a serious impact on tenants' health and wellbeing. Most of our tenants live in homes that are largely free from damp and mould; however, we know it is a problem for many households. Through our stock condition surveys we have a good understanding of the condition of our properties, which enables Barnet Homes to identify and address these issues promptly and effectively. We take damp and mould very seriously, and following the publication of the Housing Ombudsman's spotlight report on damp and mould in November 2021, Barnet Homes has made improvements to the way it handles damp and mould cases to implement a zero-tolerance approach. This includes providing training to all operational frontline staff who visit tenants' homes, incorporating an assessment of any current respiratory illness in household members, re-surveying and identifying a schedule of works for all properties with 'moderate' damp and mould, and providing additional advice to tenants about how to avoid damp and mould and deal with 'slight' cases.

We are committed to proactively dealing with damp and mould where it occurs in our properties based on the knowledge we have about their condition, as well as responding swiftly where residents approach Barnet Homes about an issue. In early 2023, the council agreed to an investment of £2.2m to address the known issues of Category 2 damp and mould across the housing stock, some of which will be used to resource Barnet Homes' new Healthy Homes team within its Repairs service to manage damp and mould cases and continue to work closely with tenants to resolve these issues. Barnet Homes also started an awareness campaign to improve tenants' awareness including providing tailored advice to households, and under the fifth priority of this strategy we have set out further work we will do across the borough to tackle this issue. We will consider any need for additional investment from the Housing Revenue Account where it is possible to do so, and we will aim to learn from good practice approaches to dealing with damp and mould in the properties we own.

Achieving sustainability targets for existing homes

Housing is one of the largest sources of carbon emissions in the country. We are committed to achieving our sustainability targets by retrofitting our social housing to help tackle climate change

and fuel poverty. In delivering our Housing Strategy we will aim to meet the national carbon zero and sustainability targets, as well as those set locally within our Sustainability Strategy.

We face a monumental challenge to meet these targets, which sit against a landscape of increased fire and building safety regulation, and a significant shortage of affordable homes to address the housing crisis. The number, type, age, and current efficiency of our council housing stock means an enormous retrofit operation will be required to meet the national targets of net zero carbon by 2050 and achieve a C rating on Energy Performance Certificates (EPC) across all homes by 2030. Locally, we have committed to achieving EPC rating C by 2027 and EPC rating B by 2030.

In November 2022, we commissioned a study to understand the emissions baseline of the borough, the potential routes to achieve net zero, the cost, and the most impactful decarbonisation options. This found that the estimated budgetary shortfall related to our housing stock is between £388m and £538m for achieving the UK target to cut emissions by 78% by 2035 compared to emission levels in 1990. Barnet Homes also commissioned analysis of the housing stock to produce its Asset Management Strategy for 2022-27, which found that for the 80% of the housing stock that had been surveyed, 42% was achieving EPC C, 1.9% was achieving EPC A or B, and 56% was achieving EPC D or lower, with the majority of properties (49.8%) achieving EPC D, which is consistent with averages for dwellings in England. Based on a decarbonisation estimate of £42,000 per property, it will cost around £337m to address the council's housing stock.

The council is committed to being a vocal climate leader, and to overcome these significant cost challenges and meet our sustainability and net zero goals we must lobby the Government for more funding. The Government has promised a £3.8bn Social Housing Decarbonisation Fund (SHDF) over 10 years from 2020/21; however, it is estimated that it will cost £104bn to retrofit all social housing in the UK to zero carbon standards, and there is presently no answer to where the shortfall will come from.

At the time of writing this strategy, Barnet Homes has bid for £4.5m in grant funding from the SHDF, which will be match-funded from the Housing Revenue Account. Sustainability-related technology is moving at a rapid rate, so we will prioritise a 'fabric first' approach to achieve our net zero goals, such as looking at the internal and external insulation of our homes. Barnet Homes is taking the opportunity to optimise energy-efficiency works during other works on the council's stock, and this two-year programme through to 2024/25 means that overall Barnet will commit £6m to retrofitting our homes and increasing energy efficiency.

Whilst our focus is on fabric first, we will continue to explore the role of green technologies in the management of our housing stock. Barnet Homes is installing environmental sensors in homes that are subject to sustainability works and those which have damp and mould related issues, in order to measure temperature and humidity at all times of day and monitor these remotely. Environmental sensors can help to overcome many challenges, from compliance and carbon footprint to mould risk and fuel poverty. This increases resident safety, whilst providing Barnet Homes with greater insight that it can use proactively to deliver improvements and help meet our aim to ensure healthy homes, and potentially pre-empt moderate or severe cases of damp and mould and condensation. Barnet Homes will take forward technology pilots which are likely to include solar panels and photovoltaics, and heat pumps, and will also explore other technology options to allow property issues to be addressed proactively rather than reactively, with the aim of reducing carbon emissions.

Barnet Homes will continue to implement interim support to help improve sustainability, improve thermal comfort and energy efficiency, and reduce the impact of the cost-of-living crisis for our tenants, such as the initiative being taken forward in partnership in 2021 to provide energy-saving boxes containing radiator reflective foil sheets, draught-proofing strips, and low energy LED lamps.

It will also determine a plan for replacing gas boilers in our existing council housing homes with alternative heating systems, such as heat pumps.

We will ensure Barnet applies for all possible funding streams to help retrofit its social housing stock, including using levers such as the Mayor of London's £10bn Innovation Partnership, and working with his national retrofit centre of excellence to develop successful plans to secure funding in future rounds of the SHDF.

DRAFT

Priority 4: Raise quality and standards in the private rented sector.

The private rented sector is home to a high proportion of Barnet’s residents, and affordability constraints mean that for many it is a way of life. The number of households relying on the private rented sector has more than doubled in the last 20 years, and now accounts for a third of the homes in the borough.

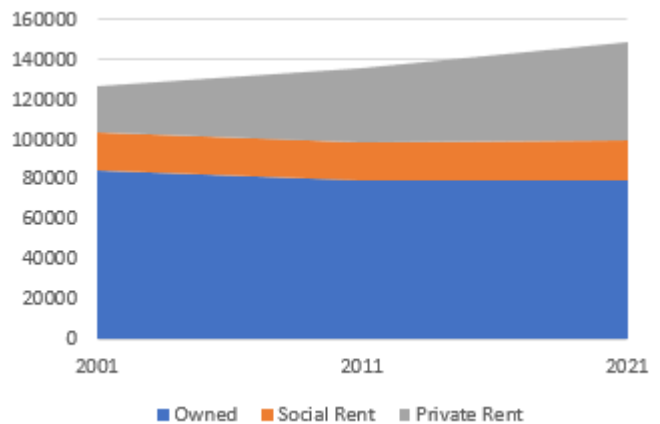
We want to see a stable private rented sector in Barnet with good standards of management and quality, affordable homes for the many residents who live in these homes.

Many residents who rent privately are happy with their homes and many landlords in Barnet offer renters a good service and a quality, safe, well-maintained home; however, a minority let their tenants down with poor property conditions, sub-standard services, and in some cases criminal behaviour, which pose a risk to tenants’ health, safety, and wellbeing.

We already work with landlords to help raise standards, and we use our powers and enforcement action to tackle rogue landlords and communicate to landlords and reassure tenants that poor standards will be addressed.

From April 2020 to February 2023, we have dealt with 1,153 complaints about disrepair in the private rented sector. Licensing is in place for 973 private rented homes across the borough, with 69% of mandatory licensed houses of multiple occupation (HMOs) meeting major conditions as of February 2023. From April 2020 to February 2023, 482 Category 1 hazards have been reduced to Category 2 hazards.

We recognise that private landlords are facing significant challenges, including rising mortgage rates, many lower-income tenants finding it hard to pay their rent because of reforms to the welfare system, and growing financial and regulatory requirements. Raising standards in the private rented sector and ensuring homes are safe and secure are key priorities for the council, and we will continue to build our relationships with private landlords and provide advice and support where possible to help them improve standards and meet requirements.



Our ambitions

We will empower and support private renters to hold their landlords to the required standards by introducing a new private tenants' rights charter.

We will use our powers to continue to advise and wherever possible support private landlords to achieve the required standards, and we will take enforcement action where needed.

We will make effective use of property licensing across the borough, seeking to extend it where it is identified to be the most appropriate way to improve living conditions for private tenants.

How we will deliver

Introducing a new private tenants' rights charter

All tenants should have access to a good quality, safe, and well-managed home. We want to help empower private renters by ensuring more are aware of their rights. We will introduce a private tenants' rights charter to ensure private tenants are aware of their rights as well as the council's powers to intervene where we can.

Strengthening our approach to property licensing

We have introduced a borough-wide House in Multiple Occupation (HMO) licensing scheme to ensure oversight of housing conditions in the private rented sector, as well as an additional licensing scheme for HMOs that are occupied by three or more persons or two or more households. In 2023 we introduced a selective licensing scheme across Burnt Oak, Colindale North, and Colindale South wards to cover the entire private rented sector in these areas.

Our intention is to use a data-based approach to evidence other areas within the borough where there are poor property conditions and selective licensing may be the most appropriate course of action to improve living conditions for tenants, and complete a consultation exercise in line with the relevant legal requirements.

Our aim is to investigate opportunities to develop and improve upon the current use of robust data to increase our knowledge on the energy efficiency rating of dwellings in the borough to support the approach to net zero, and ensure enforcement activities to reduce the number of category 1 hazards are undertaken in a manner that makes the best use of the resources available.

We will proactively monitor standards in licensed accommodation and accommodation that should be licensed and take enforcement action where necessary. Where appropriate, we will work with the police to address criminal behaviour by landlords, and we will publicise successful prosecutions.

Ensuring we have the right resources in place to support tenants and landlords in the private rented sector

We are in a period of significant change in the housing and related sectors, and it is essential that we remain flexible as new requirements are introduced over the coming years. In particular, we will be responsive to improve energy efficiency in the private rented sector and to emerging requirements associated with the potential extension of the Decent Homes Standard to private properties. We will do all that we can to support landlords to achieve the required standards, and we will put in place monitoring and enforcement where it is needed.

Too many households are living in properties blighted by damp and mould. We work closely with private landlords through our licensing schemes to improve the condition of private rented homes, including where there are issues with damp and mould. We will continue to strengthen the information we provide, and increase our engagement and work with private landlords and tenants to tackle this issue. We will continue to provide training for our Environmental Health Officers to ensure they are skilled and knowledgeable, and we will take part in London-wide initiatives to make sure we take a best practice and consistent approach with other London boroughs. Our Regulatory Services will continue to work closely with Barnet Homes' Housing Options service, and will pilot the use of a dedicated Housing Enforcement Officer to work between the services to strengthen the approach to maintaining private tenants in their homes where there is a risk of them becoming homeless due to poor housing conditions.

We also know that many private landlords face significant challenges in meeting the national and local net zero targets, and we will build our understanding of barriers that may exist to the challenges of meeting the borough's sustainability objectives as well as achieving Decent Homes. Our approach to ensuring private landlords are compliant with Central Government's Minimum Energy Efficiency Standards (MEES) legislation will be pragmatic to these challenges. We will work directly with private landlords to raise their awareness of statutory requirements and what it means for their property, as well as any support or incentives we may offer to deliver the retrofitting needed to help deliver the council's and national sustainability ambitions, prior to taking enforcement action and applying civil penalties against any non-compliant properties below EPC E. We also recognise that Central Government funding is essential to help the sector achieve the sustainability targets, and we will lobby for additional investment wherever possible.

We will keep under review the level of resourcing within the council and the resourcing that is needed to meet our objectives, with a focus on giving advice to landlords and supporting them to ensure homes meet the required standards, supporting and advising private tenants to ensure they understand their rights, and taking enforcement action where it is necessary to ensure legal requirements are met.

We will review how we can work in partnership with Middlesex University and continue to provide professional development opportunities to Environmental Health Officers, such as apprenticeships.

Priority 5: Support living well by promoting healthy homes and wellbeing.

Barnet's population growth in the 2021 Census was higher than that of England and the London average. There was an increase of around 4% in the proportion of people aged 35 and over, and a 4% decrease in younger people and children, which will impact upon the profile of the borough in future years. An ageing population may see an increase in those with limiting long-term illnesses. A good quality, secure, and affordable home is the foundation that everybody needs to lead a healthy life. Good housing can help support general health, wellbeing, and positive life outcomes, as well as our other objectives such as being family-friendly, helping older and vulnerable people to live independently, and supporting educational attainment and wellbeing in children. We want to ensure Barnet's homes and neighbourhoods support people to live long, healthy, happy lives in their own communities. Overcrowding, fire hazards, over-or underheating, very old or broken boilers, excess noise, trip hazards, damp and mould, indoor air pollution, and inadequate lighting can all cause reduced quality of life and risks to health and wellbeing.

We want to ensure resilient and safe communities across the borough, and to empower residents and communities so they can thrive. This includes residents having the ability to bounce back from stress and hardship and to take on new challenges which lead to better outcomes. To ensure our success we must focus on neighbourhood-based approaches to tackle inequalities across the borough, build on our partnerships with public sector and VCS organisations, and promote digital inclusion.

Housing is just one element of the built environment that influences health, and therefore it is important to consider the ways it is connected with other determinants of health. Housing that is well connected to transport links, local amenities, and educational and employment opportunities is more conducive to healthy living.

Whilst there is much we can do within our council housing stock to achieve our net zero targets provided we receive adequate funding from the Government, our overall sustainability goals will only be met by engaging and support households across the borough to reduce carbon emissions. We know that most domestic properties in Barnet have a current energy performance certificate rating of either C or D, and that since 2018 the proportion of domestic properties with an EPC of B, C, or D has increased, and of A, E, F, and G has decreased. Most households (72.8%) rely on gas central heating, and more than 15,000 households are living in fuel poverty. By installing retrofit measures, including loft and wall insulation, double glazing, and floor insulation, 75% of homes have the potential to reach EPC Band C or above.

We will deliver this priority of our Housing Strategy by working effectively in partnership, including with the Voluntary and Community Sector (VCS), and delivering council strategies and plans including those related to the cost of living, Community Safety, Community Participation, Sustainability, and Adult Social Care.

Our ambitions

We will work towards healthy homes across the borough by tackling fuel poverty, energy efficiency, risk due to damp and mould, and water efficiency.

We will work in partnership to drive up standards of living and improve housing-related outcomes for Barnet's residents.

We will care for our places and our people, and help create vibrant, cohesive, viable communities.

We will use our voice to advocate for residents locally and nationally on housing-related issues.

Prioritising healthy homes across Barnet

We are committed to working towards healthy homes across Barnet, to support residents through the cost of living crisis, help the borough achieve our sustainability goals, and ensure good housing supports improved wellbeing.

Our Sustainability Strategy will deliver our net zero ambitions, and whilst we have greater control over efforts within the buildings and homes we own, through this we will work together with and support residents, business, and community groups across Barnet to help us become a net zero borough by 2042, including by strengthening access to information, support, and advice on issues such as fuel poverty, energy efficiency, and water efficiency, which is also part of our work to support residents through the cost of living crisis. In our work to assist residents living in the private rented sector and homeowners to make their homes more sustainable, we will prioritise those households most at risk of fuel poverty.

We recognise that many households within the borough may be equity rich but cash poor, and that the estimated minimum cost of £15,000 to retrofit homes will be challenging for many. Wherever possible, we will help residents secure grants to retrofit private homes and will signpost them to advice and support through our BarNET Zero campaign. We will also explore other options for improving awareness and supporting residents, including the potential to develop a tool that allows residents to find energy assessments online for their homes and identify the best measures they can take to improve efficiency.

We know there is a significant skills and knowledge gap in the current market, and we will explore the potential for Barnet Homes to develop a marketable retrofitting service. In doing so, we will aim to build pathways with local universities and colleges to help create opportunities and develop valuable skillsets within the borough.

Damp and mould are issues that can affect any home in the borough, and we are committed to working with residents and our partners to raise awareness and improve standards of living. We will work in partnership across all services including Public Health, Housing, and Regulatory Services, to deliver a joined-up information campaign so that all residents have increased knowledge about the causes of damp and mould and how they can reduce condensation in their homes, as well as how to access further support. We will continue to work closely with housing associations that own homes in Barnet to ensure tackling issues such as damp and mould continue to be a priority.

Across the council and jointly with Public Health and Housing we will work closely to ensure housing is part of the health agenda and address housing issues around crowding, indoor cold and

insulation, indoor heat, home safety and injuries, and accessibility. We will include housing and health items in the Making Every Contact Count commitment to make the most of each opportunity to help people improve their health and wellbeing through information and awareness sharing and signposting. We will also work with NCL integrated care board and primary care to link the council's activities with the NHS, such as funding of home repairs for people discharged from hospital.

Improving standards of living across tenures

Housing-related support services

The council and The Barnet Group have in place a range of housing-related services that go beyond simply providing homes in which people can live to supporting and enabling residents to live well and achieve improved financial, employment, educational, and social outcomes.

Several of The Barnet Group's services also provide support for other residents within the borough. In addition to Barnet Homes' floating support services for tenants of the council, the Barnet Outreach team provides free-of-charge floating support services to other residents within Barnet who have housing-related support needs. Barnet Homes will continue to provide this service to help people maintain their accommodation by offering a range of support that promotes independence and empowerment. It is targeted at those who are may be most vulnerable within the borough, including care leavers, recent victims of crime, survivors of domestic abuse, those suffering or causing anti-social behaviour, people returning from hospital, people with a substance misuse problem, and people with a mental, physical, or learning disability. The help provided includes with claiming benefits and budgeting, practical advice on day-to-day living tasks, support to comply with a tenancy agreement, support with finding reasonably priced furniture, advice on finding training or employment, and support and information about moving.

The Barnet Group's BOOST service operates an outreach model with a focus on meeting the needs of hard-to-reach communities that often don't see the benefits of mainstream information and support services, with little or no access to information, and are at risk of falling through the gaps. We will continue to support BOOST to deliver the vital employment, financial, welfare and housing advice, digital inclusion, cost of living, and training and qualifications support that helps residents to be financially independent, reach their full potential, and contribute to a financially resilient and thriving Barnet.

BOOST co-locates Barnet Homes staff with a number of services including staff from DWP Jobcentre, youth engagement, and mental health coaches. Since 2015, it has delivered a range of outcomes including supporting 1,465 residents into employment. In 2021/2022 the service assisted 387 people in to work, helped 3,300 residents with wellbeing and translation services, and supported 99 young people into employment, education, or training, and provided 300 hours of mentoring support to apprentices. Some of the activities that will be taken forward over the coming years include:

- accessing low-cost laptops and broadband to enable people to get online;
- improving digital skills;
- supporting residents with money management, employability, confidence and motivation, and self-care;
- identifying and referring vulnerable residents who are in need of support;
- helping housing applicants gain and maintain a community contribution to increase their choice and priority under the Housing Allocation Scheme;
- employment support and job brokerage for all, including rough sleepers; and
- providing access to training for work, including green skills.

Barnet Homes and Adult Social Care will work in partnership to map existing practices and pathways including the move-on protocol, with the aim of ensuring effective approaches are in place to provide the right support where it is needed, and to improve practices.

Fire Safety in high-risk high-rise blocks remains a concern for many residents. Working with freeholders, leaseholders, the London Fire Brigade, and the government, the council will continue to target the highest risk blocks and ensure that minimum standards are met.

Supporting residents through the cost-of-living crisis

The council will also continue to deliver its cost-of-living support plan, with advice and signposting for all residents including with paying bills, support for children and families, money and debt, housing advice, help with health and wellbeing, and support with jobs, training, and skills.

Supporting people to stay in their homes for longer

With an ageing population, we expect to see an increase in care and support needs within Barnet over the coming years. We want to support residents to stay in their homes for longer, and our housing, social care, and health services will work in partnership to strengthen support services and increase opportunities.

The Government's social care white paper 'People at the Heart of Care', published in December 2021, set out an intention to balance demand for specialised supported housing with adapting mainstream housing to meet needs and enable people to continue to live in it. Adult Social Care will work closely with Barnet Homes to deliver its social care reform plan and the Right Home commissioning plan, ensuring that every decision about care is also a decision about housing, and embedding housing within the health and care system.

We will invest in preventative services wherever possible to enable people to remain in their own homes for longer, whether they are social housing tenants or residents of the council or private registered providers, private renters, or owner occupiers. We will also explore ways to make it easier for all homes to be adapted to enable independent and safe living, including ensuring we make the best use of funding available for delivering aids and adaptations to homes for people who need them.

Our housing services will work closely with Public Health to ensure housing is part of the health agenda, including with the Making Every Contact Count commitment to make the most of each opportunity to help people improve their health and wellbeing.

Caring for our places and people

We do not want to be complacent, and in caring for our places we want to transform what is already good about living in the borough to what is great. To achieve this, we will do more to support residents to feel safe at home and in the community, and we will celebrate the richness of our diverse communities. We know that not everyone's experience is equal. There is more to do to support those with greater or more complex needs to live well, and we need to make sure that those who may not have access to the same opportunities or experience equitable outcomes are not held back.

Good housing is not just about bricks and mortar; to create vibrant, cohesive, and viable communities we must enhance our connected green spaces and assets, and tackle issues such as antisocial behaviour. We must also ensure residents have a voice and are involved in shaping and designing housing-related services. Everyone has the right to feel part of the community in which they live, and with increasing diversity within the borough we will work in partnership with residents and partners in the public and voluntary and community sectors to build strong, cohesive communities.

Our goals and commitments are set out in our Community Participation Strategy and our Community Safety Strategy that aims to ensure sustainable, resilient, and safe communities. Barnet

Homes will also deliver upon these commitments through its Customer Experience Strategy, Community Engagement Strategy, and Successful Tenancies Strategy.

Advocating for residents on housing-related issues

We and local authorities across London and the country are facing unprecedented challenges. Whilst there is much we can do by working in partnership, we must acknowledge that we need more support from central government to tackle the housing crisis and improve people's life chances and outcomes. We will work as part of regional groups as well as individually to advocate for our residents and provide a strong lobbying voice to help inform the Government on the changes that are needed, including regarding housing supply, sustainability and good design, welfare reform, longer tenancies, homelessness, fire and building safety and cladding, and social care and mental health services.

DRAFT

Next steps

This Housing Strategy sets out Barnet Council's vision for everyone to have a safe, secure, affordable home where they can thrive, and our approach to housing over the next five years. It describes what we want to achieve and focuses in particular on the big changes that are necessary for our success.

It will be used to inform our planning policies and guidance, and the development of and support our other housing-related strategies, such as the Homelessness and Rough Sleeping Strategy and Adult Social Care's Right Home commissioning plan, as well as other council strategies and plans that aim to drive positive outcomes for the people of Barnet and embed our commitment to being a council that cares for people, our places, and the planet. These include the Barnet Plan, the Sustainability Strategy, the Growth Strategy, the Children and Young People's Plan, the Adult Social Care Reform Plan, and the Right Home commissioning plan.

It also sets out the issues on which we will campaign and lobby central government and advocate for the rights and needs of our residents where new funding, laws, or powers are needed to make a positive difference to people's lives.

Our commitments under the themes of this Housing Strategy show, in broad terms, how we will implement the strategy. While it describes a number of specific initiatives that are already underway or are planned or have the potential to be explored, it does not offer every detail of how our objectives will be achieved. In some cases, we do not have all the answers, and want to consult further with residents and partners before we finalise our plans and put them into action.

We will develop action plans where needed and will report regularly on progress and how our aims are being put into practice. We will apply for funding wherever possible to help deliver improved outcomes for residents, and where further investment is needed to improve or develop services this will be considered through individual business cases. The actions we will take will need to be flexible and responsive to emerging needs and new housing-related circumstances over the five years of this strategy. Delivery is not just a matter for the council, but will also involve partnership with residents, developers, landlords, service providers, public sector partners, and the voluntary and community sector.

There is also a central role for Barnet Homes, the council's housing management organisation, which will also continue to deliver its own housing-related strategies and improvement plans in support of this Housing Strategy. We will continue to set targets for our services within Barnet Homes' annual Delivery Plan, through which we will be able to monitor the impact of our work and take a flexible approach to dealing with the housing and homelessness crises.

Despite the significant challenges we face to tackle the housing crisis and provide suitable, genuinely affordable accommodation for everyone who needs it, this strategy sets out a positive, proactive approach to how the council, its partners, and residents can work together to achieve our aims. Whilst there is no easy solution to all the challenges we face, and our delivery of this Housing Strategy will not resolve the many causes and impacts of the housing crisis, we are confident it will help improve our position and deliver positive outcomes for many of Barnet's residents.

Housing Strategy context



Homelessness and Rough Sleeping Strategy | 2023 - 2028



a council that cares for people, our places, and the planet

Contents

Foreword from Councillor Ross Houston, Cabinet Member for Homes and Regeneration	
Introduction	
Our priorities	
Homelessness and rough sleeping in Barnet	
Causes of and levels of homelessness	
Rough sleeping	
Domestic abuse	
Armed forces veterans	
Levels of deprivation in Barnet	
Our track record of tackling and preventing homelessness and rough sleeping	
The challenges ahead	
Insufficient social housing to meet demand	
Increasing lack of affordability of private rents, and instability in the market	
Benefit and welfare reforms	
Meeting diverse and complex needs	
New administrative responsibilities and duties from the Homelessness Reduction Act 2017	
Priority 1: prevent homelessness	
Priority 2: ensure a sufficient supply of accommodation	
Priority 3: provide support for people who are or have been homeless	
Next steps	

Foreword

Welcome to the new Homelessness and Rough Sleeping Strategy, which sets out the council's priorities for providing support to those who are most in need and for tackling homelessness and rough sleeping over the next five years.

The challenge of preventing homelessness and rough sleeping is both national and local. London's unprecedented housing crisis is felt most keenly by those who have no home at all, and Barnet, like all councils, faces major challenges to reduce the harms associated with this. Simply put, there are not enough genuinely affordable homes for all those who need them, meaning that too many households are threatened with homelessness.

Locally, the council has worked closely with its partners and made good progress in preventing homelessness and reducing rough sleeping; however, there is more to do to provide appropriate support at an earlier stage, and the environment in which we work is increasingly challenging.

This strategy sets out the council's ambition to rise to the challenges we face, working in partnership to deliver better outcomes for households in Barnet that are at risk of homelessness. In delivering our priorities, we will focus on identifying new and innovative ways to further our existing approach to preventing homelessness and take steps to end rough sleeping.

Our approach is founded on strong, collaborative relationships, and we will focus on working with our partners to better understand the root causes of homelessness, prevent recurring homelessness, give appropriate advice and support to those in need, and make sure there is sufficient supply of accommodation. The need for change goes beyond Barnet and we cannot do this alone. We are, therefore, also committed to providing a strong lobbying voice to help inform the Government on key issues and encourage urgent investment in building new, genuinely affordable homes, improved welfare provision, and funding for essential support services.

Earlier in 2023 we shared our draft Homelessness and Rough Sleeping Strategy for your input. Thank you to every one of you who responded to that consultation; your involvement has been vital in shaping our final strategy. I would particularly like to thank those partners and stakeholders, and especially the hardworking staff at the council, Barnet Homes, and in our partner organisations, who will help us deliver the priorities within this strategy to prevent homelessness and eradicate rough sleeping.

This Homelessness and Rough Sleeping Strategy sets out how over the coming five years, as a council that cares for people, we will prevent homelessness and support those who face or are at risk of becoming homeless, founded in our belief that everyone deserves a place to call home.

Councillor Ross Houston
Cabinet Member for Homes and Regeneration

Introduction

This Homelessness and Rough Sleeping Strategy sets out how over the coming five years we will prevent homelessness and support those who face or are at risk of becoming homeless.

Whilst rough sleeping (those who live or sleep on the street) is often the most visible form of homelessness, other forms of homelessness are hidden and include anyone who does not have access to suitable, stable accommodation. This can include people who are staying with friends or family (“sofa surfing”), those at risk of violence or domestic abuse, and those living in temporary accommodation provided by the council when they urgently need a home and are being helped to find long-term housing.

Becoming homeless is a traumatic event that can have long-lasting impacts on the health and wellbeing of those affected. Circumstances vary from person to person, however in general the health, wellbeing, and life chances of those who are homeless are significantly worse than those of the general population. As a council that cares for people, our places, and the planet, we aim to do all we can to support those who are in need and fight the inequalities that many face. In our Corporate Plan 2023-26, we acknowledge the challenges we face to reduce the harms associated with homelessness, and we have committed to continuing to invest in preventing and reducing homelessness and taking steps to end rough sleeping by providing the right support to ensure that where it does occur, it is rare, brief, and non-recurring.

Some people living in temporary accommodation have complex issues and needs and may struggle to navigate the housing and care system. They may have been sleeping rough on the streets or be ex-offenders. Many households in temporary accommodation, however, are families with children who are homeless because of family or financial reasons.

The council, in partnership with its arms-length management organisation Barnet Homes and other agencies, already does much to prevent homelessness and support those who are affected by it, and we have a strong track record of working with residents and partners in the voluntary and community sector. During 2022/23 we spent around £5.18 million (net of grants and income) on homelessness and rough sleeping services, were approached by over 2,500 residents who were in need of housing or advice, and provided temporary accommodation for more than 2,000 households.

We recognise that the environment in which we are working has changed and there is much uncertainty at the time of writing this strategy. Whilst positive progress has been achieved in recent years, our ability to continue to provide support and prevent homelessness faces unprecedented challenge. To keep doing the best thing by our residents, we need to think and work differently. In delivering this strategy we will continue to provide essential services and support to those who are affected by homelessness, but we will focus on identifying innovative and effective solutions that are necessary to meet diversifying needs and because the status quo is no longer sustainable.

Our priorities

This new strategy is intended to further the council’s existing approach to preventing homelessness, and to focus our efforts on identifying new and innovative ways to respond to the challenges we are likely to face over the coming five years.

In developing this strategy, we have reviewed housing needs, performance, and the resources available to the council and its partners to address homelessness to develop our priorities for action, including data and insight from engagement with residents in our Homelessness Prevention and Insight Project. We have also taken into account the Mayor’s London Housing Strategy and the Department for Levelling Up, Housing and Communities’ Homelessness Code of Guidance for Local Authorities. In doing so, we have identified three priority areas.



In all that we do we are also committed to providing a strong lobbying voice to help inform the Government on issues such as the need to increase funding for the development of new homes, as well as solutions to the challenges facing private landlords to help ensure a functional and accessible private sector. In all that we do we will use our voice to advocate for a national response to the housing crisis, and to tackling housing shortage and instability as well as inequalities caused by welfare reform. This includes pressing for increases in Local Housing Allowance rates and benefit cap levels. We will do this individually and as part of regional groups through responses to consultations, calls for evidence, and commissioned pieces of work.

Homelessness and rough sleeping in Barnet

The number of households requiring support has increased in recent years, affected by the change in legislation with the introduction of the Homelessness Reduction Act 2017, and the impact of the COVID-19 pandemic and cost of living crisis. Over the past decade, the number of homeless households in temporary accommodation in Barnet has increased significantly, largely driven by the lack of affordable housing, overcrowding, and poverty.

Our vision to supporting households that present as homeless or at risk of homelessness is to treat them with respect, care, and compassion. We endeavour to understand each household’s very specific needs and aspirations, and to treat them as individuals. We aim for all our interactions to be positive, and to work with residents to create the best chances for the best possible outcomes for them. We face challenges in meeting everyone’s needs due to housing supply constraints and lack of affordability, so we take steps to make sure that expectations are realistic and that residents are informed of all their options.

It is important for households to be aware that, despite our efforts to reduce the number of households in temporary accommodation, placements in temporary accommodation are unfortunately often longer-term than we might hope for, and we will share this message in a caring, sensitive, and compassionate way. Our approach is priority- and needs-based, which means that

many households may not qualify for social housing. We will give advice and support on the options available, including accommodation in the private rented sector, and we will signpost residents to other organisations that can help.

Causes of and levels of homelessness

Whilst there are many causes of homelessness, the biggest cause within Barnet and across London is the shortage of affordable homes, combined with changes to the welfare system, funding challenges in health, social care, and criminal justice, and an insecure and expensive private rented sector. The 2021 Census showed that only 13.5% of Barnet's housing is rented from the council or another provider of social housing; this is the sixth smallest provision of social housing of all London boroughs, and significantly smaller than boroughs such as Hackney and Islington where respectively 40.6% and 40.3% of all residents live in social housing.

With demand for social housing outstripping supply, many households on low incomes need to rent privately with the help of benefits; however, private rents in Barnet are high and increasing, and are well above Local Housing Allowance. The resulting lack of affordability means that for many households it is increasingly difficult to secure and sustain accommodation. As a result, nearly 3 in 10 cases of homelessness in Barnet resulted from the end of a private rented sector tenancy in 2021/22.

The shortage of affordable housing also means it is difficult for the council to find suitable accommodation for homeless households. With a limited, and contracting, supply of private rented sector accommodation, pressures on supply and cost mean that households may increasingly need to be placed away from the borough in temporary accommodation. We recognise that needing to relocate often disrupts education, childcare, employment, and support networks, and we want to avoid placing households in accommodation away from Barnet. We therefore need to explore innovative ways to increase the affordable housing supply within the borough, alongside furthering our efforts to prevent households from becoming homeless.

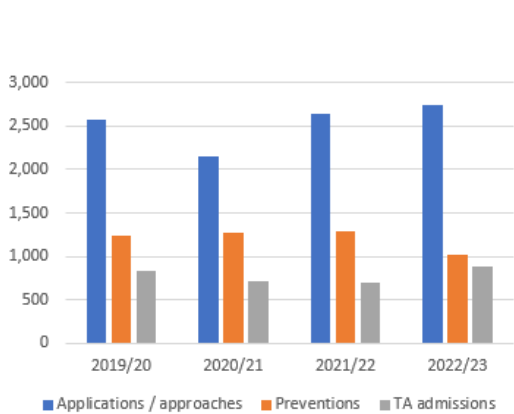
In 2022/23 (to 24 February 2023), the average waiting time for properties for households on the Housing Needs Register who were offered a permanent social housing home was 1.8 years, excluding properties that were let to tenants who moved from a regeneration site.

Average waiting time in 2022/23

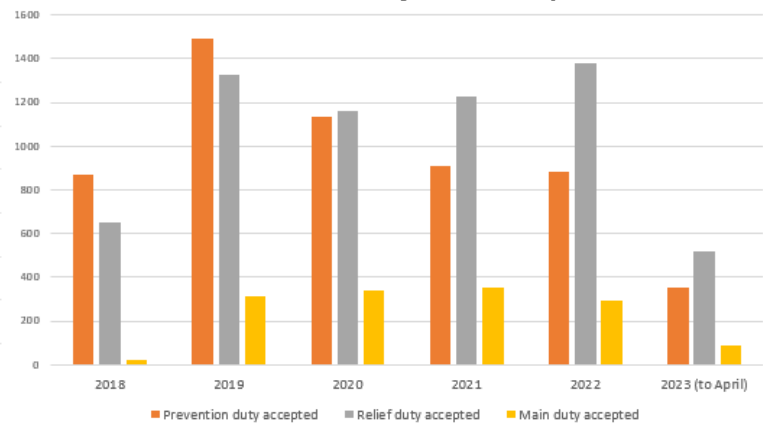
Property size	Number of lettings	Average waiting time (days)	Average waiting time (years)
1-bedroom	204	456	1.2
2-bedroom	167	449	1.2
3-bedroom	80	1,485	4.1
4-bedroom	24	768	2.1
Total	475	643	1.8

The number of applications or approaches to the council has increased significantly following the enactment of the Homelessness Reduction Act 2017. The restrictions of the COVID-19 pandemic resulted in fewer approaches, however in subsequent years, similarly to our peers in London, we have seen a return to higher numbers. In Quarter 3 2022/23 there was a significant increase in demand, with 984 new applications opened. This was a 62% increase compared to the same period in 2021/22 (608 applications opened). It is possible that, in addition to the impact of the cost-of-living crisis on tenancy sustainment, there is a surge in demand as a result of the removal of measures during COVID-19, such as eviction cases that were previously stayed now progressing through the courts.

Number of applications, preventions, and TA admissions

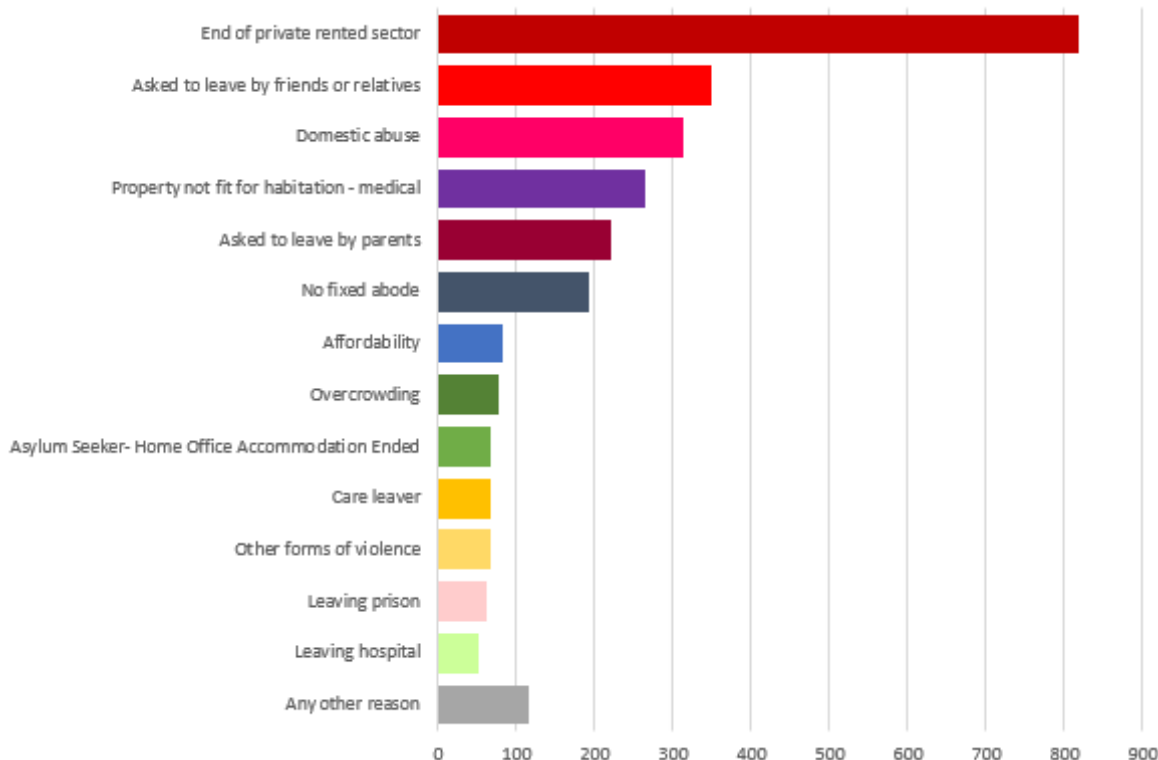


Number for which the prevention duty, relief duty, and main duty were accepted



Across London, the main reason given for people presenting as homeless is that family or friends are no longer willing or able to provide accommodation, accounting for around a third of all homeless applicants, followed by the end of private tenancy, which accounts for around a quarter of applicants. In Barnet, evictions from the private rented sector are the most common reason for homelessness, accounting for just under 30% of all applicants, followed by being asked to leave by friends or relatives, which accounts for 12.7% of all applicants. The chart below shows the most frequent reasons for loss of last settled accommodation before the household became homeless.

Reason for loss of last settled accommodation 2022/23



Rough sleeping

The number of people rough sleeping in Barnet fell during the pandemic when additional accommodation was available through the Everyone In initiative which ran from March 2020 to March 2022. The number of approaches Barnet Homes received from rough sleepers subsequently reduced, however remains higher than before the pandemic. Despite this, there were 8 rough sleepers counted in 2022 as part of the national count, which in 2022 took place from midnight on 18 November. This was lower than the previous years counts of 13 in 2021 and 24 in 2019 and 2018. Whilst the number of rough sleepers is likely to be higher than the estimate from the spotlight street count, it is a good indicator of trends in rough sleeping.

According to the 2021/22 CHAIN¹ report on rough sleeping in London, in Barnet 109 people (63%) were seen rough sleeping only once in 2021/22, compared to 182 (65%) in 2020/21. The 2021/22 figure was around the average (mean) for the Outer Boroughs. The total number of people seen rough sleeping in Barnet (173) in 2021/22 equated to approximately 4 people per 10,000 of the population; the eighth lowest of the Outer Boroughs. The total number seen rough sleeping in 2021/22 was lower than in 2020/21, but higher than in 2018/19.

65% of people seen rough sleeping in 2021/22 were new rough sleepers (compared to 79% in 2020/21), 26% were also seen rough sleeping in the previous year (2020/21) (compared to 10% in 2020/21 also seen in 2019/20), and 9% were returning to rough sleeping (the same as in 2020/21). The CHAIN data showed that 51% of people seen sleeping rough in Barnet were UK nationals, 85% were male, 27% were from an ethnic minority background, 6% had experience of serving in the armed forces, 29% had experience of prison, and 6% had experience of being in care.

123 of the 173 people (71%, lower than the overall Outer Boroughs total of 84%) seen rough sleeping in 2021/22 had a support needs assessment recorded. Of these, 18% had alcohol-only support needs, 29% had drugs-only support needs, 45% had mental health-only support needs, 24% had more than one support need, and 36% had no alcohol, drugs, or mental health support needs. Poor mental health and substance misuse can make it difficult for rough sleepers to sustain their accommodation once they are housed, and targeted support is needed to help maintain tenancies and reduce the risk of anti-social behaviour.

Barnet Homes' data on support for rough sleepers in 2021/22 shows that 95 rough sleepers were accommodated, and of these by the end of the year 47 had moved on into longer-term accommodation, 24 were still in temporary accommodation, and 22 had left temporary accommodation without a known positive move-on, including tenancy abandonments, evictions, and moves into hospital or custody.

A range of support is provided to rough sleepers within the borough, including:

- Barnet's Somewhere Safe to Stay Hub, a 17-bed rough sleeper assessment hub that provides an immediate 'off the streets' offer for rough sleepers with the aim of moving occupants on to sustainable long-term accommodation.
- Change Grow Live, a national health and social care charity which supports people with drugs, alcohol, housing, and other challenges. For 2022/23 and 2023/24 Barnet has been awarded £709,936 in funding from the Rough Sleeping Drug and Alcohol Treatment Grant,

¹ The Combined Homelessness and Information Network (CHAIN) is a multi-agency database recording information about rough sleepers and the wider street population in London. CHAIN is commissioned and funded by the Greater London Authority and managed by Homeless Link, and represents the UK's most detailed and comprehensive source of information about rough sleeping.

which is being used to fund posts within Change Grow Live including a Substance Misuse Outreach Worker, a Romanian Outreach Worker, and a dual diagnosis psychologist.

- Enabling Assessment Service London (EASL), which provides advice to Barnet Homes regarding rough sleeper cases and meets with the Rough Sleeper Team each month. The service will meet rough sleepers on the streets, or in other settings, to provide professional opinions and reports.
- Homeless Action in Barnet (HAB), a day centre that provides a range of services to rough sleepers in the borough including hot meals, showers and laundry facilities, access to medical services, free internet access, a clothes store, and housing advice and support.
- Rough Sleeping Accommodation Programme, the Mayor of London's programme aimed at supporting rough sleepers into longer term accommodation with support from specialist staff to access the help they need, such as support for mental health and substance abuse problems, moving towards training and work. In 2021 Barnet Homes was awarded £5.4 million to deliver 55 homes under the programme, with 2-year assured shorthold tenancies issued, floating support in place for the duration of the tenancy, and management of the move-on process as the end of the tenancies nears.
- Together in Barnet, a charity that runs a winter night shelter for rough sleepers during October to May.

Domestic abuse

We are committed to tackling violence against women and girls, including domestic abuse and other crimes which can result in homelessness. In 2022/23, domestic abuse was the third most common reason for loss of last settled accommodation before the household became homeless.

The Domestic Abuse Act 2021 creates a statutory definition of domestic abuse, emphasising that domestic abuse is not just physical violence, but can also be emotional, controlling or coercive, and economic. The legislation places a duty on local authorities in England to provide accommodation-based support to survivors of domestic abuse and their children in refuges and other safe accommodation. It also provides that all eligible homeless survivors of domestic abuse automatically have 'priority need' for homelessness assistance and ensures that where a local authority, for reasons connected with domestic abuse, grants a new secure tenancy to a social tenant who had or has a secure lifetime or assured tenancy (other than an Assured Shorthold Tenancy) must have a secure lifetime tenancy.

Barnet Homes and the council offer a range of accommodation-based support services to survivors of domestic abuse to keep them and their children safe, including the provision of three women's refuges with 24 bed spaces. In 2021/2022, the women's refuges supported 78 women residents and 47 children fleeing domestic abuse. The Barnet Homes-led Domestic Abuse One Stop Shop service for female and male survivors and for those at risk of domestic abuse provided advice and support to 286 clients in 2020/21 and to 361 in 2021/2022, and the Barnet Sanctuary Scheme, which enables survivors to remain in their homes by providing extra security measures to make homes safe and secure, completed 97 sanctuary installations in 2020/21 and 73 in 2021/2022. These schemes involve partnership working between Barnet Homes, Solace Women's Aid, Victim Support, Solicitors, Police, and the London Fire Brigade amongst others to keep survivors of domestic abuse safe and also help them to retain their support networks and local connection.

The council also commissions the Solace Advocacy and Support Service to provide an Independent Domestic Abuse Advisory Service. Barnet Homes is also a signatory of the North London Domestic Violence Reciprocal Arrangement and the Pan-London Housing Reciprocal, and uses these

arrangements to support households to secure, safe accommodation outside of Barnet where this is required and appropriate.

In the year from January 2022 to December 2023, there was an increase in the number of households providing domestic abuse as the reason for loss of last settled accommodation. There were 65 presentations in Quarter 4 of 2021/22 and 104 in Quarter 3 of 2022/23. This may be the start of an increasing trend that could pose particular challenges regarding the availability of refuge spaces within the borough.

Armed forces veterans

The CHAIN data for 2021/22 showed that 8 rough sleepers (6%) were armed forces veterans; this was higher than the previous four years, although generally there is not high demand within Barnet. From 2019-2022, Barnet Homes received 158 approaches from homeless former armed forces personnel.

Barnet is signed up to the Armed Forces Covenant, which pledges to treat those who service or have served in the armed forces, and their families, with fairness and respect and is aimed at improving access to housing. Under the Housing Act 1996, through its Housing Allocations Scheme Barnet gives reasonable preference to people servicing or have formerly served in the armed forces, as a group of people with high levels of assessed housing need.

Levels of deprivation in Barnet

The 2021 Census considered households in terms of dimensions of deprivation. Households were considered to be deprived if they met one or more of the following dimensions:

- Employment: where any member of a household, who is not a full-time student, is either unemployed or economically inactive due to long-term sickness or disability.
- Education: no person in the household has at least five or more GCSE passes (grade A* to C or grade 4 and above) or equivalent qualifications, and no person aged 16 to 18 years is a full-time student.
- Health and disability: any person in the household has general health that is “bad” or “very bad” or is identified as disabled.
- Housing: the household’s accommodation is either overcrowded, with an occupancy rating of negative 1 or less (implying that it has one fewer room or bedroom required for the number of occupants), or is in a shared dwelling, or has no central heating.

The Census found that 51.7% of households in England and Wales were deprived in at least one dimension or measure of household deprivation, a decrease of 5.9% from 2011. Barnet was slightly below the national average with 50.4% of households deprived in at least one dimension (a decrease of 6.4% from 2011), the 22nd highest for all London boroughs. However, the Census indicates that there is a gap between the wealthiest and the poorest in the borough, with 0.4% of households deprived in all four dimensions (the 10th highest in London, and reduced from 0.7% in 2011), and 49.6% of households not deprived in any dimension (the 12th highest in London, and increased from 43.2% in 2011).

Further information about housing and homelessness can be found in the supplementary evidence base.

Our track record of tackling and preventing homelessness and rough sleeping

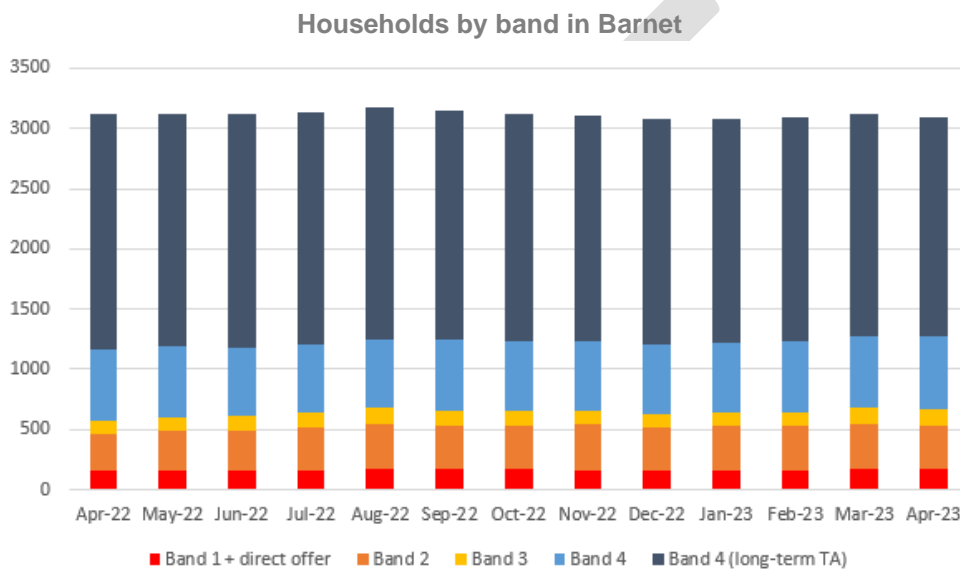
- Despite Barnet being one of the most expensive areas to live in the UK, outside of Inner London, we were able to reduce the use of temporary accommodation in Barnet from 2,936 households in November 2016 to its lowest number in a decade of 2,076 in August and September 2022. This was a considerable achievement at a time when most London boroughs saw the numbers living in temporary accommodation increase.
- 14,302 approaches in the last four years, of which 9,599 applications were opened.
- 4,810 homelessness prevention outcomes achieved from April 2019 to March 2023 through a mixture of tenancy sustainment or placements into alternative accommodation.
- 2,210 households placed directly into the private rented sector between April 2019 and March 2023.
- 457 properties acquired from 2019 to 2023 between the council and its delivery partner Opendoor Homes to provide accommodation to those in housing need.
- From April 2015 to December 2022, only 18 families were housed in shared facilities bed and breakfast accommodation beyond the 6-week statutory limit.
- Reduction in the length of time households spend in emergency accommodation, from over 70 weeks to 40 weeks for families and 35 weeks for single applicants.
- Strength of our Singles and Rough Sleeping Team, which has grown from 3 members of staff with the capacity to accommodate 15 rough sleepers in temporary accommodation to 18 members of staff with specialisms including Ex-Offender Support Workers, Afghanistan Project Resettlement Coordinator, Rent Deposit Scheme Workers, Rough Sleeper Specific Housing Needs Officers, Rough Sleeper Support Workers, and a Rough Sleepers Navigator.
- Introduction of the Somewhere Safe to Stay Hub, and delivery of 55 studio properties through the Rough Sleeping Accommodation Programme.
- Funding won to create a new Domestic Abuse team to support complex domestic abuse cases, with £244,584 awarded in 2021/22 and a further year's funding of £225,769.85.
- 97 homes made safe through our sanctuary scheme in 2020/21 for survivors of domestic abuse who wished to stay in their homes.
- 16 Syrian families resettled for five years, with holistic support provided including housing, deposits, rent, furniture, decoration, education training and employment support, and a full-time support worker, and all families successful in applying for British citizenship.
- 8 families supported so far through the Afghanistan resettlement project, with each receiving 3 years of support.
- £332,000 of funding achieved over two years through Accommodation for Ex-Offenders for two years to support ex-offenders who may not otherwise have been in priority need.
- Delivery of the Homelessness Prevention Insight Project to research how we might better prevent homelessness in Barnet.
- Successful funding application in partnership with North Central London NHS Services to create a new pilot Housing and Health Navigator role who will be placed in hospitals to assist residents with housing-related issues.
- 365 residents assisted by BOOST in 2022/23 to find employment, and an additional 405 assisted through the JETS project.
- 42 Ukrainian refugees signed up by BOOST for employment support following funding from World Jewish Relief, and 20 helped into employment.
- 288 clients helped by the Domestic Abuse One Stop Shop in 2020/21.

The challenges ahead

We know there is no quick fix to the homelessness and temporary accommodation crisis. We want everyone in Barnet to have access to a stable, safe, and decent home, and we are committed to using our resources innovatively to prevent and reduce homelessness.

Insufficient social housing to meet demand

There is not currently enough suitable housing in Barnet for everyone to have a safe, secure, and affordable home. There are over 3,000 households on the housing needs register waiting for permanent homes, and of this over 1,800 households are homeless and living in suitable long-term temporary accommodation. The shortage of affordable housing creates significant challenges to reducing the number of households that are homeless.



Delivery of affordable homes for rent in Barnet from 2018 to February 2023

Provider Type	Number of Homes	Rent Level
Barnet Council (Barnet Homes)	53	Affordable Rent
Opendoor Homes	295	Affordable Rent
Opendoor Homes	15	London Affordable Rent
Other Housing Associations	404	Affordable Rent
Other Housing Associations	146	Social Rent
Other Housing Associations	57	London Affordable Rent
Total	970	

Homes to be delivered in Barnet on regeneration sites (affordable)

Regeneration sites (affordable housing)	2023	2024	2025	2026	2027	2028	2029	2030	2031	Total
Dollis Valley	4	89	7							100
Granville Road		46								46
West Hendon	78	72	34	96						280
Grahame Park		209			403	225	72		366	1,257
Total	82	416	105	160	505	225	72		566	1,701

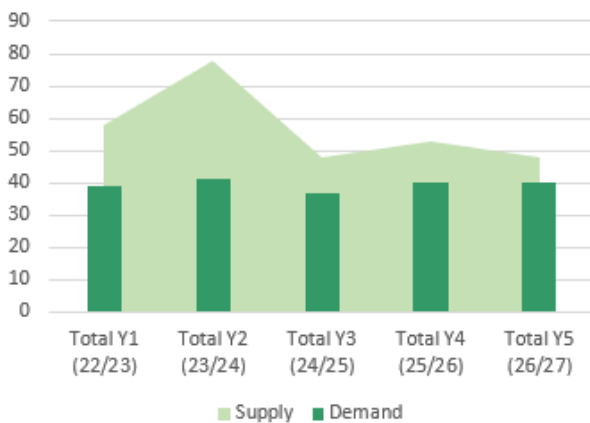
Whilst Barnet’s housing trajectory shows that the borough will exceed the targets for housing completions in the London Plan, demand continues to outweigh the supply of affordable housing in the borough.

In working to address the challenges we face to provide housing for all those who are in need, we consider information in various ways that may help to highlight particular challenges. In Barnet Homes’ supply vs demand modelling for five years from 2022/23, which includes only demand from the highest priority households in Bands 1 and 2, direct offers, and regeneration and ad-hoc decanting of properties, we are currently experiencing and further expect a shortage of 1-, 3-, and 4-bedroom properties.

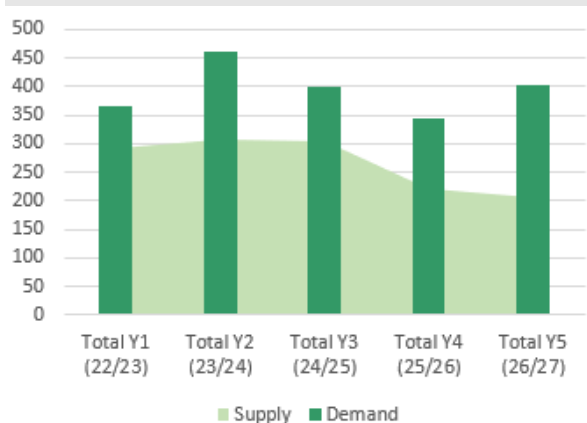
In practice, when taking account of demand in Band 3 (where need is similar to band 2, but there is no Community Contribution under the Housing Allocation Scheme) and Band 4, including those in Band 4 who are housed in suitable long-term temporary accommodation, there is pressure across all property sizes, and overall demand for social housing in Barnet far outweighs the supply. Whilst the majority of households that are made and accept an offer of social housing are in Bands 1 and 2 or are direct offers, 19.1% of those who were placed in social housing between 1 July 2022 and 30 June 2023 had been prioritised in Bands 3 or 4. To enable us to continue to provide safe and secure accommodation to those in housing need, it is clear that we must continue to focus our efforts on increasing the amount of social housing in the borough. We intend to update future modelling to illustrate in more detail the nature of the pressures in Bands 3 and 4.

Housing supply and demand (for Bands 1 and 2 and direct offers) by property size

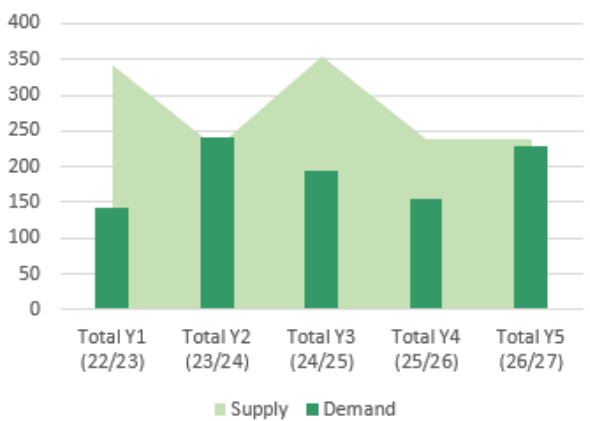
Studio properties:



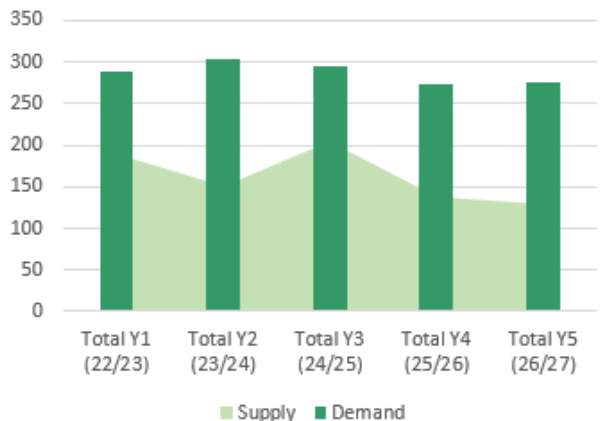
1-bedroom properties:

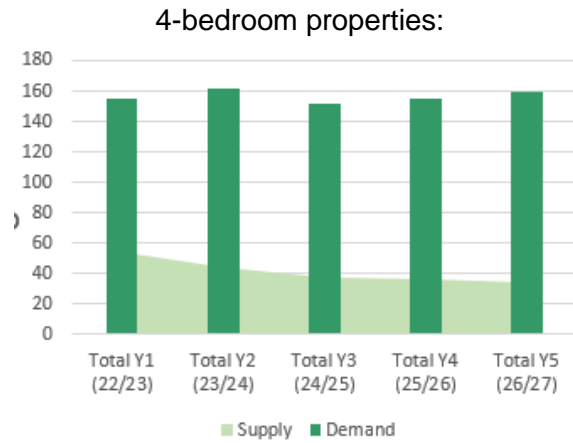


2-bedroom properties:

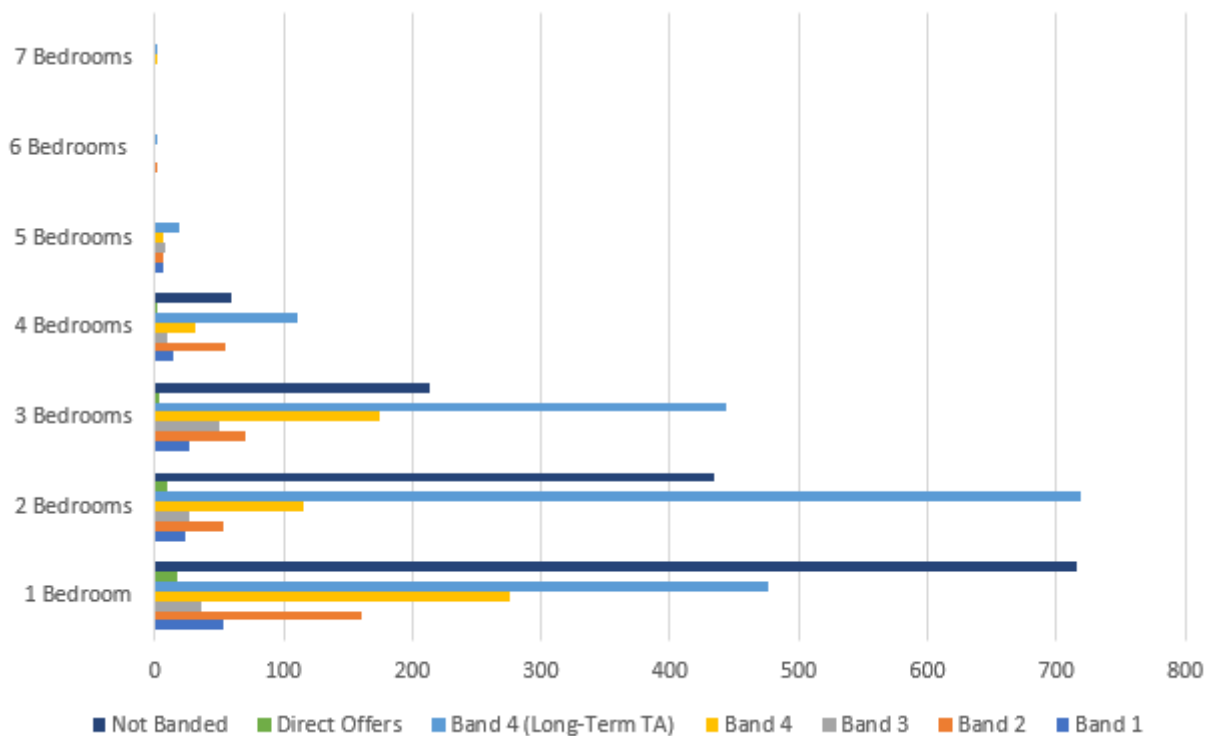


3-bedroom properties:





Overall demand by property size (as of 26 June 2023)

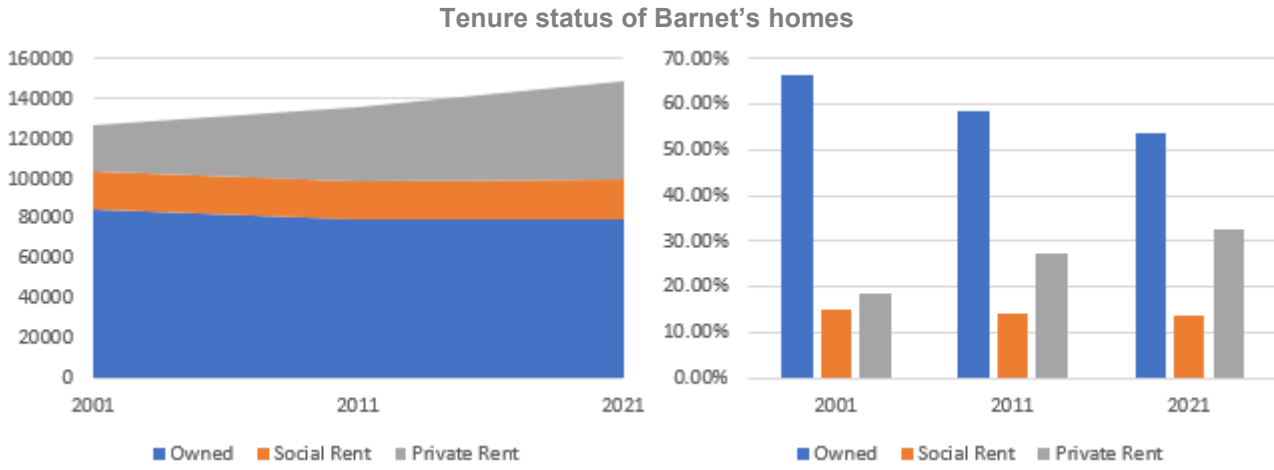


The loss of existing social housing also impacts upon the available supply of affordable housing, with fewer council homes replaced than sold each year. The number of council homes sold under the Government’s Right to Buy increased each year from 2017 to 2019. Although the number reduced as a result of the COVID-19 pandemic, 69 council homes were sold in 2022, a significant increase compared to previous years.

We face a significant challenge as the number of households in temporary accommodation increases if the number of households that are homeless isn’t matched by the availability of suitable, affordable homes. Whilst the lockdowns and emergency measures of the COVID-19 pandemic led to more homeless households being accommodated, we are starting to see an upward trend in the number of homeless cases being opened and are likely to face considerable challenges to bring the number of households in temporary accommodation down further still.

Increasing lack of affordability of private rents, and instability in the market

The private rented sector is home to a high proportion of Barnet’s residents, and affordability constraints mean that for many it is a way of life. The number of households relying on the private rented sector has more than doubled in the last 20 years, and now accounts for a third of the homes in the borough.

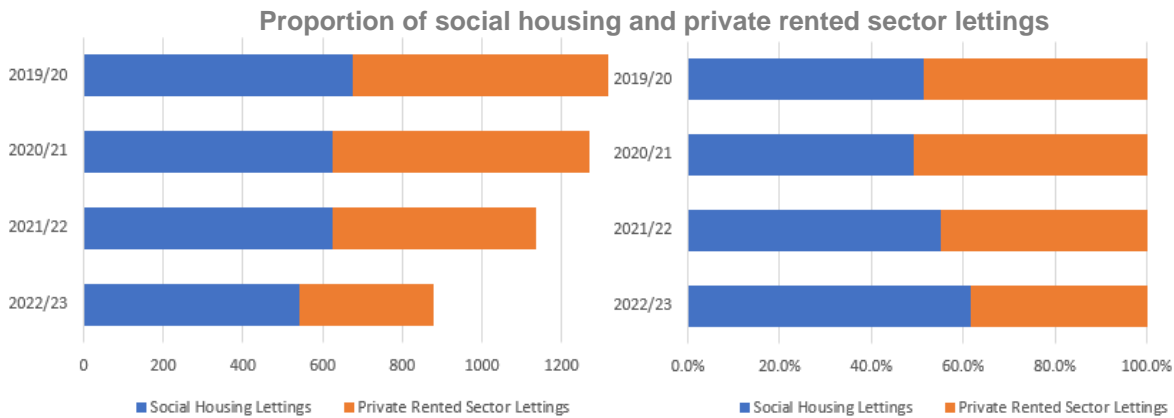


Rents have increased over the past two decades, and the median monthly rent in Barnet in 2019 (£1,365) was slightly higher than that for Outer London (£1,300), with the average monthly rent more markedly higher (£1,548 compared to £1,394). Average property prices are also high at approximately 15 times the average income of £39,700, rising by 13.6% between January 2019 and October 2022.

Eviction levels reduced significantly during the pandemic; however, the lifting of the eviction ban in June 2021 coupled with financial challenges such as rent increases in the face of rising mortgage rates and the cost-of-living crisis creating even greater affordability issues, we expect to see the number of households presenting as homeless increase and potentially rapidly accelerate. We may see the proposed Renters Reform Bill introduced to Parliament in 2023, which is expected to ban Section 21 ‘no-fault’ evictions alongside abolishing arbitrary rent review clauses and rights to challenge unjustified rent rises. It is hoped that these will give greater security for families who are able to afford their rent, however we must wait to see whether the legislation will impact on homeless applications.

The Localism Act 2011 allowed councils to discharge their housing duty to the private sector, and Barnet has benefited from this increased flexibility. However, the cost of private sector leases is increasing due to the competition for properties and overall rise in market rents, which in Barnet are now slightly higher than pre-pandemic levels. Although we offer incentives to landlords to help secure affordable accommodation for homeless households, it is proving more difficult and more expensive to do so.

One of the reasons for Barnet’s success in bringing down the numbers in temporary accommodation to a 10-year low in 2022 was strong access to the private rented sector (PRS), with nearly 50% of lettings being made across the past three years; however, Barnet is experiencing a continuing contraction of the PRS, and the number of lettings made each year is reducing. From a peak of 82 PRS placements in November 2020, the number each month has been below 50 since November 2021, and was a low of 20 in December 2022. The general contraction in the private rented sector is impacting the supply of temporary accommodation, and we expect to see more landlords looking to sell or not renew leases due to the financial challenges that many face.



To maintain its present level of prevention and relief, Barnet will need to continue to access a significant amount of private rented sector accommodation and work with private landlords to support households at risk of homelessness into sustainable tenancies, and it is likely to become increasingly challenging to source over the next 5 years due to affordability and supply. Demand for affordable housing and temporary accommodation is rising and along with the supply of social housing contracting the provision of private rented sector accommodation has diminished.

There is a reduction in properties coming onto the market at LHA rates as landlords are able to achieve greater rents elsewhere, and we are also seeing an increasing number of benefit-capped tenants who cannot afford PRS rents. There is additionally rising competition for PRS temporary accommodation, with other boroughs often offering higher incentives to PRS landlords in addition to other benefits such as rent in advance. With these challenges, Barnet is likely to increasingly rely upon emergency accommodation. There is a real risk that these imbalances will worsen and lead to a major crisis.

Benefit and welfare reforms

There has been a reduction in the real value of benefits, and few private rented temporary accommodation or move-on properties are now affordable to households on benefits. Households also face challenges due to long waits for Universal Credit payments, and the disproportionate impact of the cost-of-living crisis on the poorest households. The freezing of Local Housing Allowance (LHA) rates since April 2020 means that at an average rent of £1,505 per month, which is higher than most other boroughs in Outer London, most rents in Barnet are above the LHA rates.

High housing costs that far exceed the Local Housing Allowance and a lack of suitable accommodation, including a contraction of the private rented sector, mean that we increasingly have to house families outside of Barnet, and in the current environment we recognise that this may become increasingly likely. We know that placing households in temporary accommodation away from the borough can lead to challenges including having to resettle away from work, schools, and support networks, and we are committed to supporting households to minimise the disruption. The shortage of temporary accommodation in Barnet, similarly to other London boroughs, is also affecting the number of households placed in emergency accommodation, and whilst we will continue to work to avoid families being placed in B&B accommodation for more than six weeks, we recognise that this is also becoming increasingly challenging in the current housing market.

Since 2018/19 we have seen an increase in the proportion of homeless applicants aged 16-39, with a particular increase in those aged 16-29. Barnet, like other local authorities, facing a significant challenge to finding affordable shared housing for homeless households under 35. The Shared

Accommodation (benefit) Rate is lower than the LHA rate, which leaves tenants with large shortfalls to make up that make it very challenging to find shared accommodation in the area.

Housing applicants face further affordability challenges due to welfare reform including the benefit cap, which makes it harder for those affected to pay their rent and meet their living costs. As of August 2022, 2,392 residents in Barnet were in receipt of Universal Credit and were benefit-capped, and 206 residents were in receipt of Housing Benefit and were benefit-capped. In 2021/22, 4.7% of housing applications (99 in number) in Barnet were from residents who were benefit-capped.

Meeting diverse and complex needs

We know that some groups are disproportionately affected by homelessness and the housing crisis, and the shortage of suitable affordable housing most significantly affects those in need of larger, family-sized homes and those who need an accessible home. Whilst the number of households on the housing needs register decreased slightly from April 2022 to December 2022, there was an increase in those in Band 1 (the highest priority band) and with direct offers and Band 2, and a reduction in those in Band 4, including those in Band 4 who are living in suitable long-term temporary accommodation.

In Barnet we also see that ethnic minority households are disproportionately affected by homelessness, particularly Black and Black British households which represented 23.3% of all cases in 2021/22 compared to Barnet's Black or Black British population of 7.9% in the 2021 Census, and Mixed or Multiple Ethnic households which represented 9.2% of all cases compared to a population of 5.4%. Key reasons for this include the distribution of debt as seen amongst those approaching Barnet Homes, and the role of unemployment, low income, and lack of resource to public funds. We also know that disabled people are 2.4 times more likely to become homeless in Barnet, with mental ill health as the largest disability presenting to Barnet Homes. Reasons for this include established links between mental health, traumatic experiences, and rough sleeping, as well as mental ill health being both a cause of homelessness and the result of homelessness.

There can be several barriers to accessing services to prevent homelessness as a result of the diverse and complex needs of those most affected. For individuals who are disabled, those with mental ill health, and those who are financially vulnerable, digital barriers are critical and can limit individual's ability to complete applications and access support. For those from ethnic minority backgrounds there can be language barriers, and these households are more likely to have no recourse to public funds which makes it difficult to access support.

Supporting rough sleepers off the streets is challenging. Rough sleepers are frequently highly mobile and have a range of different and often complex needs. Mental health problems are often a barrier to rough sleepers leaving the streets, and often lead to them returning to rough sleeping. Adopting psychologically- and trauma-informed approaches and partnership working are essential to achieving success in supporting rough sleepers off the streets.

New administrative responsibilities and duties from the Homelessness Reduction Act 2017

The statutory duties for councils to house were extended in 2017 in the Homelessness Reduction Act, which prioritised a preventative approach to homelessness. Changes in legislation since the 1970s have helped local authorities to tackle homelessness and provide temporary accommodation for those who need it most, however in the last five years in Barnet we have seen levels of homelessness increase and growing pressure on the systems in place to provide support and accommodation.

The Homelessness Reduction Act 2017 places a duty on local authorities to provide anyone at risk of being homeless within a 56-day period with advice and support. Prior to the implementation of the Act in April 2018, Barnet did not routinely capture information on the numbers approaching the council for assistance with the prevention of homelessness. In 2018/19, Barnet Council received 2,608 requests for assistance. The largest increase, due to the changes introduced through the Act, was in single person households which made up 49% of all those applying for assistance.

The Homelessness Reduction Act 2017 placed duties on local housing authorities to intervene at earlier stages to prevent homelessness in their areas, and to provide homelessness services to all those who are eligible. The Act also introduced a duty on specified public authorities to refer service users who they think may be homeless or threatened with homelessness to the housing options team. This is intended to ensure services are working together effectively to prevent homelessness by making sure people's housing needs are considered when they come into contact with public authorities.

From April 2018 to February 2023, Barnet Homes' Housing Options service received 1,422 referrals under the duty to refer or from partner organisations that do not have the duty; however, whilst we are seeing high numbers of referrals, the quality of these referrals has not been consistent and there is further work to do to support partner agencies to provide more detailed information to allow a swifter response.

Priority 1: Prevent homelessness.

We will focus on identifying those who are most at risk, tackling the root causes of homelessness, working in partnership to ensure early intervention and 'upstreaming' this where possible, preventing recurring homelessness, and improving awareness, advice, and information.

Our aims are to:

- Work in partnership to prevent households from becoming homeless;
- Encourage interventions from public sector partners and community and voluntary sector organisations that have early contact with households at risk of homelessness and are able to advise them to approach the council;
- Make advice and information available for residents to access services that may help prevent homelessness;
- Prevent recurring homelessness;
- Continue to improve our use of data to understand how homelessness is affecting particular groups, including those with mental ill health, those with disabilities, those affected by domestic abuse, those leaving hospital, care leavers, veterans, ex-offenders, and other groups that may be disproportionately affected.

Working in partnership to prevent homelessness

To achieve our objectives in preventing homelessness, we need to work successfully in partnership. We will continue to strengthen our practical arrangements to ensure a continued commitment to joint working to prevent homelessness and improve outcomes for those at risk of or affected by it.

Barnet is a member of the North London Housing Partnership, a strategic umbrella organisation that brings together housing and homelessness managers working within six North London local authorities: Barnet, Camden, Enfield, Haringey, Islington, and Westminster. Through this partnership we look at how to make best use of our collective housing stock and have a strong track record of successfully applying for funding to deliver frontline services where gaps have been identified. The partnership has provided a strong voice for North London in representing members' views on consultations and calls for evidence, as well as commissioning research into the cumulative impacts of government policy and the financial implications of additional homelessness prevention duties.

At a sub-regional level, the partnership has been effective in working with Barnet and the other boroughs to secure funding for a range of housing and homelessness initiatives, including:

- New to the Streets, a rapid response project for new rough sleepers in North London to which Barnet referred six clients between October 2020 and October 2021.
- Supporting access to the charity RAMFEL (Refugee and Migrant Forum of Essex and London) to provide immigration and legal advice for vulnerable migrants who are rough sleeping, which assisted 13 cases from Barnet between April 2022 and December 2022.
- Establishing the North London Multi-Disciplinary Rough Sleeping Hub, the first joint sub-regional rough sleeping service in the country. It works with all client journeys away from rough sleeping, and as of the beginning of February 2023 8 clients from Barnet had been accepted into the service.

- Providing high-quality training to Barnet's trainee Housing Needs Officers and Housing Needs Officers to enable them to deliver effective frontline homelessness services.
- Implementing a Nightly Paid Accommodation project, which at a pan-London level has achieved an 11% reduction in placement costs and £1.7m in savings.

The Barnet Group's BOOST service provides homelessness prevention support in the partnership work it does with Citizen's Advice, which funded an Outreach Adviser within the service, and close working with the council's Revenue and Benefits service and Capita. The service also provides support on food security, a digital inclusion network, and participates in the Prevention and Wellbeing forum in partnership with Adult Services, the DWP, and voluntary and community sector partners. BOOST's work with the DWP Jobcentre Borough Relationships Manager has also helped to connect claimants at risk to housing advice, and to provide information and training about housing to jobcentre staff in Barnet. We will continue to focus on partnership working through the BOOST service to provide additional homelessness prevention support across the borough.

The Housing Options service will work with our public sector partners to support them to make homelessness referrals meaningful, including delivering briefing sessions on the Duty to Refer, with the aim of delivering greater responsiveness to those who are in need.

Through the Rough Sleeping Operational Group, Barnet Homes will continue to meet on a weekly basis with our partners Homeless Action in Barnet and Together in Barnet to take a case-based approach to reviewing what is currently happening on the streets, reviewing any vacancies within shelters, and understanding any blockages or challenges. This approach has been in place since 2020, originating as a measure during the COVID-19 pandemic, and we have benefitted from the improved communication it enables.

Whilst the end of a social housing tenancy is not a frequent reason for becoming homeless (0.1% of all homeless presentations in 2021/22, down from 1.8% in 2018/19), we will work in partnership with registered providers within the borough to build improved pathways and promote early intervention.

Ensuring information on housing options is easily accessible

Information is key to prevention, and we want to ensure everyone has access to information before they are at the point of crisis to help them make informed decisions about the choices available to them. We know that our partners in the public sector as well as in the voluntary and community sector have early contact with households at risk of homelessness, and we need to ensure they are equipped with the right knowledge and information about housing options and homelessness and to encourage those at risk to approach the council for support. We will work closely with partners, including exploring options for delivering briefings, advice, training, and face-to-face engagement to help them understand the basics on homelessness and rough sleeping, the pressures regarding supply and demand, and how they can support us to meet our aims.

To build our understanding about whether at-risk households are aware of the services the council could provide to prevent homelessness, we will undertake a survey of those approaching as homeless to understand their experience and how well-informed they are, and will use this information to make targeted improvements where possible.

In 2021, Barnet undertook a disproportionality study which led to the formation of a Tackling the Gaps: Fighting Inequalities group to address inequalities in the borough. Alongside this, a Homelessness Prevention and Insight Project was carried out to better understand disproportionate

representation within those approaching as homeless. The project examined the prevention of homelessness across services in Barnet and was intended to increase understanding about who is most affected by homelessness. In addition to undertaking a desktop review of 22 services across the council, the project also engaged with customers and reviewed their experience, including through customer journey mapping workshops, the collection and analysis of case studies and complaints, and completing interviews to understand customers' experience of their journey to Barnet Homes and potential improvements to services.

The project highlighted high representation of those from a Black or Black British background, and high representation of those who are disabled, with mental ill health being the most common disability in those presenting to Barnet Homes. Reasons for this disproportionate representation include established links between mental health, traumatic experiences, and rough sleeping, as well as mental ill health being both a cause and result of homelessness. The Homelessness Prevention and Insight Project has identified particular communication needs for those groups disproportionately affected by homelessness, including digital and language barriers. We will use the information from this project to make improvements to advice and communication, including working with partners wherever possible to improve the support available with form-filling.

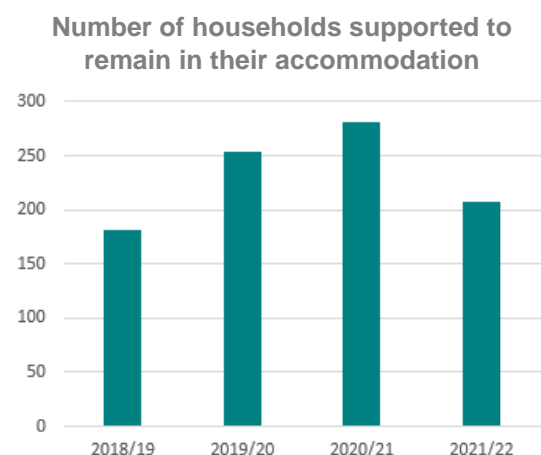
We will improve the housing advice we provide online, and keep our communications under review to ensure they are accessible and inclusive. We will continue to work collaboratively across all departments and Barnet Homes as part of a wider Resident Experience programme to improve access to services and support at the 'front door', particularly for those presenting with multiple needs as a result of their circumstances. We expect many residents who are homeless or at risk of homelessness to be positively impacted by our work to identify and refer those who can benefit from our digital inclusion skills programme and laptop donation scheme, which will help residents to gain essential skills and tools required to get online, enabling those who wish to access services online to do so.

We will use a 'no wrong door' approach to housing advice in collaboration with our public sector and voluntary and community sector partners, and we will develop a shared approach to signposting, referrals, and homelessness triage. As part of this, we will review the impact and outcomes of our Domestic Abuse One Stop Shop, as well as good practice across the sector, to inform a review of a potential model to co-locate statutory and VCS services to prevent homelessness.

Supporting residents facing eviction to remain in their homes

Barnet has a strong track record of preventing homelessness by supporting people to remain in their current accommodation, with 207 in 2021/22 and 281 in 2020/21.

We will continue to provide financial interventions where necessary to support people to remain in their homes. In 2021/22 870 awards of Discretionary Housing Payment were made, with a total value of £2,076,712. 30% of these payments were made to council or temporary accommodation tenants. The Crisis Fund also spent £300,111 in 2021/22 to support households to move to new, suitable accommodation.



This successful prevention work is likely to become more challenging over the coming years due to the present environment, and we will explore innovative ways to prevent homelessness in different ways, keep people in their homes, and manage homelessness demand.

To ensure a comprehensive approach to improving conditions in the private rented sector and try to reduce the number of homelessness applications to the council due to poor housing conditions, including damp and mould, in 2023 we will recruit an additional Housing Enforcement Officer to the Private Sector Housing Team. This new role should enable the tenants applying for rehousing to be prioritised for an inspection, as well as more rapid engagement with landlords around improvement, so that the tenancy can be maintained where possible. This should help improve the living conditions of tenants in the private rented sector, and in cases where tenancy sustainment cannot be achieved it will enable Barnet Homes' Housing Options service to progress homeless applications more quickly where the grounds for approach are suitability due to damp and mould.

Continuing to improve our use of data to target interventions at the groups at highest risk of homelessness

We will make further use of our data and insight from customers, including that gathered in our Homelessness Prevention and Insight Project, and information from our partners, including the specific triggers, risk factors, and causes of homelessness at different points in people's lives, to identify groups likely to be at risk of homelessness so that we can develop targeted action and improve prevention. This includes recording and analysing data on diverse needs such as homelessness among LGBT+ residents in Barnet.

By improving our collection of and analysis of data, we will be better able to work with groups at risk of homelessness to give them access to tailored support early, including those from ethnic minority backgrounds, survivors of domestic abuse, those with mental ill health, those leaving hospital, and those leaving prison.

We will continue to work in partnership across a range of services to continue the work of the Homelessness Prevention and Insight Project through the Insight and Intelligence Hub's Homelessness Analysis Project. This will ensure an insight-led approach to prevention through early identification and quantitative investigation into at-risk groups, including exploring how the population requesting support with housing has changed over the past 18 months and the reasons for this. Our aim is to be able to more proactively identify potentially at-risk and vulnerable households, using the information held across the council, before they approach as homeless or at risk of homelessness, so we can upstream our prevention work wherever possible.

From 2019 to January 2023, there have been 5,243 repeat homelessness applications (38% of all applications received), and 954 repeat admissions into temporary accommodation (32.1% of all admissions). We will use the information we hold on these cases to understand if there are steps that could have been taken to prevent their return to homelessness and/or temporary accommodation, to identify opportunities to deliver earlier intervention.

Priority 2: Ensure a sufficient supply of accommodation.

We will focus on accessing social housing and the private rented sector, making effective use of the council's housing assets, continuing to try to reduce the use of temporary accommodation, bringing empty properties back into use, and looking to address specialist needs including supported housing, domestic abuse, and accessible properties.

Our aims are to:

- Find ways to increase the supply of accommodation to meet the needs of people who are or may become homeless, including through:
 - Delivering new council housing and enabling the delivery of other social housing across the borough
 - Working to provide a range of suitable accommodation for different needs, including private rented sector, shared accommodation, supported housing, and domestic abuse refuges.
 - Seeking funding to meet diverse needs within the borough.

Delivering more social housing in Barnet

We will take forward our plans to boost the supply of social housing across the borough through our Housing Strategy and the provisions of Barnet's Local Plan, working in partnership wherever possible to meet the needs of residents. We aim to increase the supply of social housing not only by delivering new council housing, with a target of delivering 1,000 new genuinely affordable council homes, and enabling the delivery of other new social housing across the borough, but also by tackling over- and under-occupation through our Fresh Start initiative as well as bringing empty homes within the borough back into use. For more information about how we will deliver the right homes in the right places, please see our Housing Strategy 2023-28.

Ensuring a range of accommodation is provided to meet housing needs

To ensure there is an adequate supply of suitable accommodation within the borough, we are currently heavily reliant upon the private rented sector. However, already-high market rents continue to rise, and there is a risk that private landlords faced with requirements to bring properties up to sustainability targets as well as a potential new Decent Homes Standard may find that they are unable to do so. We are already seeing an impact on the availability of private rented sector properties. Our reliance on the private rented sector is not sustainable in the current market, and so we need to think differently about how we ensure the right supply of accommodation. We must remain open to innovative solutions, including exploring opportunities for the council to acquire additional accommodation. We will also continue to, wherever possible, offer opportunities to split large households with a high bedroom need into two smaller households where they are willing to do this.

Whilst we will explore other options to maintain a supply of affordable accommodation, we will work to ensure a continued supply of suitable private rented sector properties. Barnet Homes' Housing Options and Let2Barnet teams will work closely to understand the impact of any changes to the landlord incentive scheme and keep this offer under review in light of changing circumstances and challenges in the housing market.

As part of our efforts to increase the availability of suitable temporary accommodation against the challenge of a contracting private rented sector, we will explore the viability of delivering innovative forms of housing, for example modular or pre-fab homes, on vacant sites that have been earmarked for development in the borough that would otherwise remain underused in the short to medium term.

There is presently higher demand for wheelchair-accessible homes than are available. Our Housing Strategy 2023-28 includes our plans to increase the supply and to encourage developers within the borough to help us ensure presently unmet need within the borough is addressed.

Ensuring adequate provision of accommodation for survivors of domestic abuse

Barnet provides a range of support for survivors of domestic abuse; however, based on the 1975 Violence in Marriage Select Committee's recommended ratio of 1 refuge space per 10,000 people, Barnet requires a total of 39 refuge spaces and currently has 24 available. Our refuge provision is very reliant on funding, and so it is hard to future-proof. We will apply for any funding that becomes available in order to secure additional provision of refuge spaces within the borough.

Ensuring an adequate supply of accommodation for care leavers

Barnet remains an expensive place to live, and for young people leaving care private rent levels are typically unaffordable. Barnet Homes will work closely with Children's and Family Services to explore innovative solutions to the challenges in securing suitable, affordable accommodation for this group, including reviewing options for delivering shared accommodation.

Delivering supported housing to meet needs in Barnet

Through our Adult Social Care services, we will establish a steering group to engage with residents to identify any gaps in housing provision and ensure identified areas are relevant to residents. Barnet Homes will also work closely with Adult Social Care to ensure specialised housing needs are understood and delivered within the programme of increasing the supply of affordable accommodation. We will look to set up a multi-service working group aimed at reviewing existing supply and housing stock and levels of need, to explore in partnership what we need more of and how we can increase the supply of supported housing for older and disabled residents.

Seeking funding to meet diverse needs within the borough

We will consider opportunities to bid for funding from central government or the Greater London Authority to deliver more housing within the borough, including the Single Homelessness Accommodation Programme to deliver homes and support services for people who are sleeping rough or at risk of sleeping rough, and Housing working with Adult Services to bid for funding to deliver supported accommodation wherever possible and where a need is identified.

We will also explore any opportunity to seek additional funding from the Greater London Authority to enable increased delivery of accommodation for care leavers, particularly where it may be possible to offer rents at social or London Affordable Rent levels.

Priority 3: Provide support for people who are or have been homeless.

We will focus on working in partnership to provide support, including for single people at particular risk, rough sleepers, families, survivors of domestic abuse, and households in temporary accommodation. This includes housing-related support and personal support including with domestic abuse, mental health problems, drug and alcohol addiction, poverty, debt, and unemployment.

Our aims are to:

- Work in partnership to provide support to people who are, or may be at risk of becoming homeless and those who have been homeless and need support to prevent them becoming homeless.
- Provide appropriate housing-related support and personal support to prevent or reduce homelessness, including for rough sleepers and those who are at particular risk such as care leavers, ex-offenders, veterans, survivors of domestic abuse, people with mental ill health, and people leaving hospital.

Identifying support needs and developing personalised housing plans

The Homelessness Reduction Act 2017 introduced a duty for housing authorities to assess an applicant's case and develop a personalised housing plan that is tailored to include specific, personalised housing advice and support. Barnet Homes develops these based on assessments of applicant's needs, and we will keep these plans under review to enhance them wherever possible, including exploring the potential to introduce additional information to signpost applicants to support services and information.

Working in partnership to provide support

Barnet has achieved great success through close working of the Housing Options service with the BOOST service, The Barnet Group's employment, benefit advice, skills, and wellbeing project. We will continue to make referrals to help those who are, or may be at risk of becoming, homeless with income maximisation support, employment advice, and money and debt advice.

Single homelessness applicants have often experienced most trauma, and often fail when left on their own. Currently there is insufficient supply of supported accommodation in Barnet, so we will explore the potential to deliver a revised approach for this group. Barnet Homes and Adult Social Care will work together to explore opportunities to bid for funding to procure additional supported accommodation for single homeless applicants who cannot live independently. If this accommodation is obtained, Barnet Homes will evaluate the viability of creating a move-on protocol with Adult Social Care and Adult Mental Health, and will explore options to address the lack of move-on options for this vulnerable group of people.

Many at-risk households experience challenges in maintaining their tenancy once they are settled in accommodation, and there is a high risk of tenancy failure. We will work in partnership to develop pre-tenancy training that is tailored for people who have never rented before or are at most risk of repeated homelessness.

Some households will not be eligible for housing assistance under the Homelessness Reduction Act due to their immigration status. Where this is the case, advice will be given on their housing options, and if there are vulnerable members in the household such as dependent children or adults with significant mental or physical health needs, referrals will be made to Children's and Family Services and Adult Social Care. Children's and Family Services will assess whether any duty is owed to the

household under section 17 of the Children Act 2004 and Adult Social Care taking into account sections 22-23 of the Care Act 2014.

With funding from World Jewish Relief, the BOOST service employed a Ukrainian Employment Support Worker in 2022. This funding is expected to be renewed for a further year, and an additional post will be created due to the demand in Barnet and the success of the approach to date. This service will continue to make contact with Ukrainian refugees in the borough to make assessments, identify English as a Second Language needs, sign up individuals for support, convert foreign qualifications into UK equivalents, and broker jobs and support individuals into work. In February 2023, there were 40 Ukrainian refugees taking part in the programme, and of these 13 had qualifications equivalised by the UK National Information Centre, 13 had been supported into work, 3 had started their own business, and 4 were participating in volunteering work.

Prior to the COVID-19 pandemic, Barnet Homes led the Domestic Abuse One Stop Shop, a successful drop-in advice service for survivors of domestic abuse, female genital mutilation, force marriage, rape and sexual violence, sexual exploitation, prostitution, honour-based violence, stalking, and harassment. This multi-partnership service brought together multiple agencies to provide support and advice, including health advisors, police, solicitors, domestic violence and abuse specialist agencies, and local women's aid and rights organisations. There have been challenges in delivering a remote service during and in the aftermath of the pandemic, and in February 2023 a face-to-face one stop shop was reinstated. We will continue to work with partners to provide essential advice and support to those who need it.

Some London boroughs have been able to put in place multi-disciplinary teams, for example to support hospital discharge through early assessment of housing needs and identifying support to reduce the likelihood of readmission. We will review good practice and explore the potential to put in place an approach in Barnet that provides coordinated support to address residents' multiple needs.

Supporting recovery and independence through a personalised and trauma-informed approach

We will continue to provide tailored and flexible support for single people who are at particular risk of becoming homeless. In 2022, our Homelessness Prevention and Insight Project recommended that we can better help vulnerable customers by applying a trauma-informed approach to our work. As part of this, we are delivering training for staff on trauma, the effects of trauma, how to avoid moral injury, compassion fatigue and burn out, how to support customers who have experienced trauma.

Additional Trauma-Informed Practice training has been developed for Barnet Homes' Housing Options service to support them to enact the service delivery training, focusing on maintaining their wellbeing and looking after themselves when working with customers affected by trauma. Barnet Homes is also working in partnership with Adult Social Care to set up a renewed approach to supervisions for front-line staff to give them the opportunity to talk about cases, discuss good and bad outcomes, and support each other. We will continue to provide support and training for our staff to help them deliver appropriate services to customers who have experienced trauma and look after their own wellbeing, to help ensure positive outcomes are achieved.

Supporting rough sleepers

A range of services are provided within the borough to provide support and accommodation to rough sleepers, and we will continue to work with our public sector and voluntary and community sector partners to improve outcomes for those who have experience of rough sleeping.

The Barnet Homes-led BOOST service will continue to provide free and accessible support for any resident, including employment support for rough sleepers through two Rough Sleeper Support Workers. BOOST also provides access to staff from Barnet Homes, Barnet Education and Learning Service, Discretionary Housing Payments, and Future Path. In 2021/22, the Rough Sleeper Support Workers worked with 29 clients, all of whom were EEA Nationals, supporting five into work and assisting with benefit claims and seeking settled status. We will explore opportunities for BOOST to provide location-based employment support for rough sleepers.

We will explore how a 'Housing First' project could be successfully implemented within Barnet, with the aim of taking a more holistic, preventative approach to tackling homelessness by providing immediate access to a settled and secure home for people experiencing homelessness with complex and multiple needs, as a starting point to help tackle their non-housing needs by then introducing appropriate wrap-around care and support services.

There is a lack of longer-term supported accommodation for rough sleepers and single person households with medium to high support needs in Barnet, and it is difficult for rough sleepers to access supported accommodation through Adult Social Care due to the high thresholds for assistance. Following initial placements in short-term supported accommodation, it can be challenging to secure sustainable longer-term accommodation for a number of reasons, including standard temporary accommodation not being suitable for those with complex needs, a lack of engagement sometimes with the floating support that is offered through the Rough Sleeping Accommodation Programme, and difficulty with tenancy sustainment for some rough sleepers due to anti-social behaviour and rent arrears. These challenges can result in support needs not being met, a decline in health, and a risk of returning to the streets. We will explore options for delivering additional supported accommodation to support rough sleepers and single person households with medium to high support needs. Services would offer longer lengths of stay and more intensive support to build an individual's independent living skills. We will need to ensure there is a clear move-on pathway as part of each person's supported journey towards greater independence.

It can be difficult to maintain communication with rough sleepers as they do not always have access to a telephone, they may relocate which makes it difficult for the Rough Sleeper Team to find them again, and some rough sleepers simply are not able to prioritise maintaining good communication with Barnet Homes due to the challenges they are facing in their lives. Poor communication causes delays to rough sleepers receiving the support they need, and if the housing process takes a long time to complete the risk of disengagement increases. We will continue to explore ways to overcome this challenge, including monitoring the success of Barnet Homes' initiative to purchase cheap mobile phones for rough sleepers, and working in partnership with refuges to provide communications and information to those who are in short-term accommodation.

The rough sleeper severe weather emergency protocol (SWEP) aims to get rough sleepers off the streets during periods of below-zero night-time temperatures by providing emergency accommodation. Barnet Homes has a strong track record in managing demand when SWEP is activated, and in the past has not had to use rest centres due to excellent relationships with and access to a large number of temporary accommodation providers. Over both the December 2022 and January 2023 SWEP periods, Barnet accommodated 19 individuals. In light of the current housing market and pressures on supply and cost, there is a risk that in future it will be more challenging to secure sufficient accommodation to meet needs without needing to provide rest centres. We will keep our approach under review in anticipation of periods of colder weather, and will look to take further steps such as block-booking accommodation and exploring other options if circumstances make securing temporary accommodation challenging.

Where issues exist such as street drinking, begging, drug misuse, and anti-social behaviour, it can be challenging to identify where rough sleepers are committing these behaviours. Community Safety will work in partnership with Barnet Homes' Rough Sleepers team to undertake joint visits and identify where rough sleepers are participating in these activities so that support can be provided.

The Rough Sleeper team currently undertakes twice-weekly early morning outreach, with drug and alcohol support from Change Grow Live. Whilst a range of services can be provided through this partnership working, there is presently a gap in accessing support from mental health professionals to jointly assess clients on the street. The Mental Health team will work in partnership with Barnet Homes to explore potential improvements to the outreach support for rough sleepers. As part of this, we will monitor the success of the newly created dual-diagnosis psychologist within Change Grow Live, which will be able to make referrals to specialist mental health services, to understand if this successfully addresses this gap.

Supporting care leavers

Whilst youth homelessness is not a particular concern within Barnet, young people who are leaving care are at greater risk of homelessness, and we have a responsibility to ensure they are settled in suitable accommodation and have adequate support to help them sustain their tenancies and maintain employment, education, or training.

It is important that young people leaving care are adequately prepared and supported to live independently and that suitable accommodation is available to them. Barnet Homes will continue to work closely with Children's and Family Services to ensure appropriate support and advice is provided to young people leaving care to prevent them from becoming homeless, including ensuring the joint protocol between Barnet Homes and Children's and Family Services continues to work effectively, and to support care leavers to be tenancy ready. Older young people are increasingly entering care due to risks associated with gangs and county lines drug-dealing networks, and Barnet Homes will explore with Children's and Family Services how we can increase the supply of safe accommodation and support.

The Barnet Group's BOOST service will also continue to provide support for care leavers. In September 2022, BOOST provided funding of £45k from the Household Support Fund towards care leavers' utility costs, and in November 2022 provided a grant of £5k to the Onwards and Upwards care leavers hub.

In early 2023, Barnet's Care Leaver's Housing Protocol was updated to reaffirm the council's corporate parenting role to meet the needs of children in care and care leavers. The protocol affirms the need to assess children in care's housing need before they leave care, and to work to meet their housing need under the council's Housing Allocation Scheme, avoiding the homelessness assessment route wherever possible. The protocol acknowledges that care leavers, like all young people, may make mistakes; however, there will be no situation where the council will discharge its corporate parenting responsibilities or housing duty to care leavers by deeming them 'intentionally homeless'. Barnet Homes and Children's and Family Services will work closely to deliver the protocol, and will keep it under review to ensure its effectiveness.

Supporting survivors of domestic abuse

In response to levels of housing need and the complexities of domestic abuse cases, Barnet Homes created a Domestic Abuse Team in October 2022 with funding from the Mayor's Office for Policing

and Crime (MOPAC). The team provides enhanced support to survivors of domestic abuse and their children. The team manages the most complex and high-risk housing cases for domestic abuse survivors, from the initial assessment of survivors' and their children's needs to their placement in safe accommodation, to their move-on and resettlement in long-term accommodation. Housing Needs Officers within the team co-create move-on/resettlement plans with survivors, and hand hold them through the housing application process.

Small caseloads of up to 20 cases gives them capacity to provide increased support to survivors of domestic abuse. At each point, floating support is available to support individuals through their recovery and resettlement pathway. The team aims to support up to 120 adults in the initial year of funding. Barnet Homes will keep the workings of this new service under review to ensure it operates as effectively as possible and delivers positive outcomes for those who access it, including placement in safe accommodation and resettlement in suitable long-term accommodation.

We have allocated funding for floating support officers within Barnet Homes' Domestic Abuse Team in recognition of the demand for support in this area. These officers will work with domestic abuse survivors from initial contact until after they move on into safe, long-term accommodation. This vital support will help survivors to access domestic abuse services, and provide a consistent, supportive presence to aid the recovery of those who face complex issues and additional barriers.

Barnet Homes is partnering with the Against Violence and Abuse charity to work with survivors of domestic abuse, services, and partners within the borough to improve housing and homelessness support for women survivors of gender-based violence. Against Violence and Abuse will recruit, train, and support women with lived experience to change policy and practice in the borough. We will explore any further opportunities to work in partnership with the voluntary and community sector and apply for any funding that may become available to deliver further services and support to survivors of domestic abuse.

Barnet will continue to provide its Sanctuary scheme to provide security measures to enable domestic abuse survivors to stay in their home if they want to and it is safe to do so. We will also continue to provide Minerva women's refuge to ensure safe-accommodation-based support for homeless women and their children fleeing domestic abuse and approaching Barnet Homes, including those with particular needs arising from their protected characteristics. The refuge is run in partnership with Solace Women's Aid, and supported 27 women and 14 children in 2021/2022.

Barnet Homes will continue to train its Housing Needs Officers on domestic abuse and homelessness as well as the new provisions under the New Domestic Abuse Act 2021. We will also continue to explore the option of dispersed accommodations for survivors of domestic abuse.

Supporting people leaving hospital

Building on the recommendations from Barnet's Homelessness Prevention and Insight Project and conversations between Housing Options and health partners in the NHS, Barnet Homes has secured £50k from the council's Prevention Fund to recruit a Health and Housing Navigator on a 12-month pilot. The pilot is designed to reduce delayed discharge from hospitals and improve housing pathways for vulnerable customers coming from mental health trusts and hospitals in the borough. The post-holder Health and Housing Navigator will take on a small complex caseload to support people who experience housing difficulties whilst in hospital.

Supporting people with mental ill health and/or physical health inequalities

There are challenges to ensuring access to appropriate support for people who are homeless and experiencing challenges with their mental health. We expect trauma-informed training to deliver improved support to those within this at-risk group, in addition to the Health and Housing Navigator providing support for vulnerable customers. Furthermore, the newly recruited dual diagnosis psychologist working within the Change Grow Live service will add capacity to deliver interventions to people who are homeless and have a combination of substance misuse and mental health issues. Barnet Homes will also work in partnership with Adult Social Care and specialist Mental Health services to identify ways to improve access to mental health services for those who are homeless.

Supporting families

Barnet Homes is represented at the Domestic Abuse Multi Agency Risk Assessment Conference (MARAC) to which high-risk and complex cases of domestic abuse are referred and discussed. The domestic abuse MARAC is held weekly and there is now a faster turnaround between referral of high risk and complex domestic abuse cases and multi-agency risk review and implementation of risk reduction safety plans. We will continue to ensure housing officers benefit from the regular training provided by MARAC.

Barnet Homes' floating support domestic abuse officers work with women who are frequently excluded from mainstream services and/or find it hard to engage with support. The service provides outreach activity, trauma informed approach and flexible 1-1 support, and will continue to provide support to those who are most at risk.

The Multi-Agency Safeguarding Hub (MASH) is a joint arrangement between Social Services and Barnet Homes that aims to ensure families' safeguarding risks are identified at an early stage. Schools, Health, the Police and the council all submit referrals through this route, and weekly meetings enable partners to review MASH referrals to determine what additional support a family may need. We will continue to support the MASH and will monitor its outcomes to ensure its effectiveness.

Supporting ex-offenders

Barnet Homes has secured funding of £332k from the Department of Levelling Up, Housing, and Communities' Accommodation for Ex-Offenders (AFEO) programme. This funding has been used to secure two Floating Support Officers and a part-time Lettings Negotiator from April 2023, as well as provide an enhanced incentive payment for private rented sector landlords. We expect over the two years of funded activity to increase access to private rented sector tenancies for ex-offenders who are homeless or at risk of becoming homeless, with an additional 66 ex-offenders to be rehoused and supported to sustain their tenancies and reintegrate into the community.

Supporting households living in temporary accommodation

We will continue to remind residents living in long-term temporary accommodation that they should update Barnet Homes if their circumstances change, to ensure their level of housing need is clearly understood.

We will continue to ensure temporary accommodation is in a good state of repair and meets requirements. Barnet Homes' compliance programme inspects all properties in use on a rolling basis. Barnet Homes is also part of a pan-London temporary accommodation inspection service called Setting the Standards, which inspects all studios, houses in multiple occupation, and shared

facility B&Bs in use, and refers any serious issues to the borough's Environmental Health department for enforcement or action.

Supporting refugees and asylum seekers

We are committed to continuing to be responsive to the needs of and supporting and empowering refugees and asylum seekers within the borough. In January 2023, Barnet made a public commitment to work towards becoming a Borough of Sanctuary. This means that we will work with our statutory partners, the voluntary and community sector, and faith groups to make sure that those feeling displacement and persecution are welcomed and able to integrate well into and thrive in Barnet. A key challenge for us in this area is securing suitable housing, particularly for very large families. We will work with our partners including the private rented sector to meet the housing needs of refugees, and we will look to secure available funding from Central Government to support this work.

DRAFT

Next steps

This Homelessness and Rough Sleeping Strategy sets out Barnet Council's vision for preventing homelessness and supporting those who face or are at risk of homelessness. It describes what we want to achieve and focuses in particular on the significant changes that are necessary for our success.

It will be used to support our other housing-related strategies, such as the Housing Strategy and Adult Social Care's Right Homes Strategy, as well as other council strategies and plans including the Barnet Plan, the Children and Young People's Plan, the Adult Social Care Reform Plan, and the Right Homes Strategy.

It also sets out the issues on which we will campaign and lobby central government and advocate for the rights and needs of our residents where new funding, laws, or powers are needed to make a positive difference to people's lives.

Our commitments under the themes of this Homelessness and Rough Sleeping Strategy show, in broad terms, how we will implement the strategy. While it describes a number of specific initiatives that are already underway or are planned or have the potential to be explored, it does not offer every detail of how our objectives will be achieved. In some cases, we do not have all the answers, and want to consult further with residents and partners before we finalise our plans and put them into action.

We will develop action plans where needed and will report regularly on progress and how our aims are being put into practice. We will apply for funding wherever possible to help deliver improved outcomes for residents, and where further investment is needed to improve or develop services this will be considered through individual business cases. The actions we will take will need to be flexible and responsive to emerging needs and new homelessness-related circumstances over the five years of this strategy. Delivery is not just a matter for the council, but will also involve partnership with residents, public sector partners, and the voluntary and community sector. There is also a central role for Barnet Homes, the council's housing management organisation.

We will continue to set targets for our services within Barnet Homes' annual Delivery Plan, through which we will be able to monitor the impact of our work and take a flexible approach to dealing with the housing and homelessness crises.

Despite the unprecedented challenges we face to tackle the homelessness crisis, this strategy sets out a positive, proactive, and innovative approach to how the council, its partners, and residents can work together to achieve our aims. Whilst there is no easy solution to all the challenges we face, and our delivery of this Homelessness and Rough Sleeping Strategy will not resolve the many causes and impacts of the housing and homelessness crises, we are confident it will help improve our position and deliver positive outcomes for many of Barnet's residents.

Tenancy Strategy | 1 August 2023



a council that cares for people, our places, and the planet

Contents

1.0	Introduction	3
2.0	Strategic Context	3
3.0	Demographic Profile of the Borough	4
4.0	Discharge of Homelessness Duty	6
5.0	Granting of Tenancies	7
5.1	<i>Rights and Responsibilities</i>	7
5.2	<i>Non – Secure Tenancies and Licence Agreements</i>	7
5.3	<i>Introductory or Starter Tenancies</i>	7
5.4	<i>Lifetime Tenancies</i>	7
5.5	<i>Flexible Tenancies</i>	8
5.6	<i>Reviews and Appeals</i>	8
6.0	Tenancy Sustainment	9
7.0	Succession	9
8.0	Tenant Mobility	10
9.0	Home Ownership	10
10.0	Social Housing in the Borough	11
11.0	Affordability Statement	12
12.0	Delivering the Tenancy Strategy	13
13.0	Equality and Diversity	13

1.0 Introduction

- 1.1 The Localism Act 2011 places an obligation on the London Borough of Barnet to have a tenancy strategy that is drafted in consultation with providers of social housing in the borough. It sets out expectations for all social landlords and provides guidance on the council's preferred approach to tenure and affordability, with specific consideration to:
- the types of tenancies granted;
 - the circumstances under which different types of tenancies will be granted;
 - whether flexible tenancies will be granted and the length of the tenancy and the renewal process when the flexible tenancy expires.
- 1.2 We aim to uphold the rights of households, some of whom are in the direst need, to be housed in the most suitable accommodation, and to receive the right kind of support in a tenancy that is aimed at providing them with a home that will promote their health and wellbeing. We are committed to listening to our tenants when identifying the support required and when delivering housing services, and to the need to identify long-term housing solutions.
- 1.3 The Social Housing Green Paper, published in 2018, proposed a new deal for social housing. In November 2020, the Government published its White Paper, 'The Charter for Social Housing Residents', which affirms social rented homes as places where residents can put down roots and build communities. The White Paper also recognises that the COVID-19 pandemic has reinforced the importance of people's homes, communities, and neighbourhoods.
- 1.4 Barnet wants those who are allocated social housing to see their homes as genuine places to settle, not as temporary welfare provision. Residents should have control over their lives and homes as this can help to build thriving, cohesive communities. Offering lifetime tenancies at, wherever possible, social rent levels best supports this in most cases.

2.0 Strategic Context

- 2.1 The previous Barnet Council Local Tenancy Strategy was approved on 29 June 2015. This review in 2023 is undertaken to meet our obligations under the Localism Act 2011 and to set clear expectations for the granting of tenancies in the borough. There is a need for a cohesive approach to tenancy management across all social landlords to ensure that the ability for the residents of the borough to live well and feel part of the community.
- 2.2 Barnet's Corporate Plan is being refreshed and will establish a vision for Barnet to be a council that 'cares for people, our places, and the planet', and a council that is effective and engaged. It makes a commitment to focusing on tackling the housing crisis and working to make sure everyone in the borough has access to a decent, safe, secure, and affordable home.
- 2.3 Barnet's Housing Strategy is being refreshed in 2023 and focuses on the following themes:
- The prevention of homelessness and the need to support rough sleepers off the streets.
 - The delivery of the right homes in the right places to deliver more affordable housing in the borough.
 - Ensuring safe, sustainable council housing.
 - Raising the quality and standard of private rented accommodation.
 - Supporting the council's agenda on living well by promoting healthy homes and wellbeing.
- 2.4 The challenge in London is how to provide decent, affordable housing. London's housing shortage has been caused by the failure, over decades, to build the new homes the city's growing economy needs. The effects of the housing shortage now reach into every aspect of Londoners' lives. The London Housing Strategy (published in May 2018) sets out the Mayor's vision and policies for London and the proposals to make it happen. Barnet is supportive of the Mayor's vision and is committed to supporting its delivery through its Housing Strategy, Homelessness and Rough Sleeping Strategy, and Tenancy Strategy. The London Housing

Strategy calls on all organisations that have a part to play in addressing London's housing crisis with a view to:

- building homes for Londoners;
- delivering genuinely affordable homes;
- high quality homes and inclusive neighbourhoods;
- a fairer deal for private renters and leaseholders; and
- tackling homelessness and helping rough sleepers.

2.5 Barnet's Homelessness and Rough Sleeping Strategy is being refreshed in 2023 and focuses on the following themes:

- Preventing homelessness; by identifying those most at risk, tackling the root causes of homelessness, partnership working to ensure early intervention, reducing recurring homelessness and improving awareness, advice, and information.
- Ensuring a sufficient supply of accommodation; both social and private sector by using assets effectively, reducing the use of temporary accommodation, bringing empty properties back into use, and looking to address specialist needs including supported housing, domestic abuse, and accessible properties.
- Providing support for people who are or have been homeless; working in partnership to provide support including housing-related support and personal support across domestic abuse, mental health, substance misuse, poverty, debt, and unemployment.

2.6 Barnet's Housing Allocation Scheme is being refreshed in 2023. It sets out how the council prioritises who can be offered a social housing tenancy. The main changes are reverting to a two-offer policy to increase choice for housing applicants, and the inclusion of a local lettings plan to ensure local people and non-secure tenants on regeneration estates are prioritised.

2.7 The council is drafting a new Local Plan which will set out its approach to the challenges faced by the borough, its vision for growth and development, and its policies to ensure that housing is affordable and meets need. At the heart of the plan is the promotion of health and wellbeing.

2.8 In introducing this tenancy strategy we aim to:

- work with social landlords to meet the housing and support needs of residents.
- set out expectation for social landlords in the development of their tenancy policies.
- provide a clear development mandate for social housing developers.
- promote the health and wellbeing of individuals.
- build sustainable balanced cohesive communities.
- align with strategies and policies to deliver the council's aims, objectives, and vision.

3.0 Demographic Profile of the Borough

3.1 The London Borough of Barnet is a suburban London borough in North London. The council was created by the London Government Act 1963 and replaced five local authorities: Barnet Urban District Council, East Barnet Urban District Council, Friern Barnet Urban District Council, Finchley Borough Council and Hendon Borough Council. It borders the Hertfordshire district of Hertsmere to the north and five other London boroughs: Camden and Haringey to the southeast, Enfield to the east, and Harrow and Brent to the west. The borough's major urban settlements are Hendon, Finchley, Mill Hill, Colindale, Finchley, Golders Green, Friern Barnet, Chipping Barnet, Whetstone, and Edgware; there are also village settlements notably Totteridge and Arkley along with rural areas and countryside part of the Green Belt.

3.2 Barnet forms part of Outer London and is the second largest London borough by population and the fourth largest by size. The 2021 Census estimates the population to be 389,340, which is a 9.2% increase on the 2011 Census.

3.3 Compared to the overall population of London, Barnet has a greater proportion of the population in those aged 0-15 and those aged 40 and over, and a lower proportion of those aged 20 to 39. Key statistics for our population demographics are:

- The population aged 75 and over in Barnet is around 26,300, and this age group has increased the most since the 2011 Census.

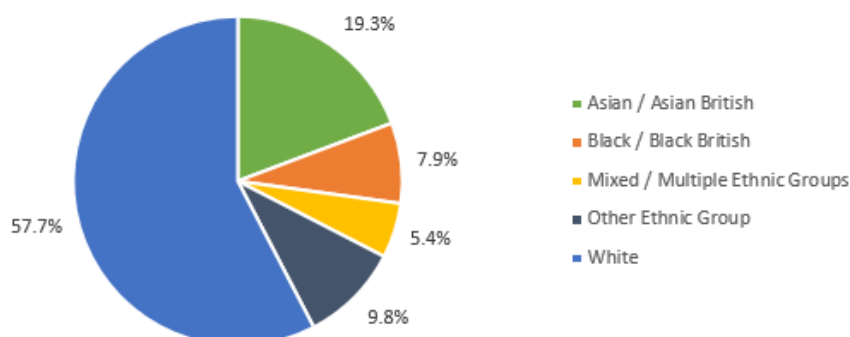
Population Breakdown	Barnet	London	England
Total Population 2021	389,340	8,799,800	56,489,800
Total Population 2022	406,061	9,145,214	57,282,105
Total Population 2023	408,821	9,188,317	57,557,521
Total Population 2024	411,198	9,224,542	57,816,890
Total Population 2025	413,257	9,255,002	58,060,235

Note: population projections are based on 2018 data. The 2021 population is based on the 2021 Census results.

- The population of children and young people aged 0-19 is around 96,600, and this age group has increased much less than previously estimated since the 2011 Census.
- The population of those aged 20-74 is around 266,400.

Working age	Barnet 2022	Barnet (%)	England (%)
0-19 years old	96,629	24.8%	23.1%
20-64 years old	236,611	60.8%	58.5%
65+ years old	56,100	14.4%	18.4%

- Barnet is a diverse place to live; currently 42% of the population is from an Ethnic Minority background, which is slightly above the average (mean) for London. The population of those from an 'Other' ethnic background is higher than the average (mean) for London.



3.4 Life expectancy for both males and females in Barnet has continued to increase. A female born in Barnet in 2020 can expect to live to around 86 years, and for a male, life expectancy is around 83 years. However, healthy life expectancy (the years a person can expect to live in good health) has reduced over the last few years. In Barnet, for both males and females, healthy life expectancy is around three quarters of life expectancy; suggesting for males around 21 years of their life will not be lived in good health and for females it is 22 years. This could lead to a greater demand for services to support older populations living in the borough. The table below shows the proportion of male and female in the borough as compared to the national average.

Sex	Barnet 2022	Barnet (%)	England (%)
Female	200,799	51.6%	51.0%
Male	188,545	48.4%	49.0%

3.5 The employment and unemployment figures for the period of October 2021 to September 2022 are captured in the table below. 'Economically active' is defined as employed or self-employed.

With 123,600 of the economically active being male and 79,400 female there is a greater probability of women being unemployed in the borough.

Sex	Barnet (No's)	Barnet (%)	London (%)	England (%)
Economically Active	203,000	76.4%	79.4%	78.5%
Unemployed	10,900	5.5%	4.5%	3.7%

- 3.6 Properties in Barnet had an overall average price of £866,312 in 2021/22. The majority of sales in Barnet during the last year were flats, selling for an average price of £499,551. Semi-detached properties sold for an average of £949,709, with terraced properties fetching £905,544. Overall, sold prices in Barnet over the last year were 14% up on the previous year and 19% up on the 2020 peak of £729,478. The table below shows a breakdown by bed size.

Average Property Prices	Barnet 2022
Average property price	576,562
Average 1 bed property price	336,250
Average 2 bed property price	469,167
Average 3 bed property price	670,000
Average 4 bed property price	931,250

Figures obtained from the Government's house price index.

Average UK house prices increased by 10.3% in the year to November 2022, down from 12.4% in October 2022. The average UK house price was £295,000 in November 2022, which is £28,000 higher than this time last year but a slight decrease from last month's record high of £296,000. Average house prices increased over the year to £315,000 (10.9%) in England.

- 3.7 Average earnings in Barnet are £38,345 per annum. This is slightly higher than the national average of £32,723 per annum, but it is still too low to allow the average household to get on the property ladder, especially when taken in context with the local housing market and the rise in house prices.

4.0 Discharge of Homelessness Duty

- 4.1 Since the introduction of the Localism Act 2011, local authorities can discharge their homelessness duties through an offer of suitable accommodation in the private rented sector. Where properties of a suitable standard can be found at the right cost, Barnet will undertake a suitability check and if successful, will make an offer of private sector accommodation in line with the Homelessness Code of Guidance for Local Authorities and the Homelessness (Suitability of Accommodation) (England) Order 2012.
- 4.2 We work to promote a good relationship with private sector landlords in Barnet to secure a supply of good quality properties. Where budgets allow, we offer incentives and grants to help them improve their properties and maintain them to safe standards appropriate for letting. We support tenants in the private sector where we seek to establish affordable rents with capping at the Local Housing Allowance, or a small top-up subject to tenants meeting the affordability criteria.
- 4.3 The supply of good quality private rented accommodation has proved an effective supplement to help meet housing needs in Barnet, accounting on average for nearly 50% (48.9%) of the total lettings (social and private rented sector) to homeless households in the last three years.

Year	Social Housing Lettings	Private Rented Sector Lettings	% Private Rented Sector
2019/20	676	642	48.7%
2020/21	623	647	50.9%
2021/22	625	511	45%
2022/23	541	336	38.3%
Total	2,465	2,136	46.4%

4.4 Unfortunately, there have been significant challenges to discharging the homeless duty into the private rented sector (PRS) in the last year. Rents have increased by 11%, and as of December 2022, only 259 (42.45%) of the 2022/23 target of 610 units have been procured. The result is a significant reduction in the number of clients housed in suitable accommodation in the PRS in 22/23. Regrettably, this is unlikely to change in the next few years as the demand for private rented units is predicted to continue to surpass supply and rents are set to continue to rise well above the Local Housing Allowance level, further restricting access to those who are benefit capped.

4.5 We work together in partnership with registered providers in the borough to discharge our homeless duty in both council and registered provider stock. We recognise that it is important to continue to raise the profile of those who are homeless in the borough. We also recognise that with ever increasing levels of financial hardship experienced by many households, that homeless prevention must be a primary aim, and this necessitates the strengthening of the partnership between the council and social landlords.

5.0 Granting of Tenancies

5.1 Rights and Responsibilities

All tenants need to make informed choices about their housing options. We will work with our registered providers to make the process of offering tenancies is as clear and transparent as possible. All registered providers understand the need to explain the rights and responsibilities of a tenancy when signing up new tenants.

5.2 Non-Secure Tenancies and Licence Agreements

Tenants in temporary accommodation are signed up on non-secure tenancies and licence agreements. The home is not permanent and only available to the household whilst the council assesses their duty under the homelessness legislation or, if a duty is accepted, until a suitable offer of permanent accommodation can be secured.

5.3 Introductory or Starter Tenancies

We will continue to grant starter or introductory tenancies to someone who has never held a social tenancy or someone who requires support during the initial period of their tenancy. The initial period is for 12 months, after which it will convert to a lifetime tenancy unless a Notice of Extension has been served extending it for a further 6 months. This may be done where the tenant would benefit from further support or intensive tenancy management.

5.4 Lifetime Tenancies

5.4.1 With the need to have sustainable communities and the welfare of our residents a primary aim, we will grant lifetime tenancies to tenants who have successfully completed a starter or introductory tenancy or a tenant transferring from another social housing tenancy. This will take the form of a secure tenancy. The council's preference is for registered providers to offer lifetime assured tenancies in these circumstances.

5.4.2 Social housing tenants with lifetime tenancies that were issued before 1 April 2012, and who have remained social housing tenants, have their security of tenure protected by law. The Localism Act 2011 s.154 and regulatory framework for social housing require all landlords to offer

lifetime tenancies when these tenants move to another social rented home. This includes mutual exchanges, transfers, or moves as a result of major works or regeneration. Where a social housing tenant has been given a lifetime tenancy on or after 1 April 2012, and they swap their home with a social housing tenant who has a fixed term tenancy, they will lose their lifetime tenancy.

- 5.4.3 The Domestic Abuse Act 2021 requires in cases of domestic abuse that landlords issue new lifetime tenancies where a tenant previously had a lifetime tenancy. We expect this to be undertaken by their own landlord. However, where this is not possible or they need emergency rehousing requiring assessment under the homelessness legislation, we would expect their permanent offer to be a lifetime tenancy subject to eligibility.
- 5.4.4 We expect lifetime tenancies to be issued to vulnerable tenants with long term support or care needs. This may include the following:
- those with enduring mental health needs;
 - those with a learning disability;
 - some types of physical disability;
 - older people in supported accommodation;
 - older people moving into specialist, sheltered or extra care housing, particularly those giving up a larger home and a lifetime tenancy;
 - those needing specialist care.

5.5 Flexible Tenancies

- 5.5.1 Since 2012, Barnet Council has been granting flexible (fixed term) tenancies of either 2 or 5 years in length, with the exception of tenancies granted to older people, ex-armed forces, people with disabilities, and young people leaving care. From 2023 we will cease to grant flexible tenancies. In addition, we will seek to migrate the flexible tenancies that we have currently to lifetime tenancies. This means:
- a. Introductory tenants who were previously told their tenancy would become flexible after the initial 12 months will be asked to sign a variation to allow the tenancy to become secure.
 - b. Flexible tenancies with 9 months or less to go will be allowed to convert to secure tenancies.
 - c. Flexible tenancies with more than 9 months will be asked to sign a variation to allow the tenancy to change to a secure tenancy with immediate effect.
- 5.5.2 We will consult with all our tenants before this comes into force and their rights and responsibilities will be explained. A tenant is under no obligation to sign a variation, and where they do not the flexible tenancy will remain in force until such time as it naturally converts to a secure tenancy.
- 5.5.3 We recognise that some registered providers may wish to grant flexible tenancies to make best use of their stock, in line with local priorities and the delivery of the Mayor of London's affordable housing programme. Where flexible tenancies are in use, we ask that, in line with regulatory requirements, these be for a minimum of 5 years or preferably longer. Registered providers that grant flexible tenancies are asked to provide a copy of their tenancy policy and we ask that these policies take into consideration the vulnerable people listed at 5.4 of this strategy.
- ## 5.6 Reviews and Appeals
- 5.6.1 All tenancies should be visited as part of a rolling programme to ensure the property is occupied by the household on the tenancy agreement, that the premises are being used lawfully, and that it is being maintained in accordance with the tenancy conditions.
- 5.6.2 All new tenants should receive a settling in visit or call within the first several weeks of the tenancy.

- 5.6.3 Introductory tenants should have formal reviews at 3, 6, and 9 months of their tenancies to ensure they are managing their tenancy and to provide support to assist them to complete the initial 12 months successfully.
- 5.6.4 Landlords that grant flexible tenancies are required to have a renewal process with reviews at 9 months and 6 months pre-tenancy end. A renewal notice informing the tenant on whether a new tenancy, the type of tenancy, and its duration must be issued at the 6-month review. Where a further tenancy is not to be granted, the landlord is expected to provide the tenant with housing advice to securing alternative accommodation.
- 5.6.4 All social landlords should have a clear tenancy appeals process that is explained to tenants where decisions are being made in relation to their tenancy, and the landlord must invest in the resources necessary to undertake these effectively. With introductory tenancies there is a statutory requirement to allow appeals in the following circumstances:
- Where an introductory tenancy is extended a further 6 months.
 - Where possession proceedings are commenced for an introductory tenancy.
 - The 6-month review renewal notice for a flexible tenancy.

6.0 Tenancy Sustainment

- 6.1 We are committed to helping tenants to maintain their tenancy whether they live in temporary accommodation, private rented accommodation, or council owned social housing. Our Arms-Length Management Organisation (ALMO), Barnet Homes operates a Tenancy Management Policy on behalf of the council which sets out our remit in relation to tenancy sustainment, and we have the same expectation of other social landlords in the borough in relation to:
- a range of targeted visits during the lifespan of a tenancy;
 - rehousing where financial hardship would lead to tenancy failure;
 - a support service, covering a range of advice and assistance;
 - tenant orientated employment opportunities;
 - tackling anti-social behaviour through a range of measures; and
 - making it easier for tenants to manage their own homes.
- 6.2 The aim, whether delivered by the council or one of its partner landlords, is to provide the right aid at the right time, and at times this may be bespoke to a household. Tenants who have been allocated a general needs property may need supported housing and this will be assessed as one of the measures.
- 6.3 Where domestic abuse is identified, a solution that looks at the best outcome for the survivors including children will be sought. Where relocation of the perpetrator would provide the best remedy, this may be considered as an option on a case-by-case basis.

7.0 Succession

- 7.1 Legislation allows for a provision for statutory succession rights for secure and assured tenants. There is one right to succeed. The law does not grant a further succession right if the successor then dies.
- 7.2 Historically, there were significant differences between the succession rights of assured and secure tenants. The Localism Act 2011 introduced changes to harmonise succession between the two, however there remain significant differences. The Localism Act 2011 made changes which only affect tenancies granted from April 2012 onwards, but not those granted before that date.
- 7.3 Some landlords offer more generous succession rights than the statutory legal minimum, allowing tenancy rights to be passed on a second time or to be conferred in circumstances when the tenant would not normally qualify for a statutory succession. The rights may contractual, i.e., written into their tenancy agreement, or discretionary and assessed on a case-by-case basis.

- 7.4 The Tenancy Standard governed by the Regulator of Social Housing requires social landlords to have a policy on succession.
- 7.5 The legislation also allows for the assignment of tenancies in law by deed of assignment. There are two types; a mutual exchange where two social tenants exchange tenancies with the consent of their landlord; and where a tenant assigns the tenancy over to a permanent member of their household who also meets the succession rules. The latter is also known as a living succession. Assignments may also take place where a court issues an order transferring the tenancy.

8.0 Tenant Mobility

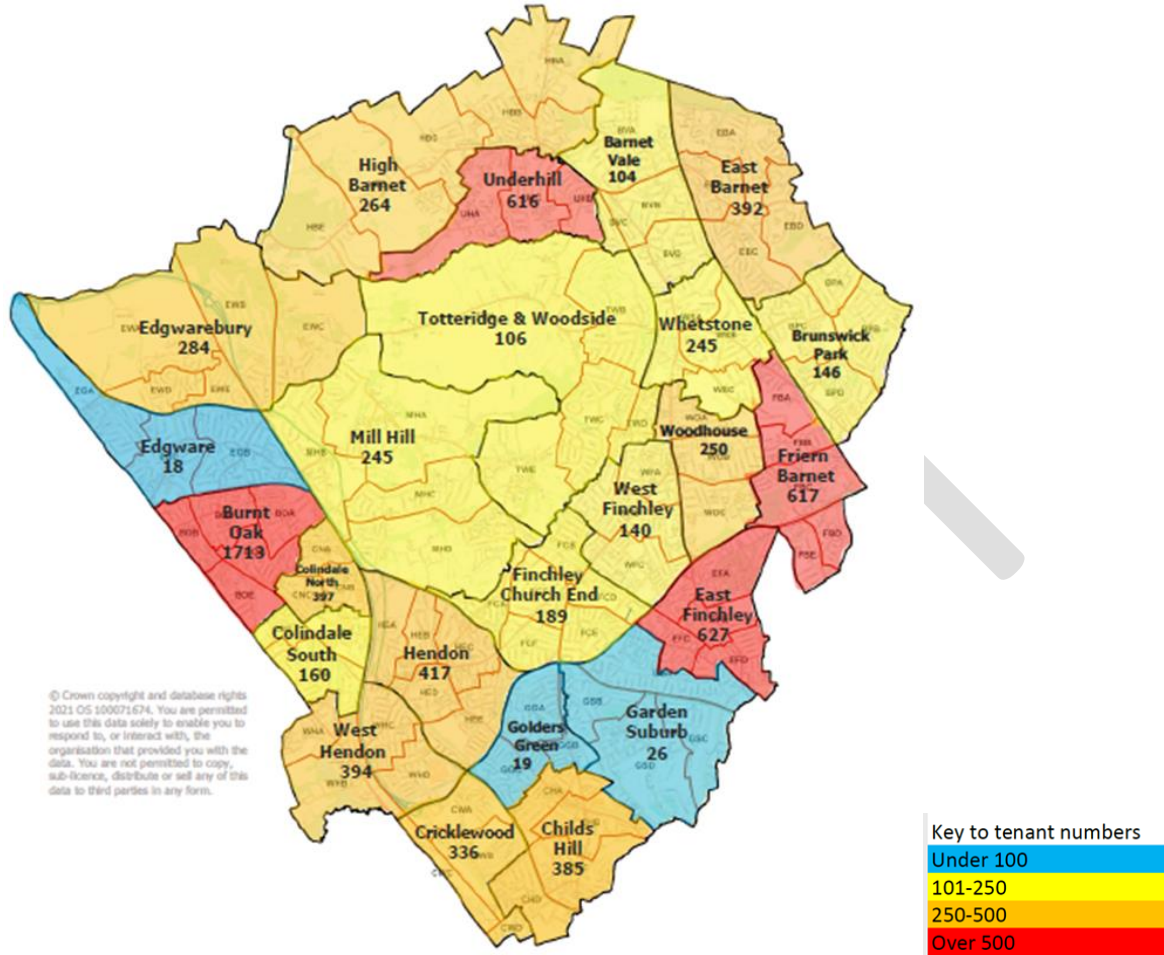
- 8.1 We need family-sized accommodation and expect all social landlords to provide incentives and assistance to tenants who wish to move to a smaller property. They should be encouraged to join the housing register and their application will be awarded a priority that reflects the demand for larger properties.
- 8.2 Tenants who claim benefits in under-occupied units are subject to the Spare Room Subsidy (also known as the bedroom tax), which can have a negative impact, making affordability an issue and having a detrimental effect on health and wellbeing. Consequently, moving to a smaller property may be necessary and they will be encouraged to submit a housing application. When assessing applications for downsizing, the council will give consideration to all permanent household members including those who do not reside with the applicant at the time of their application.
- 8.3 Where tenants need adaptations in properties that are unsuitable for the required works, both the council and the registered provider must consider all possible ways to meet that need. Where this is not possible, the tenant may be encouraged to apply for rehousing with their own landlord. Where council tenants needing aids and adaptations are also under-occupying their home, they will be encouraged to trade down to a smaller property that is more suitable to their needs.
- 8.4 It is important for tenants who wish to move for employment, or for support and welfare reasons, to be able to do so. Applicants on the housing needs register wishing to transfer for these reasons will be awarded suitable priority and will be considered under our local connection rules.

9.0 Home Ownership

- 9.1 We will make every effort to promote the opportunities for low-cost home ownership for residents in the borough. This will involve working with the registered providers who have such stock and where we are approached for rehousing, applicants will be signposted to these landlords as a viable housing solution.
- 9.2 Tenants who are eligible will be able to purchase their home from the council through the Right to Buy scheme and from their registered provider through the Preserved Right to Buy or Right to Acquire schemes, provided the property they reside in does not hold an exemption. Registered providers will keep the council informed of any purchases through these schemes in order for us to maintain a database of available social rented stock in the borough.
- 9.3 As part of our working relationship with registered providers, we ask that the following properties be exempt from purchase:
- properties in rural locations, where the number of available properties is low, and the aim is to preserve current community stability;
 - designated accommodation for older people; where this accommodation is in short supply;
 - specialist or supported housing;
 - disabled adapted properties secured through planning obligations; and
 - shared accommodation.

10.0 Social Housing in the Borough

- 10.1 We can demonstrate through a ward map the property density for council stock in the borough. The highest density can be seen in the wards of Burnt Oak, East Finchley, Friern Barnet, and Underhill. The lowest is in the wards of Garden Suburb, Golders Green, and Edgware.



- 10.2 The council will continue to map social housing in the borough for both council stock and that of private registered providers. This is important not only to understand which areas of the borough have the highest density of social housing, but also the size, type, and tenure mix of the properties.
- 10.3 We will work with our landlords and community-led housing developers to maximise the opportunities to deliver affordable properties including social rented properties and will seek to leverage funding through Homes England and the GLA to support this where scheme viability is an issue. The priority, driven by the severe affordability issues in areas within our borough, is to protect and increase the supply of social housing in Barnet alongside the provision of other affordable housing options.
- 10.4 We recognise that our registered providers may have to dispose of stock where it is not cost effective to maintain it to the Decent Homes Standard, or it is hard to let, either because of the type of accommodation or area in which it is located. Where this becomes necessary, particularly where a property has been given in trust, or where Barnet or Homes England have invested in the property, the full gain (less any transaction and ancillary costs) from disposal should be reinvested back into the borough.

- 10.5 Social housing may be repurposed where disposal is not the most effective solutions, and the council will work with the relevant landlord to obtain the best possible outcome. The partnership between the council and landlord ensures that adequate notice is given of any proposed disposal, thereby allowing the council to consider the variety of options available to it. To avoid property disposals as a result of poor property standards, we expect all social landlords to maintain their property portfolios to the Decent Homes Standard or equivalent or higher standard. This will also promote the benefits of better health and wellbeing.
- 10.6 There is growing evidence that by joining up planning for housing with planning for health and wellbeing, significant benefits to individuals and communities can be seen, which help people to thrive. This is one of the council's priorities and our commitment together with social landlords is to:
- deliver social homes to the Decent Homes Standard or higher.
 - build genuinely affordable places to live where residents can settle and develop a commitment to their local community.

11.0 Affordability Statement

- 11.1 Barnet has a diverse and ageing population, there are increasing challenges in securing suitable homes for those who are most in need, and the cost-of-living pressures faced by residents have increased. Housing costs continue to rise fast relative to both local median incomes and Local Housing Allowance (LHA) rates which results in a continued affordability gap, there are challenges in supply to meet demand, and there are increasing pressures on the Housing Revenue Account and General Fund due to cost of living pressures on rental income, the affordable temporary accommodation capital programme, and costs associated with fire safety works and achieving carbon neutral and energy efficiency goals
- 11.2 The Government promotes work to reduce dependency on benefits, so it is important that rent levels in Barnet are affordable and do not deter the tenant from entering employment. The table below shows average rents in the borough by bed size for council stock and private rented accommodation. We are working to gather the information on registered provider stock and private rented accommodation.

Average Weekly Rents	Bedsit	1 bed	2 bed	3 bed	4 bed	5 bed	6 bed
Council	£93	£115	£146	£162	£151	£169	£179
Private Rented	£210.92	£276.92	£334.62	£426.92	£576.92		

Private Rental Market Statistics, 1 October 2021 – 30 September 2022, Office for National Statistics.

- 11.3 New tenants are unlikely to have sufficient savings to secure a deposit or pay rent in advance. We ask that registered providers reflect the payment of rent in advance at sign up in their policies and have a flexible payment approach to allow the tenant to build the sufficient level of credit over time.
- 11.4 Our Housing Strategy sets out the delivery aims for an affordable housing programme that has the right mix of social housing products and sets out the measures that we employ to achieve the desired outcomes. We recognise a coordinated approach with registered providers is essential to deliver those outcomes.
- 11.5 We have to consider scheme viability and the cost to the tenant overall in terms of rent and service charge when considering the rent level. However, a social rent comparison will be undertaken when undertaking scheme appraisals to ensure the most affordable rent products are considered.
- 11.6 With property prices high in the borough, first time buyers often seek a low-cost home ownership route to get on the property ladder. This largely means shared ownership where a percentage of the equity is purchased, and rent is paid on the remaining equity. It is hoped that with time and

an improvement in the financial circumstances of the tenant, more equity is purchased with the optimum goal being 100% and no further requirement to pay rent.

12.0 Delivering the Tenancy Strategy

- 12.1 The council and the social landlords operating within the borough will jointly own this strategy. This will be monitored to ensure successful delivery of the aims of the strategy. We have a shared commitment across our key partners and stakeholders to support the delivery of this strategy, as the achievement of our vision is dependent upon their contribution. Barnet's governance structure will have oversight of the implementation of the strategy and will monitor and review progress.
- 12.2 This strategy will be reviewed every 5 years, unless legislation, business or sector developments require otherwise, to ensure it continues to meet the stated objectives and takes account of good practice developments. We aim to mitigate any risk associated with the delivery of this strategy and its implementation by landlord tenancy policies through discussion and negotiation.
- 12.3 The delivery of this strategy will be monitored as follows:
- Discussions with residents of the borough
 - Discussions with social landlords on its effectiveness.
 - Tenancy sustainment reviews by social landlords.
 - Feedback from the private rented sector.
 - Reviews by Barnet's governance structure.

13.0 Equality and Diversity

- 13.1 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 place.
- 13.2 Under the Equality Act 2010 and in particular section 149 of the Public Sector Equality Duty, councils are required to give due regard to eliminate discrimination, advance equality of opportunity and foster good relations between those who share a protected characteristic and those who do not, when exercising a public function such as a landlord. The protected characteristics are age, disability, gender reassignment, marriage and civil partnership, pregnancy and maternity, race, religion or belief, sex and sexual orientation. This strategy complies with the council's Equality, Diversity and Inclusion Policy which sets out our commitments to ensuring in equality in service delivery. An Equalities Impact Assessment was undertaken before the strategy was adopted, and we will continue to monitor any equality impact post-implementation, as required.

This page is intentionally left blank

Housing Allocation Scheme

| 1 October 2023



a council that cares for people, our places, and the planet

Contents

Section 1: Introduction to the Housing Allocation Scheme	4
1.0: Introduction	4
1.1: Legal context	4
1.2: Making changes to the Scheme	6
1.3: Data protection	7
1.4: Right to information	8
1.5: Equality, accessibility, and monitoring	8
1.6: Complaints	9
1.7: The council's statement on choice	9
1.8: When the council may make a direct offer outside of the band and date order system	10
1.9: Suspension from being considered for an allocation where an applicant has refused 2 suitable offers	11
1.10: Types of properties and restrictions	12
Section 2: Who can apply to join the Housing Needs Register and the criteria for deciding who is eligible to be included and who can qualify to join the Scheme	13
2.1: The eligibility rules	13
2.2: The non-qualification rules adopted by the council	14
2.3: Sufficient financial resources: income, savings, home ownership, and equity	15
2.4: The circumstances where an exemption may be considered to the sufficient financial resources and homeownership qualification rule	15
2.5: Making false or misleading statements or withholding information	16
2.6: The need to demonstrate a residential connection	16
2.7: Applicants who owe arrears of rent or other accommodation charges to Barnet Council in respect of the current tenancy or former accommodation	18
2.8: Unacceptable behaviour rule	20
2.9: How exceptional circumstances will be considered in respect to any of the qualification rules	22
Section 3: General rules and conditions	23
3.0: Decisions	23
3.1: Requests for assistance	23
3.2: Persons entitled to be considered as part of the application	23
3.3: Assessing applications	24
3.4: Medical priority	25
3.5: When medical priority will not normally be awarded	26
3.6: Checks into any court cases or unspent criminal convictions	26
3.7: The requirement to inform the council of any change of circumstances	27
3.8: Applications from elected council members, staff members or relations	27
3.9: Cancelling applications	28
3.10: Deliberate worsening of circumstances	28
3.11: The reviews procedure	29
3.12: How a request for a review will be dealt with	29
3.13: Pan-London Mobility and Pan-London Housing Reciprocal arrangements	29
3.14: Local lettings policies	30

3.15: Local lettings policy for applicants owed a main homelessness duty accommodated under a non-secure tenancy on regeneration sites	31
3.16: Size of accommodation that can be offered	31
3.17: Secure and flexible council tenants	31
3.18: Private Registered Provider tenants	32
3.19: Mutual exchanges	32
3.20: Discretionary succession	33
3.21: Service tenancies	33
Section 4: How to apply and how an applicant's banding will be assessed and when a band will be awarded	34
4.0 How to apply	34
4.1 The date a band will be awarded	34
4.2 The banding system	35
Annexes	37
Annex 1: Details of the Barnet Housing Bands awards	37
Annex 2: Size of homes	45
Annex 3: Community Contribution: how priority is awarded	47
Annex 4: Service Tenancies	51
Annex 5: Definition of a suitable offer	52
Annex 6: a) Examples of when an applicant may be awarded priority Band 1 or 2 on the basis of a medical or disability need, and b) Guidelines for assessing extra bedroom requests for ADHD, Asperger's, sensory processing difficulties and other mental or physical health problems	54
Annex 7: Right to move criteria	58

Section 1: Introduction to the Housing Allocation Scheme

1.0 Introduction

- 1.0.1 This document is the revised Housing Allocation Scheme for the London Borough of Barnet ('Barnet Council').
- 1.0.2 This document describes the criteria and procedure that Barnet Council use to prioritise housing applicants for the social housing that we allocate to, i.e., homes owned by Barnet Council, and a proportion of homes owned by Private Registered Providers (including housing associations) in the borough to which we make nominations.
- 1.0.3 In Barnet, the demand for social housing is very much greater than the number of homes available. This Allocation Scheme describes how the council prioritises housing applicants to ensure those in greatest housing need, as described by the legal definition of Reasonable Preference, are given a head start to access available social housing.
- 1.0.4 Barnet Council's Allocation 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. The Allocation Scheme is designed to meet all legal requirements and to support and contribute towards the council's wider objectives such as promoting mixed communities.
- 1.0.5 Social housing in Barnet will be allocated through matching applicants to available council and private registered provider homes, along with homes 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 promoting other housing options, such as low-cost home ownership options and private sector renting.
- 1.0.6 The key objectives of this Allocation Scheme are to:
- meet the legal requirements placed on the council to give appropriate priority to applicants who fall under the Housing Act "reasonable preference groups". This is to ensure that social rented housing is let to those in greatest need;
 - provide a fair and transparent system by which people are prioritised for social housing;
 - promote the development of sustainable mixed communities;
 - recognise residents who make a contribution to their local community; and
 - make efficient use of our resources and those of the private registered providers with social housing stock in the Barnet area.
- 1.0.7 The council's arms-length management organisation, Barnet Homes, manages this Allocation Scheme and the prioritisation of housing applicants on the behalf of the council. Barnet Homes is part of the council's local authority trading company The Barnet Group. Where this Scheme refers to "the council", Barnet Homes will provide these services on the council's behalf.

1.1 Legal context

- 1.1.1 Barnet Council's Allocation Scheme sits within a legal framework that is summarised in this section.
- 1.1.2 The 1996 Housing Act (as amended by the 2002 Homelessness Act) requires local authorities to make all allocations and nominations in accordance with an Allocation Scheme. A summary of the Allocation Scheme must be published and made available free of charge to any person who

asks for a copy. This document and a FAQ for the Scheme are available on the council's web site: www.barnet.gov.uk/housing/council-and-social-housing/apply-council-housing

- 1.1.3 They are also available on Barnet Homes' website: www.thebarnetgroup.org/bh/applying-for-housing/how-we-allocate
- 1.1.4 The Housing Act 1996, (as amended) requires councils to give Reasonable Preference in their Allocation Schemes 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 Sections 189B, 190 (2), 193 (2), or 195 of the Housing Act 1996 (or under Sections 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;
 - people serving in the armed forces and suffering from a serious injury, illness or disability which is attributable (wholly or partly) to the person's service;
 - people who have formerly served in the armed forces, where the application is made within five years of discharge;
 - people who have recently ceased, or will cease to be entitled, to reside in accommodation provided by the Ministry of Defence following the death of that person's spouse or civil partner who has served in the armed forces and whose death was attributable (wholly or partly) to that service; or
 - people serving or have served in the reserve forces and are suffering from a serious injury, illness or disability which is attributable (wholly or partly) to the person's service.
- 1.1.5 The Housing Act 1996 also requires councils to state within their Allocation Scheme their position on offering applicants a choice of housing accommodation or offering them the opportunity to express a preference about the housing accommodation to be allocated to them. Our policy on choice is described in section 1.7 of this Scheme.
- 1.1.6 In developing the Scheme, regard has been had to the law and regulatory requirements, including:
- The Housing Act 1996, Part 6 as amended by Localism Act 2011 (England);
 - The Housing Act 1996, Part 7 as amended by the Homelessness Reduction Act 2017;
 - Allocation of Accommodation: Guidance for Local housing Authorities in England (2012, DCLG) "the Code";
 - Providing social housing for local people: Statutory guidance on social housing allocations for local authorities in England (DCLG, December 2013) "Supplementary Code";
 - Allocation of Housing (Procedure) Regulations 1997, SI 1997/483 Allocation of Housing (England) Regulations 2002, SI 2002/3264;
 - Allocation of Housing and Homelessness (Eligibility) (England) Regulations 2006, SI 2006/1294 and all subsequent amendments;
 - Allocation of Housing (Qualification Criteria for Armed Forces) (England) Regulations 2012, SI 2012/1869;
 - Housing Act 1996 (Additional Preference for Armed Forces) (England) Regulations 2012, SI 2012/2989;

- The Allocation of Housing (Qualification Criteria for Right to Move) (England) Regulations 2015;
- 'The Allocation of Housing and Homelessness (Eligibility) (England) (Amendment) (EU Exit) Regulations 2019 (SI 2019/861)';
- Equality Act 2010;
- Data Protection Act 2018
- UK-GDPR (General Data Protection Regulation) 2021;
- Care Act 2014;
- Human Rights Act 1998;
- Domestic Abuse Act 2021; and
- Children and Social Work Act 2017

- 1.1.7 In framing the Allocation Scheme, regard has also been had to the current Housing Strategy 2019-24 and Homelessness and Rough Sleeping Strategy 2019-2024, the emerging Housing Strategy 2023-28 and Homelessness and Rough Sleeping Strategy 2023-28, the Tenancy Strategy, and relevant caselaw.
- 1.1.8 All references to statutory materials are by way of summary and are not used as substitutes for the details within the original.
- 1.1.9 The council will provide an electronic copy of this Scheme to anyone who asks for one. Copies in alternative formats will be considered on an individual basis. The whole of this Scheme is available for inspection by any person at the principal office of the council if someone is unable to access the Scheme online.
- 1.1.10 Any provision in this Scheme may be waived in exceptional circumstances at the discretion of the lead officer responsible for the housing services. The reasons why a provision has been waived will be documented.
- 1.1.11 This is the revised Housing Allocation Scheme for Barnet Council and will take effect on or after 1 October 2023. The assessment of need and qualifying criteria set out in the Scheme will be applied to all new and existing applicants from this date.
- 1.1.12 Tenancies for council homes are allocated pursuant to Part VI of the Housing Act 1996 and according to the council's Tenancy Strategy as required as part of the Localism Act 2011. Other private registered providers with social housing in Barnet have had due regard to the council's Tenancy Strategy when setting their own policies.

1.2 Making changes to the Scheme

- 1.2.1 The Scheme will be reviewed and revised as required:
- in response to any national policy or legislative changes; or
 - in response to any policy changes instigated by the council; or
 - to reflect the requirements of any new leading and relevant case law.
- 1.2.2 Any significant changes to this Scheme will be approved by the council's Cabinet.
- 1.2.3 For minor changes to the Scheme, or changes to the procedures that administer the Scheme, decisions will be delegated to the Portfolio Holder responsible for Homes and Regeneration.
- 1.2.4 Formally, any major change to the Scheme can only be made after a copy of the proposed amendments have been consulted on by sending this Scheme to every Private Registered Provider operating in the Barnet area. This is a requirement under Section s166A (13) Housing Act 1996.

- 1.2.5 The council will take any steps as it considers reasonable (for example, by making contact via email, telephone, or letter, or by placing a notification on a council's website, or via another suitable form of communication), within a reasonable period of time, to bring to the attention of applicants likely to be affected by:
- a) any alterations made to this Scheme;
 - b) any subsequent alteration to this Scheme that would affect the relative priority of a large number of applicants; or
 - c) any significant alteration to any associated procedures for administering this Scheme.
- 1.2.6 Where a full review of the Scheme is undertaken, the council will adopt local government good practice guidelines and undertake a broad consultation that includes relevant statutory and voluntary sector organisations, tenant representatives, and applicants to the scheme.

1.3 Data protection

- 1.3.1 Barnet Council, and Barnet Homes acting on its behalf, will ensure personal information of all applicants (new, existing, and deleted) is:
- a) stored lawfully;
 - b) processed in a fair and transparent manner;
 - c) collected for a specific, explicit and legitimate purpose;
 - d) kept up to date and held until it is no longer required; and
 - e) shared only with other organisations for legitimate processing.
- 1.3.2 Barnet Homes' privacy notice, which sets out when and why it collects personal information about people who access its services, how it uses it, how it keeps it secure, and individuals' rights, can be found on its website: www.barnethomes.org/privacy.
- 1.3.3 The UK-GDPR and the Data Protection Act 2018 provide individuals with a right to request access to any of their personal data held by Barnet Homes, 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. Information about making a subject access request is available on Barnet Homes' website: www.thebarnetgroup.org/bh/contact-us/request-for-personal-data.
- 1.3.4 Subject Access Requests can be made in writing to Barnet Homes at talk2us@barnethomes.org or by post to Barnet Homes' office, 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.
- 1.3.5 Any Subject Access Request 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, Barnet Homes should be contacted in order to make alternative arrangements.
- 1.3.6 Barnet Homes will not usually charge a fee to deal with a Subject Access Request.
- 1.3.7 Once Barnet Homes has received the information and proof of ID, it must provide the requested information within one month. There is a limited range of exemptions from the right of subject access.
- 1.3.8 Housing files may contain information about other people (third parties). If Barnet Homes 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.

- 1.3.9 Under the UK-GDPR and Data Protection Act, in certain circumstances applicants have other rights regarding their personal data, including the right to request the correction of records which they believe to be inaccurate. For further information, please see Barnet Homes' privacy policy on its website. Data subject rights' requests can be put to Barnet Homes in writing, including by email to talk2us@barnethomes.org.

1.4 Right to information

- 1.4.1 Anyone has the right to request access to recorded information held by the council or Barnet Homes, either under the Freedom of Information Act 2000 (FOIA) or, for environmental information, the Environmental Information Regulations 2004 (EIR).
- 1.4.2 Requests under the FOIA must be made in writing, must include the applicant's name and a correspondence address, and must specifically describe the information requested. Requests under the EIR must also comply with these requirements except that they can also be made verbally. Please address requests regarding the operation of this Scheme under the FOIA or EIR to the "Complaints and Information team" at Barnet Homes' postal address or to talk2us@barnethomes.org.
- 1.4.3 Once a valid request has been reviewed Barnet Homes must usually respond within 20 working days.
- 1.4.4 Requests made by individuals for their own personal data will be treated as "subject access requests" under the UK-GDPR and Data Protection Act 2018 (see section 1.3 of this Scheme for information).
- 1.4.5 Information on Barnet Homes' policy on Freedom of Information can be accessed on its website at: www.thebarnetgroup.org/bh/contact-us/freedom-of-information-requests.

1.5 Equality, accessibility, and monitoring

- 1.5.1 Barnet Council is committed to ensuring that the Scheme, and the implementation of all associated guidance and procedures, are non-discriminatory, taking into account the needs of groups protected by the Equality Act 2010, the Human Rights Act 1998, and for children, Section 11 of the Children Act.
- 1.5.2 To help the council identify the needs of applicants, the application form contains specific questions relating to vulnerability, ethnic origin, sexual orientation, disability, and other relevant criteria. The information obtained will be used to monitor the impact of the Scheme to enable a better understanding of people's housing needs and ensure no one is discriminated against as a result of the way this Scheme has been framed or during the administration of it.
- 1.5.3 Under the Equality Act 2010, and in particular Section 149 of the Public Sector Equality Duty, a council is required to give due regard to eliminate discrimination, advance equality of opportunity and foster good relations between those who share a protected characteristic and those who do not, when exercising a public function such as implementing their legal 'Housing Allocation Policy'.
- 1.5.4 Barnet Council will ensure this Scheme complies with current equality legislation. It will be subject to a full Equality Impact Assessment (EIA) before it is adopted. The EIA will be regularly reviewed as information regarding the impact of the Scheme is obtained. A copy can be requested directly from the council.

1.6 Complaints

- 1.6.1 Complaints are separate to the circumstances in which an applicant is entitled to seek a review of a decision made on their housing application. A request for a review of a decision made on an application should be made under the review procedure set out in section 3.11 and not through the council's or Barnet Homes' complaints processes.
- 1.6.2 Where an applicant wishes to make a complaint about poor service, or the way they have been treated, this should be made using Barnet Homes' complaints process. Information about how Barnet Homes deals with complaints can be found on its website: www.thebarnetgroup.org/bh/contact-us/complaints.
- 1.6.3 Where a complaint relates to how an applicant has been dealt with under this scheme, an applicant has the right to continue with their complaint to the Local Government and Social Care Ombudsman Service if they are unhappy with Barnet Homes' response to their complaint.
- 1.6.4 The Local Government and Social Care Ombudsman provides an independent complaint handling service for complaints that have not been resolved by local authorities. The Ombudsman can investigate complaints about how the council has done something, but it cannot question what has been done simply because someone did not agree with it. Further information can be found on Barnet Homes' website and in its Complaints and Compliments Policy, as well as on the LGSCO's website: www.lgo.org.uk

1.7 The council's statement on choice

- 1.7.1 Applicants who are eligible to be considered for properties under the Scheme will be able to express a preference for an area, or areas, in which they would like to live and the type of property they would prefer. However, the ability to satisfy their preferences is extremely limited by the lack of available social housing in Barnet.
- 1.7.2 The considerable housing pressures faced in Barnet limit the degree of choice that can be offered, along with the responsibility the council has to offer housing to applicants in urgent housing need. These pressures include the need to reduce the financial impact on the council for households placed into temporary accommodation under a homelessness duty.
- 1.7.3 Therefore, expressing a preference over where an applicant would prefer to live does not mean that preference can be met, or that an applicant won't be offered suitable accommodation outside of their preferred area.
- 1.7.4 An applicant will be asked at time of registration to state any area in which they believe they cannot live due to fear of violence, harassment, or domestic abuse. The assessment of their application will then consider the facts and decide whether the applicant is allowed to restrict areas.
- 1.7.5 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.
- 1.7.6 Priority for council and Private Registered Provider properties being let as secure, flexible, 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 normally be determined by the date the applicant has been registered in that band.
- 1.7.7 In selecting properties to allocate 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 re-housing;
- the housing band into which the applicant's case falls; and
- the date registered within that band (except for when a property may be allocated outside of band and date order (see section 1.8);

1.7.8 The council will not normally take into account:

- non-essential preferences concerning the location or type of rehousing requested by the applicant; or
- an applicant's preference concerning an allocation of a council property, a nomination to a Private Registered Provider property, or an allocation to a Private Rented Sector property.

1.8 When the council may choose to make a direct offer outside of the band and date order system.

1.8.1 There may be circumstances in which there are urgent strategic, operational, or financial reasons to make a direct offer of housing outside of the band and date order criteria. Specific examples include but are not limited to:

- a) people who need to move due to a fire or flood, or severe storm damage to their home;
- b) where there is an evidenced threat to life in the area in which an applicant currently lives for example, people who are at imminent risk of violence and are to be housed through a Witness Protection Programme;
- c) people who it has been agreed must be housed urgently as part of a multi-agency protocol such as a MAPPA, MARRAC case where it is agreed there is a need to manage where a person should be housed;
- d) where a vacant adapted property or a property designed to disability standards becomes available it may be offered to those households with a need for this property type regardless of their band or the date they were registered;
- e) in the case of a secure or flexible council tenant who is willing to transfer from a property they do not require, and which is particularly suitable for an applicant with special or support needs;
- f) applicants who have given up their secure and flexible council tenancy whilst they are in prison;
- g) where an applicant is homeless and in temporary accommodation and owed a Section 189B (2) Relief duty or 193(2) Main duty under the Housing Act 1996 and the council wishes to make a direct offer to move applicants out of temporary accommodation to manage any budgetary or legal requirements placed on the council;
- h) persons whom the council has a duty to rehouse under Section 39 of the Land Compensation Act 1973;
- i) a vulnerable applicant where the outcome of an assessment is that a managed let in a particular suitable location is the best letting solution for that applicant; or
- j) where a property has been acquired outside of the borough it may be allocated outside of banding and date order priority. The council will exercise its discretion to prioritise families

already living outside the borough for these units. This will enable the council, in some instances, to better meet the needs of such families as they are able to maintain social networks and support links already established in those areas. In most instances, these households will be already living in other forms of temporary accommodation.

1.8.2 Special allocation arrangements may also apply in respect of properties available for letting on new-build developments. The council has a Local Lettings Policy whereby existing council tenants with an established housing need under the council's Allocation Scheme (in Band 1 or Band 2) whose existing home would become available for reallocation are given priority for new-build properties on in-fill developments on their estate.

1.8.3 Decisions to allocate properties outside of band and date order system will be authorised by a manager responsible for applications and lettings and recorded, with the reasons why an allocation has been made. These will be reported on to members at least annually through a performance report covering all applications and lettings.

Note: households that may be at high risk due to significant repairs issues will be decanted and made a direct offer outside of this Allocation Scheme as any offer will be a management initiated move and sits outside of the requirements of allocations legislation.

1.9 Suspension from being considered for an allocation where an applicant refuses two suitable offers

1.9.1 Any applicant who refuses two suitable offers will be suspended for a period of 12 months for an allocation of accommodation. Except where there has been a material change in circumstances such that the two offers of accommodation would no longer be suitable, the 12-month suspension shall be from the date the council notified the applicant of its decision. An example of a change in circumstances could be because of an enlargement of the applicant's household or a deterioration in health.

1.9.2 The council will determine whether an offer was reasonable for an applicant to accept using the suitable offer criteria set out at annex 5.

1.9.3 Applicants owed any of the statutory homeless duties will be made one suitable offer in writing and a refusal will mean that their banding priority for being owed a statutory homeless duty will be removed.

1.9.4 An offer of suitable accommodation for an applicant owed a statutory homeless duty could be either a private rented property, or a social rented property. Should the applicant refuse an offer that is considered both suitable for their needs and reasonable, then, subject to the council's homelessness review procedure, the homelessness duty owed will be discharged and they will lose any priority status granted to them based on the homelessness duty owed.

1.9.5 In these circumstances the council will then assess whether they have another housing need as defined by the Scheme that would allow them to be banded and owed a second suitable offer under the Scheme. If they do not, they will be removed from the Housing Needs Register.

1.9.6 A statutory homeless duty is defined as:

- the prevention of homelessness duty under Section 195(2);
- the 'relief of homelessness duty' under Section 189B(2);
- where the relief duty has come to an end and an applicant is then owed a Section 190 Intentionally homeless temporary accommodation duty to provide them with a reasonable opportunity to secure alternative accommodation for occupation (Section 190(2) duty); or

- the Section 193(2) main homelessness duty or the Section 193C(4) 'reduced' Section 193 duty.

1.9.7 The suitability criteria used to determine whether an offer to end a main homeless duty owed under Section 193(2) of the Housing Act 1996 or a relief of homelessness duty owed under Section 189b, will be the criteria set down in the Suitability of Accommodation Order England 2012, as amended by Section 12 of the Homelessness Reduction Act 2017, relevant case law, and statutory guidance.

1.9.8 These criteria only apply to an offer of social housing or private rented housing made with the intention of ending a full homeless duty. Where an offer is made to any other banded applicant who is not owed a full homeless duty it is for the council to decide based on the facts of the case whether the offer is suitable using the guidance in Annex 5 of this Scheme to help make the decision.

1.9.9 If an applicant does not reply to an offer within two working days of receiving the offer it will be deemed to have been refused unless there are exceptional circumstances as to why there is no response.

1.10 Types of properties and restrictions

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

- properties in blocks of flats for people aged over 40 or aged over 50;
- properties in sheltered housing developments for people aged 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;
- priority for ground floor, level access accommodation, will be given to customers with an assessed need for ground floor, level access accommodation; or
- 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 Housing Needs Manager.

Section 2: Who can apply to join the Housing Needs Register and the criteria for deciding who is eligible to be included and who can qualify to join the scheme.

- 2.0.1 Anyone over the age of 16 years can apply to join the Housing Needs Register. Applications will be rejected if:
- they are ineligible to be considered by law; or
 - they come within one of the 'non qualification' categories set out in the Scheme; or
 - they do not have a statutory housing need.
- 2.0.2 A person can apply to join the Housing Needs Register if their current address is their only home, or sole residence, and they are not already registered through someone else's housing application.
- 2.0.3 If an applicant is under 18 years of age, they will not normally be offered a property. If in exceptional circumstances a person who is 16 or 17 is granted a tenancy, this will normally be held in trust until they reach the age of 18. This means that another suitable person (such as a parent, legal guardian, social worker, or relative) will normally be responsible for the tenancy.

2.1 The eligibility rules

- 2.1.1 Some groups of people cannot by law join the Housing Needs Register regardless of their housing need or circumstances. These are people who:
- come under a government rule which means they cannot lawfully access social housing as they are not eligible;
 - do not live habitually in the 'Common Travel Area' (UK, Channel Islands, the Isle of Man or the Republic of Ireland);
 - do not have the right to live in the UK; or
 - Fall under other categories of people who the Government may in the future decide are not eligible for housing assistance.
- 2.1.2 The key relevant regulations that apply to eligibility are:
- Regulations 3 and 4 Allocation of Housing and Homelessness (Eligibility) (England) Regulations 2006, SI 2006/1294;
 - all subsequent amendments including 'The Allocation of Housing and Homelessness (Eligibility) (England) (Amendment) (EU Exit) Regulations 2019 (SI 2019/861);
 - The Allocation of Housing and Homelessness (Eligibility) (England) (Amendment) Regulations 2020 (SI 2020/667) implemented from the 24 August 2020.
- 2.1.3 The above is not a complete list of all the eligibility regulations. For example, there is significant legislation that relates to the UK's exit from the European Union and the implications for accessing housing assistance. These rules are complicated. Anyone who is impacted, or believes they may be impacted, can approach the council for advice, or can seek independent legal advice.

2.2 The non-qualification rules adopted by the council

2.2.1 Under Section 160ZA(7) of the Housing Act 1996 Part 6 a council is allowed to set criteria for classes of persons who are, or are not, qualifying persons. The following classes of person will not normally qualify for the Housing Needs Register.

- a) applicants without a housing need as defined under the banding criteria set out in this Scheme, including applicants who are only lacking one bedroom, and this is their only housing need;
- b) applicants with no residential connection to Barnet (unless they meet one of the exceptions rules set out in 2.6 below or discretion has been applied for exceptional circumstances).
- c) applicants who have been convicted of housing or welfare benefits related fraud where that conviction is unspent under the Rehabilitation Offenders Act 1974;
- d) applicants 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 (see section 2.5 below for more details);
- e) applicants in serious breach of a condition of their tenancy agreement in respect of their current or former accommodation for any tenure (including temporary accommodation). Examples of a serious breach could include subletting, deliberate damage to a property, perpetrator of domestic abuse or anti-social behaviour (see section 2.8 below for more details);
- f) applicants with lawfully recoverable arrears or another housing related debt owed to a social landlord or private sector landlord which have been accrued through deliberate and wilful non-payment;
- g) applicants who own a home or whose income or assets exceeds the limits set by the council using median income data taken from ONS data (as these limits will change, Housing Needs Officers will use guidance to apply this test – see section 2.3 below for more details);
- h) applicants who owe arrears of rent or other accommodation charges to the council in respect of their current tenancy or former accommodation unless an appropriate agreement has been reached and sustained (see section 2.7 for more details). 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;
- i) applicants who 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.

2.2.2 There is discretion to waive a rule in exceptional circumstances, as approved by a Housing Needs Manager or Housing Service Manager.

Further details on how applications will be assessed under the non-qualification rules

2.3 Sufficient financial resources: income, savings, home ownership, and equity

- 2.3.1 All applicants will be required to supply evidence of their financial income and resources to decide whether they qualify for the Housing Needs Register. In addition, verification of income and savings will be required prior to applicants being offered accommodation.
- 2.3.2 Income assessments will take into account the incomes of both the main applicant and their partner, where applicable, but not the income of dependent children or non-dependent adult children. The income that is assessed will include both gross earned income and income from benefits (excluding disability benefits).
- 2.3.3 Income checks and checks on whether an applicant owns a home will include the council undertaking credit checks.
- 2.3.4 Households will not normally qualify, or if qualified be allowed to remain on the Housing Needs Register, if their total income is above the median income level for their household size in Barnet. This is calculated using ONS data.
- 2.3.5 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.
- 2.3.6 'Sufficient financial resources' includes any assets or investments even if they are not immediately available to the applicant.
- 2.3.7 In applying this qualification rule the council will disregard any lump sum received by a member of the armed forces when leaving the armed forces or received as compensation for an injury or disability on active service.
- 2.3.8 In addition, an applicant cannot qualify for the Housing Needs Register if they or their partner own a residential property in the UK or elsewhere. Applicants who have been the owner of a residential property within the last 5 years will be required to provide proof of the proceeds from the sale and of the disposal of any proceeds. Where proceeds from any sale have been spent recklessly and, as a result, this takes an applicant's financial resources below the set disqualification level, an applicant can still be determined as not qualifying for the Housing Needs Register.

2.4 The circumstances where an exemption may be considered to the sufficient financial resources and homeownership qualification rule

- 2.4.1 Applicants who do not qualify under the homeownership or sufficient financial resources rule may be considered as an exception if:
- as a result of a divorce settlement a court has ordered that an applicant may not reside in the former matrimonial or civil partnership home in which they still have a legal interest for a period that is likely to exceed 5 years;
 - someone is a homeowner and is statutory homeless due to domestic abuse and their property has not yet been sold. A decision will be made as to whether to treat this as an exemption based on the facts and circumstances of the case; or
 - a person owns their own home but it is agreed that they are no longer able to manage in it due to their advancing years, or due to a substantial disability that makes living in their

home impracticable, and where selling is unlikely to provide sufficient funds to purchase alternative accommodation that would be suitable for their needs.

2.5 Making false or misleading statements or withholding information

- 2.5.1 Any applicant seeking to obtain accommodation by making a false or misleading statement, by withholding relevant information, or by failing to inform the council of any material change in circumstances may be prevented from qualifying for the Housing Needs Register, or where they are already registered, may have their 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.
- 2.5.2 It will be for the housing needs assessing officer in the first instance to decide if any errors contained in an application were deliberately made or not. If the officer is satisfied that the errors were not deliberate, or that they had no impact on the application, then no action will be taken though the applicant may be warned about the need to provide accurate information and the consequences for not doing so.
- 2.5.3 Once removed from the Housing Needs Register on these grounds, applicants will not be able to reapply for a period of 12 months. Decisions to remove the person from the Housing Needs Register will be made based on the seriousness of the attempted fraud or false information given, including an assessment of why information was withheld.

2.6 The need to demonstrate a residential connection

- 2.6.1 To qualify for the Housing Needs Register an applicant (or the applicant's partner) must have a residential connection, within the terms of this Allocation Scheme, which will normally mean that an applicant currently lives in the borough and has continuously done so for a minimum of five years.
- 2.6.2 Households placed in accommodation outside of the borough by the council in meeting its statutory duties will also have a residential connection as long as they fulfil the five-year residential connection. The time spent placed by Barnet in temporary accommodation outside the borough will count towards time spent in Barnet.
- 2.6.3 Once registered, an applicant must continue to meet the residential connection qualification rule. If the applicant no longer meets this rule, they will be removed from the Housing Needs Register as they will no longer qualify for inclusion.
- 2.6.4 Persons who have been detained in the local authority area (e.g., in prison or hospital), will not be able to establish a local connection as this does not constitute being resident in the Barnet area by choice.
- 2.6.5 People in the following categories will not normally be considered as having a residential connection:
- a) households applying for housing through this Allocation Scheme still owed any homelessness duty by any other local housing authority under the Housing Act 1996 Part 7 will be regarded as non-qualifying persons regardless of whether they have been placed in the Barnet area or not. This is because that other local authority retains the responsibility for re-housing whether under Section 193 or any other duty by which the other local authority retains responsibility for their accommodation;
 - b) those placed in the borough of Barnet in residential or supported housing by another borough;

- c) secure or flexible tenants of other councils or tenants of any Private Registered Provider located in another council area; and/or
- d) those who do not meet the residential criteria but who have family members in this borough, or who are employed in the borough.

2.6.6 For the purposes of determining a connection for residence, the council will accept the following circumstances as demonstrating 'normal residence':

- residency in a non-traditional dwelling, such as a mobile home that is placed on a residential site, or an official pitch;
- people who are forced to sleep rough in the Barnet area as long as overall, they meet the five-year period for residency.

2.6.7 There are several exceptions to the residential connection rule. These are:

1. Where Barnet Council agrees there are very exceptional circumstances requiring a move into the area. This will be decided on a case-by-case basis. Examples where exceptional circumstances may be considered on a case-by-case basis include:
 - reasons of safety, for example when an applicant is fleeing domestic abuse or hate crime from another area; or
 - an applicant is on a witness protection program and the council has agreed that a move to Barnet is essential; or
 - where the council agrees there is a very exceptional need to live in the Barnet area to provide or receive essential support.
2. An application from a Gypsy or Traveller household where the applicant may not fully meet the five-year continuous period of residence rule, if that period has been broken by travelling. The facts of each case will be considered when deciding whether the rule should be waived, and the applicant must have spent the majority of the last 5 years residing in Barnet.
3. A young person owed leaving care duties under Section 23C of the Children's Act 1989, looked after by Barnet Council (irrespective of whether they have been placed in a different local authority) will be considered to have established a local connection to Barnet until they reach the age of 21 (when this duty will cease, or 25 if they are pursuing a program of education agreed in their pathway plan).
4. A young person who has been provided with accommodation under Section 22A of the Children Act 1989 (provision of accommodation for children in care) who has resided in Barnet for a continuous period of at least two years will be considered to have established a local connection to Barnet even if some of that period accrued before that person turned 16 years old.
5. Applicants who satisfy the 'Right to Move' criteria. The Allocation of Housing (Qualification Criteria for Right to Move) Regulations 2015 state that local connection qualification rules must not be applied to existing social tenants who seek to move from another council district in England, and who have a need to move for work related reasons to avoid hardship. However, under this Allocation Scheme, Barnet Council will limit these moves to no more than 1% of all lettings per year.

See annex 7 for details of how the 'Right to Move' criteria will be applied.

6. Where, at the date of application, the applicant is not currently resident in Barnet whilst:
 - a) receiving medical or respite care; or

- b) serving a custodial sentence

In these circumstances the applicant must have been living in Barnet for five continuous years prior to their current circumstances.

- 7. Applicants who satisfy the Allocation of Housing (Qualification Criteria for Armed Forces) (England) Regulations 2012. These are:
 - a) applicants who are serving members of the regular armed forces;
 - b) applicants who served in the regular armed forces within the 5 years immediately prior to the date of their application;
 - c) applicants who are serving or former serving members of the regular armed forces or reserve forces who suffer from a serious injury, illness or disability sustained as a result of their service;
 - d) applicants who are a bereaved spouse/civil partner of a former serving member of the regular armed forces and have recently ceased (or will soon cease) to be entitled to reside in services accommodation following the death of their spouse/civil partner; or
 - e) the divorced or separated ex-spouse of a member of HM Armed Forces, who is currently serving or going through resettlement, will be exempt from the local connection criteria for a period of six months following the divorce or separation.

2.7 Applicants who owe arrears of rent or other accommodation charges to Barnet Council in respect of the current tenancy or former accommodation

Note: references to applicant throughout this Scheme are to be taken to mean the applicant and any member of the applicant's household unless specifically stated.

- 2.7.1 Applicants who owe arrears of rent or other accommodation charges to the council in respect of the current tenancy or former accommodation will not, unless there are exceptional circumstances, qualify for the Housing Needs Register unless an appropriate agreement has been reached and sustained for a minimum period as set out below:
 - Housing related debt under £1,000: arrears of under £100 will not be considered. Where arrears are over £100, they must have either been cleared or an agreed repayment plan must normally have been maintained for a minimum of 13 weeks before they can qualify for the Housing Needs Register; or
 - Housing related debt over £1,000: an agreed repayment plan must normally have been maintained for a minimum of four months, or a period of time that is deemed acceptable by the council due to an exceptionally high housing related debt; or
 - If an applicant is registered, payments must be maintained under the plan agreed before any offer of accommodation will be made unless the council agree there are exceptional circumstances.
- 2.7.2 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.
- 2.7.3 These guidelines for the period of time that a repayment plan should be maintained will also apply to applicants with lawfully recoverable arrears or another housing related debt owed to a social landlord or private sector landlord.

Note: the definition of rent arrears or other accommodation charges owed to the council will not include debts that are statute barred. The debt will be considered statute barred where an applicant, or their representative or someone else they held the account with hasn't:

- made a payment in the last 6 years;
- written to the creditor acknowledging the debt in the last 6 years defined as 6 years from date the debt was last acknowledged and 6 years from date rent arrears became due;
- had a county court judgment (CCJ) relating to the debt in the last 6 years.

2.7.4 For the purposes of this qualification rule rent arrears and accommodation charges debts owed to Barnet Council include:

- a) rent arrears;
- a) outstanding re-chargeable repairs;
- b) current and former housing related service charge arrears;
- c) temporary accommodation charge arrears for a licence or a tenancy where that temporary accommodation was provided by Barnet Council;
- d) failing to adhere to the terms of an agreed payment plan in relation to rent arrears or housing debt for a council tenancy, or temporary accommodation;
- e) any court costs incurred by the council associated with any of the above debts.

The above list are examples only. Housing-related debts apply to both the applicant and to any members of their household who are included in their application.

2.7.5 The following framework will be used to guide assessing officers when applying this qualification rule. The officer will consider:

- 1) the reasons why the applicant accrued the debt and whether there are exceptional circumstances that should be considered when applying the rule such as where an applicant can demonstrate that they would face serious hardship or risk through not being allowed to qualify;
- 2) whether the debt has been caused by factors difficult for the applicant to control, for example a case where an applicant was unable to pay the full rent due to being impacted by the 'spare room subsidy' rule or an applicant has a good payment history but has incurred a debt as a result of a 'one off' problem, or where a tenant had to flee domestic abuse and a subsequent debt has built up for the tenancy left;
- 3) whether the applicant still owes that debt, and if they do, the extent of the arrears/debt as well as whether it is a recoverable debt, or a statute barred debt;
- 4) whether the applicant has taken debt advice, acted on it, and entered into an arrangement to clear the arrears/debt; and
- 5) if an arrangement has been made, the amount of arrears/debt paid off, any amount outstanding, and the regularity of payments made.

After considering the above, the assessing officer will decide whether the applicant will or will not qualify to be included in the Housing Needs Register.

2.7.6 There is no time limit regarding when a person can make a new application following disqualification under this rule. Where a new application is made, the council will assess whether the applicant has taken appropriate action to address their rent arrears/debt.

2.7.7 If disqualified, an applicant will be informed of the action they need to take to resolve the debt in order to be considered for qualification.

Note: This qualification rule also applies to applicants currently on the Housing Needs Register. An applicant's eligibility to remain on the Housing Needs Register will be kept under review. An

applicant may be rendered ineligible should the council become satisfied that there is new evidence, or a change of circumstances, meaning that this rule should be applied.

2.8 Unacceptable behaviour

- 2.8.1 The disqualification rule for unacceptable behaviour will apply where an applicant, or any member of their current or prospective household, has demonstrated serious unacceptable behaviour that, in the view of the council, makes them at the time of their application, or since their application, unsuitable to be a tenant.
- 2.8.2 The rule of non-qualification will apply where the council is satisfied that an applicant (or a member of their current or prospective household) has demonstrated a serious failure to adhere to the terms of a current or previous social housing or private rented tenancy agreement. This is defined as:
- a) failing to maintain any previous social rented or private sector rented property within the terms of their tenancy agreement, or committing acts causing or likely to cause nuisance or annoyance to neighbours or others in the area where they live or have previously lived. Non-qualification will apply until the applicant (or a member of their prospective household) has demonstrated, to the satisfaction of the council, their previous unacceptable conduct is unlikely to reoccur. This may include demonstrating cooperation with support agencies leading to a substantial improvement in behaviour;
 - b) conduct likely to cause nuisance or annoyance if they were to be offered a tenancy. This is conduct or behaviour that does not only relate to a previous social housing or private rented sector tenancy. It may include the circumstances where an applicant, or a member of their current or prospective household, is the subject of actions being taken by any council (or some other recognised body) on grounds of alleged antisocial behaviour (ASB);
 - c) rent arrears for a former social housing tenancy (detail regarding former Barnet Council tenancies is included in section 2.7) or their last private rented tenancy in the circumstances where the council has obtained information that confirms on the balance of probabilities that a debt is owed. If there is a debt owed it will be for the assessing officer to decide on the facts gathered regarding the level of debt and the reasons for it, whether the applicant should be classified as a non-qualifying. Where it is established that a debt is owed the same rules will apply as per a social housing debt above;
 - d) circumstances where the applicant, or any member of their household, has assaulted a member of the council's staff, whether or not an injunction is being sought, or has been obtained.
- 2.8.3 Other specific examples of serious unacceptable behaviour include:
- a) being subject to a court order (including an interim order) for breach of tenancy conditions;
 - b) conviction for illegal or immoral use of their current or former home;
 - c) causing nuisance and annoyance to neighbours or visitors;
 - d) committing criminal offences in or near the home and still posing a threat to neighbours or the community such as drug dealing;
 - e) being violent towards a partner or members of the family;
 - f) allowing the condition of the property to deteriorate;
 - g) paying money illegally to obtain a tenancy;
 - h) unlawfully subletting their tenancy;
 - i) applicants who have been convicted of housing or welfare benefit related fraud, where that conviction is unspent under the Rehabilitation Offenders Act 1974;
 - j) having unspent convictions where the assessment concludes that the applicant is unsuitable to be a tenant due to a significant risk to potential neighbours and/or communities;

- k) an applicant or any member of their household has been responsible for any racial harassment or other hate crime. 'Racial harassment' and 'hate crimes' are defined as racist, religiously aggravated, faith, gender, age, disability, and trans phobic or homophobic or gender re-assignment harassment or hate crime. A hate crime or racist incident is defined as any incident which is perceived to be racist or hate crime related by the complainant or any other person.

2.8.4 The assessing officer will be guided using the following framework:

- a) The behaviour need not have led to possession, prosecution, or other enforcement action by a statutory agency, provided that, on the balance of probability, the household is responsible;
- b) in normal circumstances the behaviour concerned should have occurred within the last two years. In cases of a more serious nature, for example, those involving criminal prosecution, a longer timescale may be appropriate;
- c) there must be reasonable grounds for believing that the behaviour could continue or be repeated. For example, the applicant may have issued threats, or there might be a history of repeat offending.

2.8.5 When assessing whether behaviour may result in the applicant not qualifying the Housing Needs Officer will specifically consider:

- 1) the seriousness of the applicant's behaviour;
- 2) the duration of the behaviour and/or the number and frequency of incidents;
- 3) the length of time that has elapsed since the behaviour took place;
- 4) any relevant vulnerability or support needs that may explain the behaviour;
- 5) whether there is meaningful engagement with support agencies;
- 6) critically, whether there has been a significant and sustained change in the applicant's behaviour;
- 7) whether they believe on the evidence that the behaviour is likely to still reoccur now or at the point a tenancy was offered or commenced;
- 8) whether the circumstances that caused the behaviour have changed. For example, whether nuisance was caused by drug or alcohol problems that the applicant has since successfully resolved;
- 9) whether the member of the household responsible for the behaviour is still a member of the household;
- 10) whether the council can accept any assurances from the applicant as to future behaviour;
- 11) if the unacceptable behaviour is believed to be due to physical, mental or learning difficulties, whether, with appropriate support, the applicant could maintain a tenancy; and
- 12) the applicant's current circumstances. For example, health needs, dependents, and any other relevant factors.

2.8.6 Applicants to whom the rule is applied will be written to and informed that:

- 1) the unacceptable behaviour rule has been applied to their case and either they do not qualify, or that they qualify but cannot be considered for an allocation until the behaviour has been resolved;
- 2) what they must do to resolve the problem;
- 3) for a decision that they do not qualify it is the applicant's responsibility to notify the council when they have, in their view, resolved the issue and that they will need to present evidence to back up their view. The council will not monitor whether the applicant has set up or adhered to a payment plan once a decision has been taken that the applicant does not qualify for this rule.

- 4) where an applicant is disqualified for unacceptable behaviour they will have a right to ask for a review of the decision made to disqualify them.

Note: where an applicant is disqualified, any new application will normally only be reconsidered at the request of the applicant and only where there has been no reasonable cause for complaint or concern against the applicant (or members of their prospective household) for a continuous period of 12 months.

Note: The unacceptable behaviour disqualification rule will also apply to applicants currently on the Housing Needs Register. An applicant's eligibility to remain on the Housing Needs Register will be kept under review and an applicant may be rendered ineligible should the council be satisfied that the rule relating to unacceptable behaviour should be applied to their case.

2.9 How exceptional circumstances will be considered in respect to any of the qualification rules or any other rule adopted under this policy

- 2.9.1 Barnet Council will retain the ability, in exceptional circumstances, to exercise its discretion when applying any of the qualification rules adopted. It is for the applicant to request that discretion should be applied to their case for exceptional circumstances.
- 2.9.2 Where, in their application to join the Housing Needs Register, an applicant makes a case for discretion to be applied for exceptional circumstances, this will be considered as part of the application. Otherwise, if the case for discretion has not been made as part of the application the applicant will have a second chance through the review process to make the case for why discretion should be applied. For example, where an applicant has requested a review of a decision that they do not qualify or a decision as to what band is owed, the applicant may make the case for why discretion should be applied to their case for exceptional circumstances.
- 2.9.3 A request for a review of a decision that an applicant does not meet the qualification rule will be taken as a request for any exceptional circumstances to be considered. Where requested, the council will consider whether the applicant's circumstances (or those of a member of the applicant's household) are so exceptional that a qualification rule should be waived.
- 2.9.4 The applicant will receive a written decision on their claim for exceptional circumstances to be applied and, where that decision is that the case is not considered to be exceptional, reasons will be given.
- 2.9.5 The council cannot waive the eligibility rules for any applicant who is not allowed to access social housing under the immigration and 'persons from abroad' rules set by Central Government.
- 2.9.6 In deciding whether an applicant's circumstances are exceptional the council will fully consider the Equality Act 2010 and Children Act 2004. With regard to the Equality Act, the council will specifically consider:
 - a) whether the person, or a member of their household, meets the definition for one or more of the nine protected characteristics listed in the Equality Act 2010;
 - b) if we agree that the applicant or a member of their household comes under the definition for a protected characteristic, the council will fully comply with Section 149 of 2010 Equality Act and ensure it has obtained all relevant information relating to the applicant's protected characteristic and will consider that if they were not able to qualify for the scheme, whether this would have an exceptionally detrimental impact on the person with that protected characteristic; and
 - c) ensure any decision that the applicant's circumstances are not exceptional will be a decision that is a proportionate means of achieving the legitimate objectives for the Scheme.

Section 3: General Rules and Conditions

3.0 Decisions

3.1 All decisions taken under this Allocation Scheme will be by Housing Needs Officers within Barnet Homes unless otherwise specified. Housing Needs Officers are supported by Housing Needs Managers.

3.1 Requests for assistance

3.1.1 Requests for housing assistance must be made to Barnet Homes' Housing Options Service. The council aims to notify applicants of the result of the assessment of their case and, if they qualify to be considered, their priority under the housing banding system within 56 days. However, in cases where a medical assessment or other special assessment is required, it may take longer to notify applicants of the result.

3.2 Persons entitled to be considered as part of the application

3.2.1 Joint applications may be accepted and will be treated as one application. The housing need of the full household will be considered in assessing housing need.

3.2.2 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.

3.2.3 Applicants should only include persons on their application who will be a permanent member of their household and who will be occupying the accommodation offered as their only or principal home.

3.2.4 People who usually live with the applicant but are temporarily absent (for example, they are in prison on a short-term sentence, or in the care of any local authority, staying in hospital, or undertaking a college or university course), may be considered as a usual household member at the discretion of the council and depending on the facts presented.

3.2.5 Specifically, a person's housing application can include the following household members:

- a) spouses or civil partners where the applicant lives with and/or intends to live with their spouse or civil partner;
- b) partners where the applicant is currently cohabiting with a member of the same or opposite sex;
- c) children who reside with and are dependent upon the applicant. Children are defined as under 18 for these purposes;
- d) any other household member such as an adult child where it is accepted that:
 - i. they have been part of the applicant's household for a period of 12 months prior to their application to the council; and
 - ii. they reside with the applicant as part of their household.

The applicant will need to demonstrate that this is not a short term or temporary arrangement.

- e) family members who do not currently reside in the UK cannot be added to a Housing Needs Register application.

- 3.2.6 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.
- 3.2.7 The council may decide to carry out a visit to each applicant's residence if their priority is sufficient for an allocation of housing under this Allocation Scheme. Visits conducted will include an inspection of the accommodation and facilities and are normally, but not necessarily, arranged by appointment.
- 3.2.8 Joint tenancies are normally granted by the council or a Private Registered Provider where applicants have a long-term commitment, for example, married, or unmarried couples, or civil partners. This decision is for the council or relevant Private Registered Provider offering accommodation, who will decide whether to allow a joint tenancy depending on the circumstances.
- 3.2.9 For households with access to children through a Child Arrangement Order, the council will adopt the test set out in Section 189(1)(b) of Part 7 of the Housing Act 1996 to decide whether any child both lives with and is dependent on the applicant. Unless this test is passed an applicant will only be able to be considered for the size of accommodation relevant to their circumstances.
- 3.2.10 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.
- 3.2.11 If the main applicant is eligible and not subject to immigration control, non-eligible dependent children and other dependent family members or 'live in' carers in receipt of carers allowance will be taken into account when deciding the size of accommodation that the household is entitled to if accommodation in the private rented sector cannot be secured.

3.3 Assessing applications

- 3.3.1 Any band awarded reflects an applicant's housing need with the higher the band awarded (with Band 1 being highest) reflecting the greater level of assessed housing need.
- 3.3.2 Applicants will be required to sign a declaration, or to give informed consent, to confirm their understanding that:
- the information given is correct and that they will notify the council of any change in their circumstances;
 - enquiries will be made concerning their eligibility for housing and level of priority; and
 - information may be sought from other organisations.
- 3.3.3 Once an applicant provides information, the council will process that information under Article 6 of the UK-GDPR. The processing is necessary under the 'Public Task' purpose and is necessary for the council to perform a task in the public interest or for its official functions, in this case to meet its legal responsibility to assess housing applications, and we are satisfied that the task or function has a clear basis in law.
- 3.3.4 It is the responsibility of the applicant to provide all the information requested to assess their circumstances, and to provide any supporting information or documents that are requested. Incomplete information will mean the council is not able to complete its assessment until it has in its possession all the information it requires.
- 3.3.5 All incomplete applications will be cancelled after a period of 28 days measured from the date further information has been requested. If cancelled, this does not prevent the applicant making a

subsequent application at a later date, although in such cases the applicant's effective date of registration would not be backdated to the date of the earlier application.

- 3.3.6 Barnet Council may request information or a reference from an applicant's current or previous social landlord and may, depending on whether the application gives rise to any concern, request a reference from the most recent private sector landlord (or any other recent private sector landlord) if the applicant is, or has been, a private sector tenant. This is to check whether there has been any breach of tenancy conditions.
- 3.3.7 Where a social or private landlord does not reply within 28 days a reminder will be sent, and if still not forthcoming within 14 days of the reminder being sent, any other information or records available will be checked to try to determine whether there are any concerns regarding the way an applicant may have conducted their tenancy. An applicant should not be disadvantaged if, despite every effort, it is not possible to obtain a reference from their current or previous landlord.
- 3.3.8 All applications are subject to verification checks, and these may be applied:
- at the point of initial application;
 - following any change of circumstance notified to the council by the applicant;
 - following any routine validation audits;
 - following an annual review of the application;
 - at the point of an offer of accommodation;
 - at the point of letting.

3.4 Medical priority

- 3.4.1 When assessing whether to award Band 1 or 2 or no priority, the council will follow the five-stage assessment set out below:
- 1) Is the medical/disability issue serious enough for a priority banding to be considered?
 - 2) If the medical condition is serious enough for a priority banding to be considered the assessing officer should then decide if there is a direct link between the identified medical problem and the applicant's current housing accommodation/situation, i.e., on the facts obtained (from the applicant and any medical information or reports submitted including any advice from an independent medical advisor or occupational therapist) does the assessing officer accept that the applicant's current housing accommodation/circumstances are making their medical condition or disability substantially worse, or will make it worse?
 - 3) In practical terms, the officer will consider the adverse effect this has on the applicant's ability to manage day-to-day tasks in their current home. The applicant's current housing accommodation/circumstances may be impacting on their medical condition or disability but not to the extent that an award of Band 1 or 2 priority should be granted under the criteria adopted for the Scheme. There are examples listed in Annex 6 for when an award of Band 1 or 2 may be awarded and they are used to guide the officer when making their decision.
 - 4) Before making an award, the assessing officer needs to be satisfied there is a realistic expectation that the impact on the identified medical condition/disability would be removed or significantly improved through the provision of alternative accommodation.
 - 5) If the officer is satisfied that the impact on the identified medical condition/disability would be removed or significantly improved, they would then decide whether to award Band 1 or 2 depending on the severity of the impact. The Housing Needs Officer will make their final

decision based on a medical adviser's recommendations and the medical adviser will be guided by this five-stage assessment process.

3.5 When medical priority will not normally be awarded

3.5.1 Medical priority will not normally be awarded in the following circumstances:

- a) where the applicant has a health issue, however severe, that is not impacted by the accommodation occupied;
- b) health problems that are not affected by housing or cannot be improved by moving;
- c) where a move would only make a marginal improvement to the applicant's condition;
- d) medical impacts caused by housing defects that are likely to be rectified in a reasonable time frame;
- e) where another reasonable course of action is available to the applicant to resolve their difficulties;
- f) time-related medical problems (e.g., pregnancy-related problems or a broken leg)
- g) Disrepair problems not impacting significantly on the applicant's medical condition. (Note: under the Scheme an applicant may receive priority separately for living in unfit or unsatisfactory housing depending on the assessment made of their circumstances and impact);
- h) overcrowding not impacting significantly on the applicant's medical condition. (Note: under the Scheme an applicant may receive priority separately for being overcrowded);
- i) if the situation can be resolved by equipment or minor adaptations which can be implemented in a reasonable period of time.

3.5.2 Medical assessments will also consider the '*National strategy for autistic children, young people, and adults 2021-26*' for any relevant assessment.

3.5.3 Medical assessments are not just related to banding. The council will also consider recommendations for future housing, for example regarding the floor level a household may need and whether an extra bedroom is required due to a child having autism. Guidelines for assessing extra bedroom requests for ADHD, Asperger's, sensory processing difficulties, and other mental or physical health problems are set out in Annex 5.

3.6 Checks into any court cases or unspent criminal convictions

3.6.1 All applicants and members of their prospective household will be requested to disclose any pending court cases or unspent criminal convictions.

3.6.2 The council may use any information disclosed (or any other information obtained during the assessment or following registration) to ascertain whether the applicant should be disqualified from joining, or from remaining on the Housing Needs Register, after applying the serious unacceptable behaviour rule.

3.6.3 Spent convictions are not required to be disclosed and will not be taken into account in assessing a person's eligibility to join the Housing Needs Register. The assessment will consider whether there is evidence of any current serious unacceptable behaviour regardless of whether a person has been convicted in the past for that behaviour.

3.6.4 If the council decides that, on the information obtained during the assessment process, there is a pressing need for a Disclosure and Barring Service (DBS) check, or further information from the Probation Service, relevant inquiries will be made.

3.6.5 Information gained will not automatically exclude an applicant from the Housing Needs Register. Information received may also be used to make informed decisions about the suitability of any property that may be offered.

- 3.6.6 All assessments will be carried out in accordance with data protection and information sharing policies and other legal requirements.

3.7 The requirement to inform the council of any change of circumstances

- 3.7.1 Applicants are required to inform the council in writing of any material change in their circumstances that may affect their priority for housing. Examples of a change in circumstances include but are not limited to:

- a) a change of address or contact details, for either themselves or members of their household;
- b) a change in their medical condition or disability (either existing or newly acquired);
- c) additional family members or other people they wish to add to their application (It will be for the council to decide whether they will allow additional people to join the application);
- d) any family member or any other person on the application who has left their household; and/or
- e) any significant changes in income, savings, or assets, that may require a reassessment under the income and savings qualification rule.

- 3.7.2 Applications may be temporarily suspended while the council assesses the information provided by the applicant and completes further enquiries that may be necessary.

- 3.7.3 Where following a change in an applicant's circumstances this results in a change to the applicant's application or banding, they will be informed in writing.

Note: on allocation of accommodation, verification checks into the applicant's current circumstances are likely to be carried out again by the council or Private Registered Provider that owns the property. This is to ensure the allocation is being made in accordance with the applicant's current housing circumstances and needs at the time of a prospective offer. Therefore, a failure to notify the council of a change in circumstances may lead to an offer of housing being withdrawn and the application suspended whilst changes that were not notified to the council are assessed.

3.8 Applications from elected council members, staff members or relations

- 3.8.1 To ensure 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 assessed in the normal way, but any allocation of housing will require special approval.

- 3.8.2 For this purpose, an applicant with a connection includes the following circumstances plus the level of authorisation within Barnet Homes that is required:

- a) any applicant who is a current elected member of the council, or a former elected member of the council – CEO authorisation
- b) any applicant who is a board member of The Barnet Group or its subsidiaries including Barnet Homes or a member of their immediate family – CEO authorisation
- c) any applicant who is a current member of staff of the council or The Barnet Group or its subsidiaries - Housing Service Manager authorisation
- d) any applicant who is a former member of staff of the council's housing service or The Barnet Group or its subsidiaries within the past 10 years – Housing Service Manager authorisation
- e) a close relative of any current member of the council's housing service or The Barnet Group or its subsidiaries. Close relatives are defined as mother, father, son, daughter, brother, sister, partner, nephew, niece, uncle, aunt, grandparent, or grandchild - partners

and people living together are treated in the same way as if they were married – Housing Service Manager authorisation

3.8.3 Canvassing is not allowed in any circumstances by, or on behalf of, a councillor or member of staff.

3.9 Cancelling applications

3.9.1 An application will be cancelled from the Housing Needs Register in the following circumstances:

- a) at the request of an applicant;
- b) where an applicant does not respond to an application review, within the specified time set out in any correspondence sent to them;
- c) where the council or Private Registered Provider has housed the applicant (unless it is assessed that the applicants' housing circumstances would still qualify for a band award based on their housing need, but this is unlikely to be the case);
- d) where an applicant owed a homeless duty has been housed through the Let2Barnet scheme, or has had their homelessness resolved through an offer of accommodation to end a prevention relief or main homeless duty, or has found their own accommodation to rent in the Private Rented Sector.;
- e) when a tenant completes a mutual exchange;
- f) where the applicant moves and does not provide a contact address;
- g) where the applicant has died;
- h) where, at the housing application or any reassessment, an applicant has not supplied information requested within 28 days;
- i) where an applicant already registered becomes ineligible or is disqualified under the rules adopted for this Scheme;
- j) where the applicant buys a property either through the Right to Buy or Right to Acquire or through the open market, or inherits a property.

3.9.2 Any applicant whose application has been cancelled has the right to ask for a review of that decision.

3.10 Deliberate worsening of circumstances

3.10.1 At the point their application is assessed or, for applicants already on the Housing Needs Register, at the point they request a change in banding due to a claim that their circumstances have changed, where there is evidence that an applicant has deliberately made their housing situation worse in order to gain a higher banding, the assessment of their needs will be based on the circumstances before the change in their situation brought about by their actions to deliberately worsen their circumstances.

3.10.2 Examples of deliberately worsening circumstances include:

- applicants who have allowed family members or others to move into their property, who previously had suitable accommodation or the financial means to secure their own accommodation, and this has resulted in the property being overcrowded and the council does not accept that there was an essential justification for allowing the family member(s) to move in;
- homeowners who have transferred their property to another family member within the last five years from the date they make their application to the Housing Needs Register;
- applicants who have given up affordable and suitable private rented accommodation that they are able to maintain to move in with other relatives or friends, creating a situation of overcrowding;

- requesting or colluding with a landlord or family member to issue them with a notice to leave their accommodation.

3.10.3 These are examples only. There may be other circumstances in which the council decides that an applicant has deliberately worsened their circumstances.

3.11 The review procedure

3.11.1 Under the housing legislation an applicant has a legal right to request a review of any of the following decisions reached by the council:

- a) a decision that an applicant is ineligible, or not a qualifying person to join the Housing Needs Register;
- b) a decision regarding which band an applicant has been awarded;
- c) the priority date granted for the band awarded;
- d) to remove an applicant from the Housing Needs Register;
- e) any decision about the facts of the case that has been used to assess their application including the decision the council has made regarding who can be included in the application;
- f) where an applicant considers that a decision has been reached based on incorrect information.

3.12 How a request for a review will be dealt with

3.12.1 Applicants who are unhappy with a decision made under the Allocation Scheme should in the first instance contact the Housing Needs Team and explain why they think the decision is not correct or not reasonable. An initial informal review will then be undertaken by either the housing officer who dealt with their case or an equivalent officer.

3.12.2 The applicant will be notified whether the decision still stands and the reasons for this usually within two working days via a telephone call, text, email, or letter.

3.12.3 If an applicant wishes to take the matter further, they can make a request for a formal review of the decision within 21 days of being informed of the outcome of the informal review. The request can be made verbally or in writing by letter or email. In these cases, the applicant will then be invited to make a written submission stating the reasons for their request for a review. Formal reviews will be conducted by a Housing Needs Manager who will notify the applicant of the outcome of the review in writing, including the reasons for their decision. The council aims to notify the applicant within 56 days; however, this is a target timescale and may be longer depending on operational pressures.

3.12.4 There is no right to request a review of a review decision.

3.13 Pan-London mobility and pan-London housing reciprocal arrangements

3.13.1 Barnet Council participates in Pan-London Mobility (PLM) and Pan London Housing Reciprocal arrangements, and accordingly up to 5% 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.

3.13.2 Homes under this scheme are allocated according to these schemes rules and not the rules outlined in this Allocation Scheme. Full details of the PLM Scheme can be found at www.london.gov.uk.

3.13.3 Existing tenants of Barnet Council can make transfer applications through PLM to be considered for vacancies in other London local authority areas.

3.14 Local lettings policies

3.14.1 Local lettings initiatives may be applied to meet the particular needs of a local ward or area or to address sustainability and community issues to ensure that the housing allocation scheme is able to contribute to building sustainable communities.

3.14.2 They will be tailored to fit local situations in well-defined communities (such as an estate being regenerated, a particular block of flats, an individual street, or new housing development). Each local lettings policy will be based on a detailed analysis of relevant information gathered from a variety of sources and may include, for example, evidence from internal departments, local councillors, and the community itself.

3.14.3 The following are examples of local lettings policies that may be deployed under this Scheme. The list is for illustrative purposes and is not exhaustive.

- a) age restrictions;
- b) prioritising tenants or applicants to return to estates that are being regenerated;
- c) prioritising applicants who are key workers;
- d) restrictions on lettings to vulnerable households where there are already a concentration of supported tenants/residents in a street or block;
- e) lettings to childless households where there are high concentrations of children and young people living on a specific estate, street, or block;
- f) ensuring that there is a balance of working and non-working households allocated to a scheme.

3.14.4 New developments will normally have local lettings policies (and this usually only applies to first lettings) regardless of whether the new development is subject to a Section 106 agreement or affordable housing statement. Where a new development is subject to a Section 106 planning agreement the criteria set will be followed.

3.14.5 Under a local lettings policy the council will give priority for local people living on any regeneration estate to be allocated a new home on that estate ahead of those who are otherwise waiting for housing and even if their home is not being demolished.

3.14.6 The council will decide when a local lettings policy may be appropriate and why.

3.14.7 There must be a clear evidence base for adopting a local lettings policy. The following framework will be used by the council to decide whether a local lettings policy is appropriate:

- 1) that there is a clear definition of the objective to be achieved by that particular local lettings policy;
- 2) that there is a clear evidence base to back up the need for a local lettings policy;
- 3) that any potential equality impact has been considered;
- 4) how long the local lettings policy is intended to operate; and
- 5) when the local lettings policy should be reviewed.

3.14.8 A written record of each policy adopted should be kept.

3.15 Local lettings policy for applicants owed a main homelessness duty accommodated under a non-secure tenancy on regeneration sites

- 3.15.1 After allocating homes to secure tenants living on a regeneration estate, at the point of decanting a non-secure tenant the council will look to provide a new home on that regeneration estate for any non-secure tenant owed a main homelessness duty (under Section 193(2) of the Housing Act 1996) who has held that non-secure tenancy for five years or more at the point vacant possession of the property is sought.
- 3.15.2 If there are insufficient homes available after allocating to secure tenants on the regeneration estate where they live, a non-secure tenant who has held that non secure tenancy for five years or more will be considered for appropriate accommodation outside of the area where they live, but as close as possible to that area.

3.16 Size of accommodation that can be offered

- 3.16.1 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 in Annex 2.
- 3.16.2 Families who are willing can choose to be considered for smaller council-owned properties that are up to one bedroom size less than their assessed need as long as this does not mean they will be statutorily overcrowded. This will include families with a need for two bedrooms who have one child aged under 5 who opt to be considered for a 1-bedroom property.
- 3.16.3 At the council's discretion, households with a child who are seeking a transfer from a 1-bedroom property may, despite not being considered to be statutorily overcrowded in line with the space standard set out in the Housing Act 1985, be considered for a two-bedroom property where there is availability.
- 3.16.4 Young people aged 16 to 25 might be offered shared housing dependent on their assessed housing need.
- 3.16.5 Larger accommodation than specified in Annex 2 may be considered in exceptional circumstances on the recommendation of the Medical Assessment Team.
- 3.16.6 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. Where there are two communal living rooms one will be treated as a bedroom for the measurement of overcrowding and for the assessment of the size of accommodation to which an applicant is entitled.
- 3.16.7 Existing council tenants with secure or flexible tenancies 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 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.

3.17 Secure and flexible council tenants

- 3.17.1 Secure and flexible 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 the Allocation Scheme. As such they will also be subject to the qualification criteria set out in section 2.2.

- 3.17.2 Applications for a 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 a reasonable offer of a transfer to a third property that the new joint tenants accept.
- 3.17.3 Tenants in the introductory period of their tenancy or who have gained their tenancy by mutual exchange in the previous two years cannot apply for a transfer.
- 3.17.4 On occasion it may be necessary for a secure and flexible 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. Depending on the circumstances and urgency of the situation an offer may be made outside of the date order system.
- 3.17.5 Secure and flexible 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.
- 3.17.6 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 council homes or homes owned and managed by Private Registered Providers. Under the Allocation Scheme, existing secure and flexible council tenants whose homes are due to be demolished will have priority for the new replacement homes being provided on their estate in accordance with a local lettings policy agreed for each estate, before they are made available to any other applicants.
- 3.17.7 Where a care leaver who is a secure or flexible tenant needs to leave the borough for a placement in Higher Education or the Armed Forces for a period of more than nine months, and would therefore either accumulate rent arrears or possibly lose their tenancy, they can voluntarily give up their tenancy. Upon return, they would be made a direct allocation of a secure or flexible council tenancy 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 Allocation Scheme, whichever is smaller.
- 3.17.8 Where a secure or flexible 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 or flexible council tenancy 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 Allocation Scheme, 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.

3.18 Private Registered Provider tenants

- 3.18.1 The tenants of Private Registered Providers of social housing, including housing associations, will be assessed in the same way as other applicants applying for housing advice and assistance under the Allocation Scheme.

3.19 Mutual exchanges

- 3.19.2 Secure and flexible council tenants have certain rights in relation to exchanging their tenancies with other secure and flexible council 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 the Allocation Scheme, and full details for how these schemes operate can be obtained from Barnet Homes or the landlord in the case of tenants of Private Registered Providers.

3.20 Discretionary succession

3.20.1 Housing law means that certain household members are entitled to succeed to a secure or flexible 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. Under this Allocation Scheme a person can succeed to a secure tenancy if:

- a) they are a household member of the tenant who has died, and they lived with the tenant for at least a year immediately before their death; and
- b) the tenancy is their main home; and
- c) there is no partner who can inherit the tenancy defined as a married partner, civil partner, or unmarried partner; and
- d) the person would, if they had applied to join the Allocation Scheme, qualify under the eligibility and qualification rules; and
- e) all members of the household of the person succeeding to the secure tenancy lived with the tenant for at least a year immediately before the tenant's death.

3.20.2 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 Allocation Scheme; this could include an offer of accommodation in the private rented sector.

3.21 Service tenancies

3.21.1 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 through a direct offer outside of the band and date order system, subject to the applicant being eligible for assistance under the Allocation Scheme and not disqualified under the rules set out in section 2.2.

Section 4: How to apply and how an applicant's banding will be assessed and when a band will be awarded

4.0 How to apply

- 4.0.1 People wishing to apply to be considered for the Housing Needs Register should contact the council by phoning 020 8610 3539, emailing housingadvice@barnethomes.org, or writing to Barnet Homes' main office. A member of Barnet Homes' Housing Options team will assess their housing problem and circumstances and give advice on what options are available to solve any problem.
- 4.0.2 Where staying in a person's current home is not an option, or where a person's housing circumstances may meet the housing need criteria to be awarded a band, the council will assess your housing needs using Barnet Council's Housing Allocation Scheme. This assessment will determine whether a person can qualify to be included and if so what level of priority can be given for rehousing and what type of housing you may need. There is no application form to fill in.
- 4.0.3 If accepted onto the Housing Needs Register, an applicant will be informed of:
- whether they qualify for the Allocation Scheme;
 - the housing needs band they have been placed in (this determines priority);
 - the date of application (may be used to determine priority within the band allocated);
 - the size and type of properties for which they may be allocated;
 - their application reference number;
 - how to seek a review against their banding if they think it is wrong or if the decision is that they do not qualify under the Scheme rules;
 - how a household can access our Let2Barnet scheme if they find their own private rented accommodation.

4.1 The date a band will be allocated

- 4.1.1 The band start date is the date the assessment of the applicant's Housing Needs Register application has been completed, unless an applicant's housing need and/or circumstances change and any reassessment results in the applicant being placed in a higher band. In these circumstances, they will not retain the date they were awarded the lower band as the higher band reflects a higher level of housing need; therefore their date for the higher band will be the date they were awarded that band for that higher assessed housing need.
- 4.1.2 Note: for eligible homeless applicants who meet the qualification rules to join the Housing Needs Register the following will apply with regard to their band start date:
- owed a Section 195(2) Prevention of homelessness duty – Band date is the date the duty was owed and not the date of the homelessness application;
 - owed a Section 189B (2) Relief of homelessness duty – If an applicant has not been owed a prevention duty then the band date is the date the relief duty is owed and not the date of the homelessness application. If the applicant was owed a prevention duty which ended because they became homeless and they are then owed a relief duty, the effective date is the date the prevention duty was owed;
 - owed the Main Section 193(2) duty – Band date is the date the Relief of homelessness duty was owed and not the date the Main duty was owed. This is because to start the

date at the date the Main duty was owed would disadvantage an applicant by 56 days who has been found to be in priority need and unintentionally homeless;

- d) circumstances where the relief duty has ended, and the applicant is assessed at this point as not being in priority need - Band date is the date the Relief of homelessness duty is owed (or the date the prevention duty was owed if the applicant had been owed a prevention duty before being owed the relief duty) and not the date that the Relief duty is brought to an end;
- e) circumstances where the relief duty has ended, and the applicant is assessed at that point as not being owed a main duty due to being intentionally homeless - Band date is the date the Relief of homelessness duty is owed (or the date the prevention duty was owed if the applicant had been owed a prevention duty before being owed the relief duty) and not the date that the Relief duty is brought to an end;
- f) where the applicant becomes homeless unintentionally within 2 years of accepting a private rented sector offer, offered to bring the main Section 193 homelessness duty to an end, the effective date will be the date of the new application.

4.2 The banding system

- 4.2.1 The demand for social housing exceeds supply in Barnet and therefore this Scheme prioritises the housing of applicants assessed as being in the greatest need. Once registered many applicants will still unfortunately not have sufficient housing need to be offered a property.
- 4.2.2 The banding system will normally be used to decide when to make an offer of accommodation and to whom.
- 4.2.3 The council has chosen to adopt a simple and transparent system creating four queues where people will normally be ranked by date order in each queue as long as they qualify to be considered under the housing needs register. The housing bands are summarised below, and full details are set out in Annex 1. To be awarded any of the bands an applicant must qualify to be included on the Housing Needs Register. This means they must meet the residential connection rule and not be disqualified under any of the other adopted rules, unless the council has agreed that discretion should be applied to waive the residential connection rule or any other qualification rule due to exceptional circumstances. The bands are:

Band 1: People who have a Reasonable Preference 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. Also for people who currently reside in supported housing and have been prioritised as ready for independent living by Adult Social Care, Health, or another support provider authorised/approved by the council.

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 VII and the following circumstances apply:

1. those households owed a main homeless duty under Section 193(2) by Barnet Council but are housed in suitable long term temporary accommodation; or
2. applicants owed any other homelessness duty by Barnet Council as set out below:

- a) applicants where the Section 189(B) Relief duty has been brought to an end and an applicant has been assessed at that point as being intentionally homeless (and hasn't been disqualified under the unacceptable behaviour disqualification rule);
- b) applicants owed the 193 C (4) Main duty where the Prevention or Relief duty was ended by the council due to their deliberate non-cooperation;
- c) applicants owed a Section 189B (2) Relief duty by Barnet Council;
- d) applicants owed a Section 195 (2) Prevention of homelessness duty by Barnet Council since the introduction of the Homelessness Reduction Act in 2018;
- e) applicants where the Section 189(B) Relief of homelessness duty has been brought to an end and the applicant is determined to be homeless but not in priority need and therefore not owed a Main homeless duty.

4.2.4 Applicants who have been placed in long-term temporary accommodation by the council will be placed in Band 4. This will only be reviewed if the arrangement is due to expire within the next 3 months and their property lease or occupation arrangement cannot be renewed, or there is a change in circumstances that may increase their priority under the Allocation Scheme. Long-term temporary accommodation includes private sector properties let via the council or Private Registered Providers under a leasing arrangement, and non-secure tenancies on the regeneration estates.

4.2.5 Annex 1 provides details for the four bands an applicant may be awarded based on the council's assessment of their housing need, and how the Scheme defines and assesses housing need.

Section 5: Annexes

ANNEX 1: DETAILS FOR THE BARNET HOUSING BANDS

Note: To be awarded any of the bands an applicant must qualify to be included on the Housing Needs Register. This means they must meet the residential connection rule and not be disqualified under any of the other adopted rules, unless the council has agreed that discretion should be applied to waive the residential connection rule or any other qualification rule due to exceptional circumstances.

Band 1: Urgent Need to Move due to Reasonable Preference plus Additional Preference	
Category of Housing Need	Summary Guide of Criteria
Emergency medical or disability	<p>The following Band 1 examples are intended to guide the applicant on the threshold set for a Band 1 award. See Annex 6 for more details on when a Band 1 award may be granted.</p> <p>A Band 1 award is for applicants who are suffering sudden or severe progressive life-threatening medical conditions or disability and need an immediate move (e.g., to facilitate hospital discharge) because their current home is unsuitable (as it does not meet their medical needs and/or cannot be adapted) and poses an immediate and serious danger to the individual.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • 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; • the condition is life threatening and the applicant's existing accommodation is a major contributory factor; • the applicant's health is so severely affected by the accommodation that it is likely to become life threatening; • 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; • 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; • 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; • where overcrowding in the property leaves the applicant at risk of life-threatening infection.

<p>Exceptional Circumstances Welfare and Hardship Criteria</p>	<p>The council recognises that there may be exceptional circumstances where the only way an exceptional housing need can be resolved is through a Band 1 award. 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:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • a severe 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 which, on police advice, must be moved immediately due to serious threats to 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 provides a form of essential support to a close family relative, as defined under Section 178(3) of the Housing Act 1996 (this includes parents, siblings, children, uncles, aunts, grandparents, spouses and former spouses) with a serious or enduring health condition who resides in the borough; • an applicant who has an exceptional need that is not covered in the Allocation Scheme. For example, where child or public protection issues require rehousing or for domestic abuse where all other options to remain in the home have been considered; • a care leaver assessed as ready to move to independent settled housing with a profound disability or assessed as having a significant vulnerability over and above the fact that they have been in care, who is assessed as needing to be housed urgently to significantly improve the impact their current circumstances are having on their disability or vulnerability; • other exceptional circumstances as authorised by the Head of Housing Options or equivalent. <p>For any Private Registered Provider tenant, the expectation is that, where it is safe to do so, a like for like management transfer would be granted or an emergency decant provided whilst a suitable transfer can be arranged.</p>
<p>Armed Forces: Disability need to move on hardship grounds</p>	<p>Applicants who need 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.</p>
<p>Release of adapted property</p>	<p>Where a tenant is willing to transfer to a suitable non adapted property and is releasing an adapted house or designated older persons property.</p>

Statutory Overcrowded	Council, Private Registered Provider, or Private Sector tenants who are statutorily overcrowded.
Acute Overcrowding	Where a household is 3 bedrooms short of the bedroom standard outlined in Annex 2.
<p>Private sector properties insanitary or unfit Those living in insanitary conditions where the conditions pose an ongoing and serious threat to health</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Private sector tenants and residents of dwellings where the council's Private Sector Housing Team has determined 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 is satisfied that the problem cannot be resolved by the landlord within six 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 living conditions that are a statutory nuisance, and there is no prospect of the problems being remedied within a six-month time period. • 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. <p>Note: this category will not include Private Registered Provider tenancies because there is a legal requirement on social landlords to urgently remedy defects that pose a risk to their tenants.</p>
Under-occupation	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Where a secure or flexible council tenant will release a home with two or more bedrooms by moving to a property with fewer bedrooms than they currently have. • 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.
Major works or demolition	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.
Foster carers referred by the Council's Children's Service or providers of supported lodgings	Foster carers or providers of supported lodging approved by the council whose housing prevents them from being able to start, or continue, to provide foster care.

Band 2: Need to move – Reasonable Preference plus Community Contribution	
<i>For the definition of Community Contribution see Annex 2</i>	
Category of Housing Need	Summary Guide of Criteria
Homeless households owed a main homeless duty under s.193(2) by Barnet Council.	<p>People who are owed a main homeless duty under Section 193 (2) (or for any applicant still owed a Section 195 (2) duty prior to the introduction of the Homelessness Reduction Act in 2018).</p> <p>This means households that have been assessed as being owed the main homeless duty for being unintentionally homeless and in priority need and are not accommodated in long term suitable temporary accommodation.</p>
Overcrowded by the adopted bedroom standard	Where a household is two bedrooms short of the bedroom standard outlined in Annex 2.
Applicants living in unsatisfactory housing lacking basic facilities.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Applicants without access at all to any of the following facilities.: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • a bathroom or kitchen • an inside WC • hot or cold water supplies, electricity, gas or adequate heating. • Applicants who occupy a private property that 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 s.33 of the Housing Act 2004. <p>Note: Applicants who have access to shared facilities re cooking, bathroom, and toilet will not qualify under these criteria.</p> <p>This banding award does not include applicants sleeping rough or with no fixed abode. They will be dealt with under the homelessness criteria in this banding Scheme.</p> <p>Any decision to award Band 2 for this category will take into account the reasons why the applicant does not have access to these facilities and whether this is a temporary or long-term situation.</p>

<p>Severe medical or disability grounds</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Where an applicant (or a member of their household) is living in accommodation with a severe, long term, medical conditions (chronic or progressive) or severe disability that means they urgently need to move because their home is assessed as being highly unsuitable and is directly detrimental to the applicants' physical or mental health. • Where an applicant's (or a member of their household) housing is unsuitable because of severe medical reasons or because of their disability. The applicant (or member of their household) is not housebound, but their current housing is exacerbating their health conditions. <p>See Annex 6 for examples of when a Band 2 award may be granted.</p>
<p>Hardship or welfare need to move for care or support</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Those who need to move to give or receive care that is substantial and ongoing. • Those who need to access Social Services facilities and are unable to travel across the borough. • Those who need to take up (or continue) employment education or a training opportunity that is not available elsewhere and who do not live within reasonable commuting distance.
<p>Housing need due to age</p>	<p>Older or disabled applicants seeking designated retirement, Extra Care, or Sheltered Plus housing.</p>
<p>Ready to move on from council accredited supported care schemes</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • An applicant is ready to move to independent settled housing on the recommendation of the support worker or equivalent; and • The applicant is in need of medium to long term rather than short term ongoing tenancy support; and • That support package has been assessed and is in place.

<p>Move on from Care</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • A care leaver is ready to move to independent settled housing and is genuinely prepared for a move to independent living; and • They possess the life skills to manage a tenancy including managing a rent account; and • The care leaver is in need of either a long term or medium-term tenancy support; and • That support package has been assessed and is in place.
<p>Discretionary Succession</p>	<p>Where the council has agreed to grant a tenancy under section 3.20 of this Allocation Scheme.</p>
<p>Existing foster carers or providers of supported lodgings approved by the council willing to provide care for an additional child</p>	<p>Where a foster carer or a provider of supported lodging already providing a home for at least one foster child offers to provide care for an additional foster child.</p>

DRAFT

Band 3: Need to move:	
<p>a) Reasonable Preference but without a Community Contribution</p> <p>b) Right to move applicants'</p>	
Category of Housing Need	Summary Guide of Criteria
	<p>Applicants in this band will have the same element of housing need / Reasonable Preference as those applicants in Band 2 but will not have the Community Contribution award as defined in Annex 3 of this Allocation Scheme. Once a Community Contribution or Working Household award is given, the applicant will be moved into Band 2.</p>
'Right to move applicants'	<p>Existing social tenants of accommodation in England whom the council have assessed as qualifying under the Government's Right to Move regulations. Allocation to applicants who qualify for this award is limited to a maximum of 1% of all lettings.</p>

DRAFT

Band 4: Reduced priority and a need to move	
Category of Housing Need	Summary Guide of Criteria
Homelessness duty	Applicants owed a main homeless duty under Section 193(2) by Barnet Council but are housed in suitable long term temporary accommodation.
Homelessness duty	<p>Applicants owed any other homelessness duty by Barnet Council as set out below:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> a) Applicants where the Section 189(B) Relief duty has been brought to an end and an applicant has been assessed at that point as being intentionally homeless (and hasn't been disqualified under the unacceptable behaviour disqualification rule). b) Applicants owed the Section 193 C (4) Main duty where the Prevention or Relief duty was ended by the council due to their deliberate non-cooperation. c) Applicants owed a Section 189B (2) Relief duty by Barnet Council. d) Applicants owed a Section 195 (2) Prevention of homelessness duty by Barnet Council since the introduction of the Homelessness Reduction Act in 2018. e) Applicants where the Section 189(B) Relief of homelessness duty has been brought to an end and the applicant is determined to be homeless but not in priority need and therefore not owed a Main homeless duty. <p>Note: Applicants owed a main homeless duty by any other council will not qualify to join the Housing Needs Register unless there are exceptional circumstances. If they are allowed to qualify, they will normally be placed into Band 4.</p>

ANNEX 2: SIZE OF HOMES

The number of bedrooms needed by an applicant depends upon the size of their family. The table shows the number of bedrooms that we consider an applicant needs based on household size.

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 ¹ , for example flat sharers, or two brothers	1 bedroom
A couple with one child of any age, including an adult child	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 a brother and sister	2 bedrooms
A couple with two children of the opposite sex and both under 10	2 bedrooms
A couple with two children of the opposite sex, one of whom is aged 1 or over and the other who is aged 10 or over	3 bedrooms
A couple with three children	2 or 3 bedrooms, depending on the age of the children
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 aged under 10, and one dependent relative (for example, widowed mother)	3 bedrooms
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

Note:

- unborn babies are not considered when determining the number of bedrooms needed;
- multiple births, e.g., twins under the age of 1 are considered when determining the number of bedrooms needed;
- 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;
- two children of the opposite sex under ten will be expected to share a bedroom;
- where the council decides that on the evidence provided there is a need for a live-in carer, the applicant will be allowed one additional bedroom. Note: even if a carer is in receipt of Carer's Allowance this does not necessarily mean that it is necessary for them to reside with the person who is being cared for. An application to include a carer will be assessed based on whether there is a need to provide live-in support. In these circumstances the applicant must provide supporting evidence from other agencies e.g., Social Care or a health professional. Note: the provision of overnight care would not automatically result in the inclusion of the need for a carer in the application. An overnight carer may not require a bedroom as they would be expected to stay awake to provide that care;
- council or Private Registered Provider tenants trading down from properties with three or more bedrooms may choose a property with one bedroom more than they need;
- sometimes Private Registered Providers adopt different criteria for determining the number of bedrooms a household requires;
- families who are willing can choose to be considered for smaller council owned properties that are up to one bedroom size less than their assessed need as long as this does not mean that

¹ A generation is 20 years or more.

they will be statutorily overcrowded. This will include families with one child under the age of 5 who have a two-bedroom need but opt to be considered for a one bedroom property.

- at the council's discretion, households with a child who are seeking a transfer from a one-bedroom property may, despite not being considered to be statutorily overcrowded in line with the space standard set out in the Housing Act 1985, be considered for a two-bedroom property where there is availability.

DRAFT

ANNEX 3 COMMUNITY CONTRIBUTION: HOW PRIORITY IS AWARDED

People who play a part in making their neighbourhood strong, stable, and healthy, and help make it a good place to live, work and play, 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.

Community Contribution is a Barnet Council policy that 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.

We recognise that some single adult households who have caring responsibilities for a pre-school child/children may find it more difficult to make a positive Community Contribution. Therefore, discretion may be applied to the number of hours that adults in such households must be working or volunteering for the household to be awarded a positive community contribution.

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 who meet the qualification rules must still demonstrate as much as reasonably possible that they have a current positive residence history to qualify for a Community Contribution award. Examples of when they would not be considered to qualify for Community Contribution award of Band 2 include but are not limited to:

- on-going culpable involvement in anti-social behaviour or criminal activities;
- serious breach of a tenancy condition within the last three years;
- 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 who may meet the Community Contribution criteria must also fulfil the eligibility and qualification criteria in Section 3 of this Allocation Scheme.

Applicants can access increased priority for housing in five ways:

1. Working Households

This Allocation Scheme 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 therefore find difficulty in accessing outright home ownership or low-cost ownership. Applicants who have Reasonable Preference can receive increased priority to Band 2 by virtue of their "working" status.

Definition of Working Households

For the purposes of the Allocation Scheme employment is described as having a permanent contract, working as a temporary member of staff, or being self-employed. Households will only qualify if either the applicant or their partner has worked for at least an average of 64 hours per month for 6 out of the last 12 months and is currently in employment. Note: an applicant and partner's hours can jointly contribute to the required hours of 64 hours where their working arrangements are to facilitate childcare requirements.

Where an applicant is on a zero-hour contract, documentary evidence from the employer, in the form of wage slips, which confirms that this arrangement has been going on over a six-month period will be required. 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 to qualify.

A person is self-employed if they run their business for themselves. Self-employed workers are not paid through PAYE, and they do not have the employment rights and responsibilities of employees. Households who are self-employed will only qualify if either the applicant or their partner has worked for at least 64 hours per month for six out of the last 12 months and is currently self-employed. Applicants must be able to provide evidence to confirm their self-employment in addition to certified accounts as supplied to HM Revenue and Customs (not an online self- assessment) or proof of National Insurance Contributions. Verification will be sought at point of application as well as point of offer under the same terms. If an applicant or their partner is unable to provide satisfactory evidence to confirm that they are self-employed in line with this Allocation Scheme, a household may not be awarded with a Community Contribution.

2. Volunteering

Households will only qualify if either the applicant or their partner has volunteered for at least 64 hours per month for six out of the last 12 months and is currently volunteering. Volunteering must be for a not-for profit organisation that is:

- registered with CommUNITY Barnet; or
- recognised by the council; or
- a charity that is registered with the Charity Commission; or
- is funded by the council, another local authority or a faith-based community group or organisation.

Tenants and Residents Associations that are constituted are classified as not-for-profit organisation. They must be registered with Barnet Council or a Registered Social Landlord to qualify.

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 64 hours per month of voluntary work for at least six months. This person must not be related to the applicant in any way.

3. 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.

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.

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 Department of Work and Pensions 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 Allocation Scheme.

Households will only qualify if either the applicant or their partner is studying or training against the eligible criteria and definition outlined, for at least 64 hours per month for a continuous period of at least six months up to the point of application and continuously until the point of offer.

Evidence required for training or education 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, a 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 six months).

4. Ex-Service Personnel

Applicants or their partner, who are assessed as falling within the Reasonable Preference categories relating to service in the armed forces set out in this Allocation Scheme, 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 Veterans UK.

5. Registered Foster Carers

We recognise the contribution that Barnet foster carers and providers of supported lodgings make towards ensuring that children in Barnet's care receive a good service. To qualify for a Community Contribution award under this Allocation Scheme, applicants will require a letter from the council's Children's Services confirming that they have been approved as a Barnet foster carer or a provider of supported lodgings 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 Allocation Scheme. This will include those in receipt of the Carer's element of Universal Credit.

7. Protected Characteristics

Where any applicant cannot reasonably make a Community Contribution, for example go out to work or volunteer, as a result of their protected characteristics as defined by the Equality Act 2010, Housing Needs Officers will consider such cases on an individual basis and use their discretion to award a Community Contribution where they consider this is appropriate.

Protected characteristics include the following: age, disability, gender reassignment, pregnancy and maternity, race/ethnicity, religion or belief, sex, and sexual orientation.

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 64 hours per month.

Young people referred by Barnet Family 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.

9. Vulnerable adults referred by Adult Social Care

It is acknowledged that vulnerable adults who have been referred for independent living by Adult Social Care and Health are unlikely to meet the requirements of the Community Contribution criteria. In these cases, there will be discretion to apply Community Contribution with the approval of a Housing Needs Manager.

ANNEX 4 – SERVICE TENANCIES

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

DRAFT

ANNEX 5: DEFINITION OF A SUITABLE OFFER

Where accommodation is offered an applicant will normally be expected to accept an offer of a property that meets their specified needs. Reasonable 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.

The suitability criteria used to determine whether an offer to end a main homeless duty owed under Section 193(2) of the Housing Act 1996) or a relief of homelessness duty owed under Section 189b, will be the criteria set down in the Suitability of Accommodation Order England 2012, as amended by Section 12 of the Homelessness Reduction Act 2017, relevant case law and statutory guidance.

These criteria only apply to an offer of social housing or private rented housing made with the intention of ending a full homeless duty. Where an offer is made to any other banded applicant who is not owed a full homeless duty it is for the council to decide on the facts of the case whether the offer is suitable using the guidance in this annexe to help the officer make the decision.

The council will consider that a property is suitable if all of the following criteria are met:

- it is located in an area that the council considers to be suitable for the applicant and their household. This could include accommodation located outside of the Barnet area;
- 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 this Scheme;
- 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:

- a) the significance of any disruption to the employment, education or caring responsibilities of the applicant or a member of the household;
- b) the accessibility of medical or other support facilities that are currently used by the applicant or a member of the household;
- c) the accessibility of local services, including places of worship, amenities, and transport;
- d) its duty to safeguard children under Section 11 Children Act 2004;
- e) its public sector equality duty under Section 149 Equality Act 2010;
- f) 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.

The above are matters for the council to determine based on the facts of the case.

Guidance for assessing officers on how the council will assess reasonable and unreasonable refusals:

1) Property size

The property must be the appropriate size for the household's needs at the time of making the offer. Where the family composition has changed, so that the property offered is too small or large for the applicant's needs, the refusal will be recorded as reasonable.

It is the applicant's responsibility to ensure that they register any change in their circumstances that will affect the number of bedrooms to which they are entitled.

Where the applicant refuses a property because it is too small on grounds of the need for an additional or larger bedroom(s) due to medical/mobility factors, but it meets the lettings standard, this will normally

be considered to be an unreasonable refusal unless the applicant provides new medical information at the offer stage that is accepted by the council.

2) Property type

It will not be considered to be a reasonable refusal due to a dislike of the property type. Therefore, an applicant cannot reasonably refuse an offer because for example, it is in a tower block, it does not have a garden or a particular heating system, it is on a wrong floor, or does not have a lift. If the applicant states medical grounds for refusing the property, these should already have been disclosed and considered as part of the assessment of their application, unless new information is submitted that is accepted by the council.

Where specialist accommodation is offered to a household inappropriately, this is considered to be a reasonable refusal. This may be for example:

- a) offers of wheelchair standard housing to households which do not have wheelchair users;
- b) offers made to disabled applicants which are unsuitable for their needs, for example where they are unable to open a door entry system because the doors are too heavy;
- c) offers of sheltered housing where the applicant is not of the appropriate age.

3) Property condition

Where a property is refused on grounds of repair/decoration, this will be considered an unreasonable refusal unless the voids team decides to withdraw the property from letting for further works to be carried out.

4) Area of choice

An offer will still be considered reasonable even if it is not within an applicant's area of choice.

5) Racial harassment

Where an applicant from an ethnic minority household refuses the property prior to viewing because the previous tenant was rehoused as a result of racial harassment, or there is a known problem of racial harassment in the vicinity of the property, the refusal is considered reasonable.

6) Choice of landlord

An applicant cannot choose whether they are rehoused by a specific Private Registered Provider. Therefore, any refusal for example by an applicant of a property because it is a Private Registered Provider property with no 'Right to Buy', or 'Right to Acquire', or the rent is higher than another social landlord will not be considered to be reasonable (unless in the example of the rent level the assessment is that the offer is unaffordable for the applicant in question).

7) Pets

One of the conditions of the tenancy agreement is that a tenant must obtain the written consent of the landlord before keeping domestic pets.

Any intention to keep a pet must comply with the council or Private Registered Provider tenancy terms and conditions, which means that permission must be sought and agreed prior to signing the tenancy agreement for the property. Therefore, any refusal on the basis that permission has not been granted to keep a pet is not reasonable.

ANNEX 6:

EXAMPLES OF WHEN AN APPLICANT MAY BE AWARDED PRIORITY BAND 1 OR 2 ON THE BASIS OF A MEDICAL OR DISABILITY NEED

Examples of circumstances to help the assessing officer to decide when Band 1 (Emergency) may be awarded on medical or disability grounds

The following examples are intended to guide the assessing officer on the threshold set for a Band 1 award. They can also serve to help an applicant understand the threshold for a priority award to be granted. A Band 1 award is for “*Applicants who are **suffering sudden or severe progressive life-threatening** medical conditions and **need an immediate move** (e.g., to facilitate hospital discharge) because their current home is unsuitable (as it does not meet their medical needs and/or cannot be adapted) and **poses an immediate and serious danger** to the individual.*”

- a) Applicants who have a progressive, chronic or life-threatening medical condition and cannot be discharged from hospital because they do not have any accommodation, or their accommodation is unsuitable for example, because they cannot access toilet and/or bathing facilities in the property. This will include cases that cannot be discharged from hospital because their home is, and will remain, permanently entirely unsuitable or entirely inaccessible to live in.
- b) Where the assessing officer accepts that the evidence from a relevant health professional indicates that there is a significant risk of serious and permanent injury and/or permanent disability.
- c) Applicants who have a progressive, chronic or life-threatening medical condition and urgently need to move to accommodation with significant disabled adaptations, such as accommodation suitable for a wheelchair user.
- d) A serious illness, where an applicant is receiving palliative care and urgently requires rehousing to facilitate the on-going provision of that care.
- e) The applicant’s health is so severely affected by the accommodation that it is likely to become life threatening, e.g., applicant has severe mental health problems that are significantly exacerbated by their accommodation and that opinion is fully evidenced by the applicant’s consultant or mental health services.
- f) Due to limited mobility a person is unable to access essential parts of the property e.g., bathroom/toilet and no adaptation is possible.
- g) A member of the household is elderly or disabled or has a progressive illness and is likely to require admission to hospital or residential/nursing care in the immediate future and re-housing would enable the person to remain at home.
- h) Where the applicant is prevented from having access to kidney dialysis, respiratory, or other similar essential equipment. This will normally apply where these circumstances are likely to prevent someone from remaining in their home for all or most of the time. Such a condition would be likely to be ongoing, rather than a temporary condition.

Examples of circumstances to help the assessing officer to decide when Band 2 should be awarded on medical or disability grounds

- a) A life-threatening condition which is seriously affected by the current housing and where re-housing would make that condition significantly easier to manage.

- b) A life limiting condition and their current accommodation is affecting their ability to retain independence or enable adequate care.
- c) A new and life-changing condition that severely impairs their mobility, meaning they are unable to carry out day-to-day activities, or have difficulty accessing facilities inside and outside of their accommodation and require housing into suitable accommodation.
- d) An applicant or member of his/her household usually has a chronic condition; examples might include a respiratory condition, severe asthma or emphysema – and that the condition is being made worse by the current accommodation.
- e) Where their current property leaves a person at risk of infection, e.g., where an applicant is suffering from late-stage or advanced AIDs.
- f) People who have a severe mental health or learning disability which significantly affects their ability to lead a normal life, and which puts them at risk of admission to hospital or residential care. Evidence would normally need to be provided from a specialist consultant psychiatrist or a certified paediatric nurse that their current accommodation is having a significant detrimental impact on the mental health of any member of the household.
- g) People living in a mobile home, caravan or converted vehicle which, due to medical conditions, the vehicle cannot meet their essential needs.
- h) Where remaining in the current accommodation poses a significant risk of serious and permanent injury and/or permanent severe disability.
- i) Someone with a medical or disability who's housing has rendered them housebound.
- j) Where a move would avoid the need for another service (e.g., Social Services) from having to provide a significant level of support. This might include for example residential care, overnight care provision, or other support with similar resource implications.
- k) Where someone suffers with epilepsy or other conditions that cause frequent and unpredictable falls and all medical interventions to prevent them have been investigated. This will involve an assessment of the layout of their current accommodation, for example the number and nature of steps, stairs or other hazards that may increase the risk of serious injury.
- l) The applicant or household member requires significant disabled adaptations to meet their needs and this is not possible in their current accommodation or would not be cost effective.
- m) Armed forces personnel who need to move to suitable adapted accommodation because of a serious injury, medical condition or disability that he or she has sustained as a result of service.
- n) Veterans who have actively served in the armed forces and are suffering from severe post-traumatic stress disorder or serious illness directly related to service in the forces.
- o) An occupational therapist has identified that the current accommodation is partially suitable but:
 - the applicant or member of his/her household needs a major adaptation, such as a level access shower; or
 - the applicant or member of his/her household has significant difficulty managing stairs or difficulty accessing the property owing to stairs or slopes leading to doorways and the occupational therapist recommends a lift, ramped access or ground floor living; and
 - the adaptations are unlikely to be completed in a reasonable period of time
- p) Applicants who have significant mobility issues and would benefit from a move to ground floor or level access accommodation.

- q) Applicants who have significant mobility issues and would benefit from a move to accommodation that has level access showering facilities.
- r) Children with severe conditions such as autism, or cerebral palsy or ADHD where their long-term needs cannot be met without long term settled accommodation.
- s) A person with a severe disability requiring some adaptations to their property that cannot be provided for in their current accommodation.
- t) Where an applicant can access their home but struggles to access normal day-to-day facilities within it (e.g., bath/shower/toilet) without experiencing significant difficulty, pain or other discomfort. This would include cases where an adaptation is possible but cannot be undertaken in a reasonable period of time. (Note: any priority would be removed if an adaptation is completed, or work started)

GUIDELINES FOR ASSESSING EXTRA BEDROOM REQUESTS FOR ADHD, ASPERGERS, SENSORY PROCESSING DIFFICULTIES AND OTHER MENTAL OR PHYSICAL HEALTH PROBLEMS

Following a successful Court challenge the Government has issued new guidance in relation to the social size criteria which allows Housing Benefit to be paid on an extra room for children who are unable to share because of their severe disabilities.

The judgement is not binding on councils in respect of their Allocation Scheme, however, when an applicant says that their children are unable to share a bedroom it will be for the council to satisfy itself that this is the case.

In making an assessment for an extra bedroom for ADHD, Asperger's, sensory processing difficulties, and other mental or physical health problems the council will consider the following framework to help guide the assessing officer:

- the nature and severity of the disability;
- the nature and frequency of any care required during the night; and
- the extent and regularity of the disturbance to the sleep of the child who would normally be required to share the bedroom.

In all cases this will come down to a matter of judgement on facts of each individual case.

A claim should normally be supported by medical evidence and many children will be in receipt of Disability Living Allowance (DLA) care component at the middle or highest rate for their medical condition or Personal Independence Payment (PIP) at the enhanced rate or mobility component.

Requested evidence will include, but may not be limited to, the following:

- medical evidence detailing the nature of the disability, how this effected by the home environment and the impact on other members of the household;
- other supporting information from care and support agencies involved with the child and family (this should be specific information relating to the request for re-housing rather than a general letter of support and is likely to be from specialist rather than universal services); and,
- proof of DLA entitlement.

The circumstances where a possible award of an extra bedroom may be made include a consideration of all of the facts set out below:

- a) Supporting letters for example from school SENCO stating that they also use a calm room at school and why, a letter specifying aggressive behaviour and frequency, behaviour flow charts, list of aggressive behaviours displayed at school, also stating the danger of child sharing alone with another child, their sensory issues, their inability to cope with small changes and reaction as a result.
- b) Where there is professionally assessed evidence of a child or young person up to the age of 25 in the household who has a severe or profound learning difficulty, with a presentation of behavioural or emotional difficulties who exhibits sexually exploratory behaviour or other inappropriate behaviour of a serious nature and has a limited understanding around the impact of this on others. This may need to be certified by a consultant psychiatrist.
- c) The applicant or a member of their household (adult or child), need major medical equipment for the long term, such as home dialysis, equipment for percutaneous external gastrostomy feeding, long term large assistive equipment or and/or bulky medical supplies which need to be used and stored on a permanent basis.
- d) A DLA or PIP award letter indicating high care and low mobility.
- e) An assessment of need which supports the claim for an additional bedroom based on a severe impact where that assessment has been undertaken by the appropriate health or care professionals. The assessment would need to evidence that sharing with another family member who has care needs or behavioural problems that severely affect that family members ability to sleep, which in turn is having a very significant negative impact on their employment (to the extent that they may lose their permanent employment), or on their mental health (to the extent that they have been assessed with a severe mental health condition, or their current condition has become severe, as a result of having to share).
- f) Carer's award letter (or social services report) stating care award is due to care needing to be given day and night.

Examples unlikely to qualify include:

- a) Circumstances, for example, where the claimant is one of a couple who is unable to share a bedroom.
- b) Where children share and the claim is that by having to share this is impacting on their ability to study and complete homework but there is evidence that they are able to study elsewhere in the home or at relatives or using library services.
- c) Where family members provide overnight care and support only at weekends or for part of the year.
- d) People with mental health issues who say they want an extra room for a friend or relative who provides support.
- e) A claim based solely on the wish that the applicant requires an additional room so that a child can cut themselves off from the world, which they claim is essential to their mental wellbeing.
- f) People who are in receipt of formal overnight care (provided by NHS continuing care nurses, visiting agency carers, etc)

ANNEX 7: RIGHT TO MOVE QUALIFYING CRITERIA

Right to Move – Statutory guidance on social housing allocations for local housing authorities in England

An existing social housing tenant (living outside of the Barnet area) will not be disqualified on the grounds of no residential connection if they: have reasonable preference under s166(3)(e) because of a need to move to the Barnet area because the tenant works in Barnet or needs to move to take up an offer of work.

Whether or not the applicant meets the above criteria isn't solely determined by the need to move for work, but that it would cause them hardship if they were able to do so.

Definition of Work

- Work should be a permanent contract or one with a minimum term of 12 months.
- Work should be of 16 or more hours a week (unless it can be demonstrated that the earnings are substantial).
- Work should not be voluntary.
- Work can include apprenticeships.
- The relevant district should be the main place of work.
- In the case of self-employed tenants, work should be regular as opposed to intermittent.

Distance, time and travel costs

When determining hardship, the time taken to travel to work and the cost of the travel should be taken into account. The council considers the following criteria may suggest hardship:

- Travel time to get to work is in excess of two hours each way (personal or public transport depending on circumstances).
- Travel costs are more than £30 per day or 25% of net income from the employment or there is no transport available at all.

Other factors

These factors are all considered on a case-by-case basis as to whether hardship would be faced by the applicant if they could not move:

- Would failure to move mean the applicant would lose an opportunity to gain a better job/promotion, an apprenticeship, increase hours/pay or move from unemployment to employment.
- If the nature of work likely to be available closer to the applicant's home.
- Personal factors including care responsibilities and medical conditions affected by the tenant not being able to move closer to work.
- Any other situation where hardship would be demonstrable if the tenant could not move.

Discretion

Every application will be dealt with on a case-by-case basis allowing all circumstances and variables to be considered.

Proof of Work

A combination of the following can be used to prove that work or a job offer is genuine:

- Contract of employment (particularly if stating main place of work).
- Wage slips showing hours worked (particularly if zero hours contract) but they are unlikely to evidence the location of work.
- A letter offering employment (it is likely that the employer will be contacted to confirm acceptance).
- A letter from an employer to prove the work and location.

Right to Move Quota

No more than 1% of all lettings will be prioritised for Right to Move applicants based on the total of the previous year's lettings by the council.

DRAFT

VERSION CONTROL

Version	Date	Author	Comments
0.1	17/02/23	Andy Gale	
0.2	21/02/23	L Giles	Minor revisions for accuracy, and formatting changes
0.3	26/06/23	L Giles	Minor amendments following consultation

This page is intentionally left blank

Housing Strategy & Homelessness and Rough Sleeping Strategy Evidence Base

June 2023

National and Regional Context

- Current Housing Strategy dates from 2019.
- Since then:
 - December 2019 – General Election
 - March 2020 – COVID-19 pandemic starts in UK
 - March 2020 – Everyone In rough sleeping campaign
 - April 2020 – Rent Policy Statement ends rent reduction and allows increases of up to CPI +1%
 - November 2020 – Social Housing White Paper published
 - April 2021 – Domestic Abuse Act 2021 - Royal Assent
 - April 2021 – Fire Safety Act 2021 – Royal Assent
 - May 2021 – London mayoral election
 - December 2021 – Adult Social Care Reform White Paper published
 - February 2022 – Levelling Up White Paper published
 - April 2022 – Building Safety Act 2022 - Royal Assent
 - May 2022 – Barnet local election
 - June 2022 – A Fairer Private Rented Sector White Paper published
 - June 2022 – Social Housing Regulation Bill published
 - September 2022 – ‘Ending Rough Sleeping For Good’ strategy published
 - November 2022 – confirmation of 7% ceiling for rent increases for 2023/24
 - May 2023 – publication of Renters Reform Bill 2023

National

- White Paper – *The charter for social housing residents* (2020)
- Fire Safety Act 2021
- Building Safety Act 2022
- White paper – *People at the heart of care* (2021)
- White Paper – *A fairer private rented sector* (2022)
- White Paper – *Levelling Up the United Kingdom* (2022)
- Strategy – *End Rough Sleeping for Good* (2022)

Commitments:

- 300,000 homes per year by mid-2020s
- £11.5bn affordable homes programme for 180,000 homes
- End rough sleeping by 2024

Regional

London Housing Strategy

- Building homes for Londoners
- Delivering genuinely affordable homes
- High quality homes and inclusive neighbourhoods
- A fairer deal for private renters and leaseholders
- Tackling homelessness and helping rough sleepers

Commitments:

- *Homes for Londoners*
- £4.8bn affordable homes programme 2016-23
- £4bn affordable homes programme 2021-26

Population



PERSON-CENTRED

A large, diverse borough

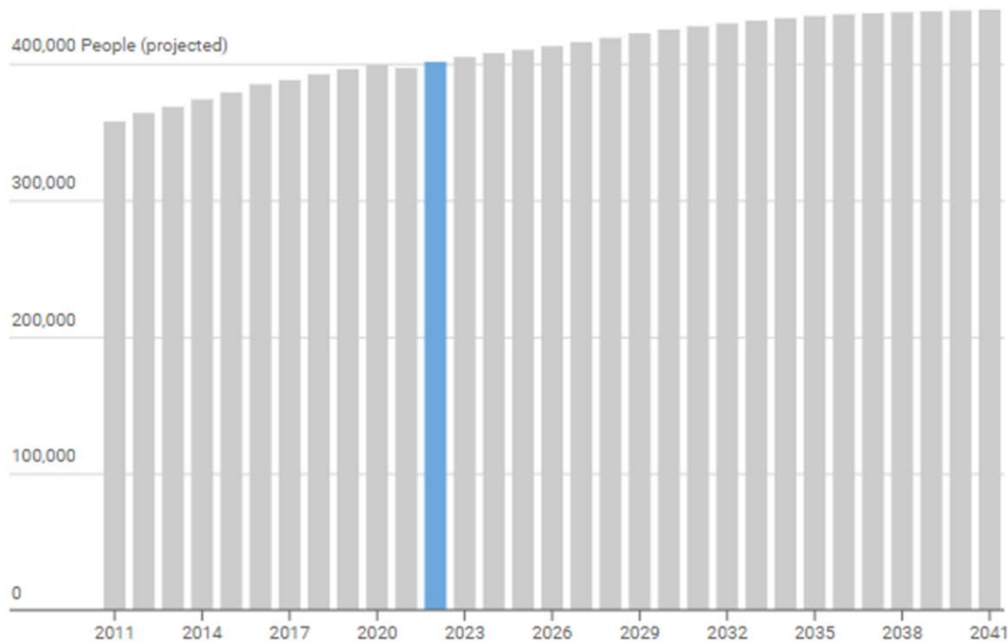


2021 Census – population growth

- 2nd most populated local authority in London
- 17th most populated local authority in England

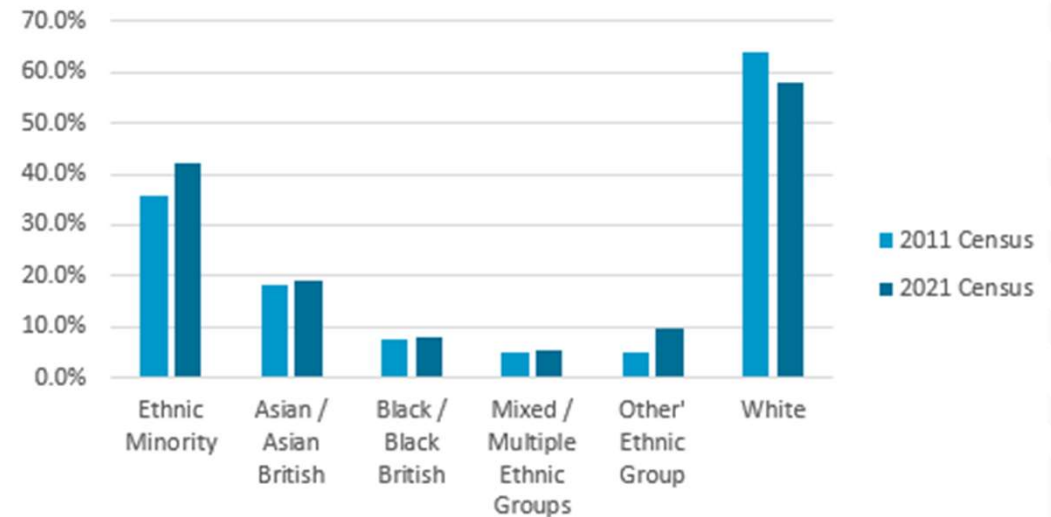
A growing and increasingly diverse population

Projected Population Growth



- Barnet's population in 2021 Census: **389,300**
- Increase since 2011 Census: **9.2%**
- Expected population by 2041: **451,040**
- Projected increase: **61,740 / 15.6%**

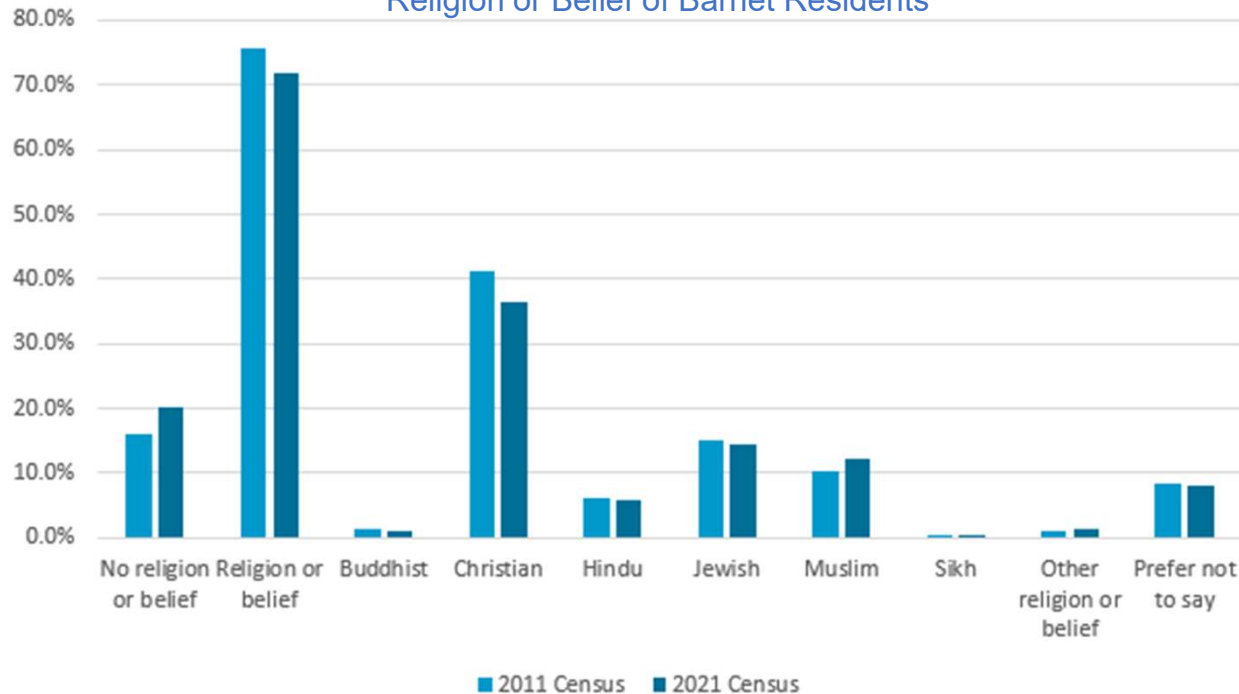
Ethnic Origin of Barnet Residents



- **182** languages other than English are spoken by pupils in Barnet schools, where Romanian and Arabic are the most common languages spoken after English.
- In secondary schools, **163** languages other than English are spoken, with Polish and Arabic most common.

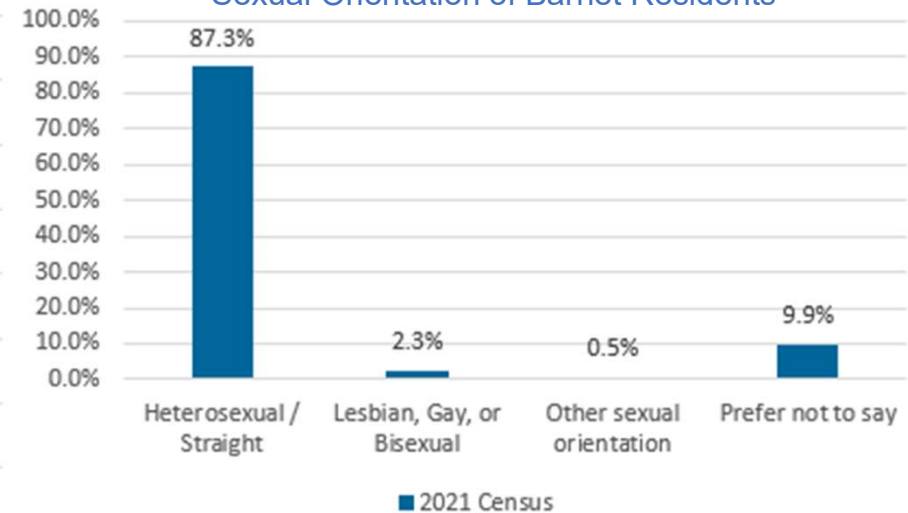
A growing and increasingly diverse population

Religion or Belief of Barnet Residents



An increase in those with no religion or belief in the 2021 Census compared to 2011 (+4%), and a decrease in those with a religion or belief (-3.9%). There was a reduction in all religions and beliefs with the exception of Islam, which increased by 1.9%.

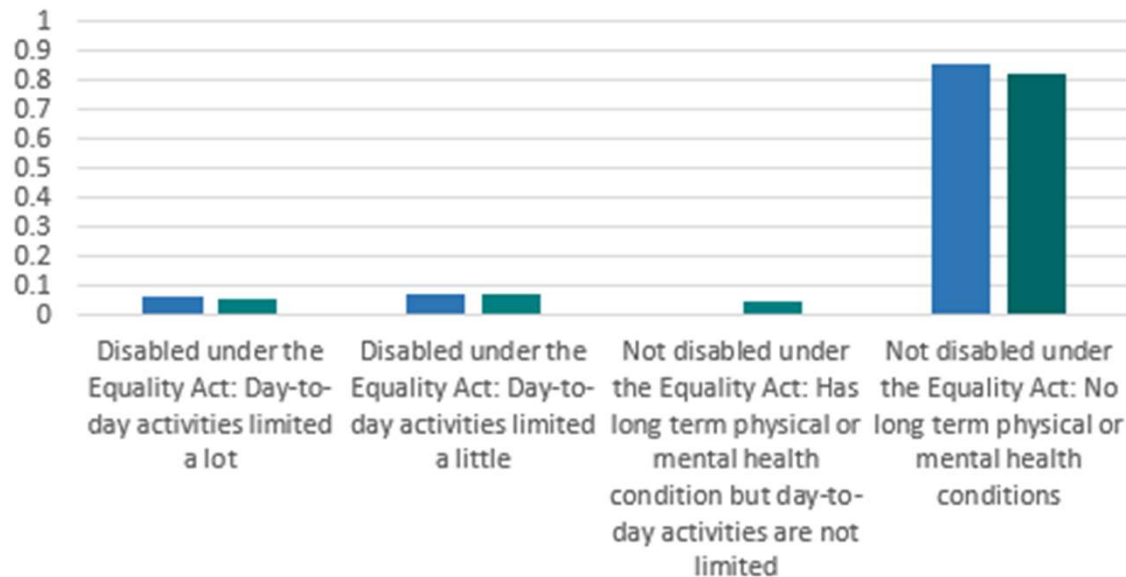
Sexual Orientation of Barnet Residents



Sexual orientation was captured for the first time in the 2021 Census. Of all London boroughs, Barnet has the highest proportion of residents who are heterosexual or straight, the 23rd highest who are lesbian, gay, or bisexual, the 13th highest who have another sexual orientation, and the 4th highest number of residents who chose not to provide this information.

A growing and increasingly diverse population

Barnet residents stating disability under the Equality Act



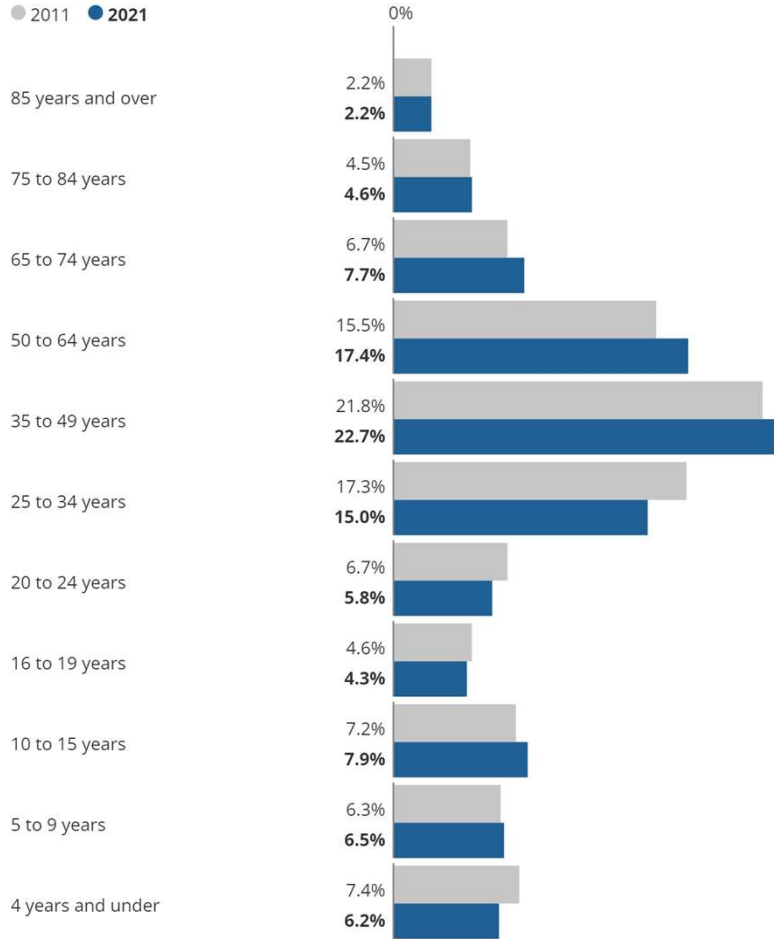
A slight decrease in those who stated they are disabled under the Equality Act 2010 and their day to day activities are limited a lot (-0.9% compared to 2011), in those who stated their activities are limited a little (-0.3%), and in those who said they are not disabled (-3.9%).

In 2021, information was captured about residents who said they were not disabled but have a long-term physical or mental health condition but their day-to-day activities are not limited, this impacted upon the comparison to 2011.

An increasingly older population

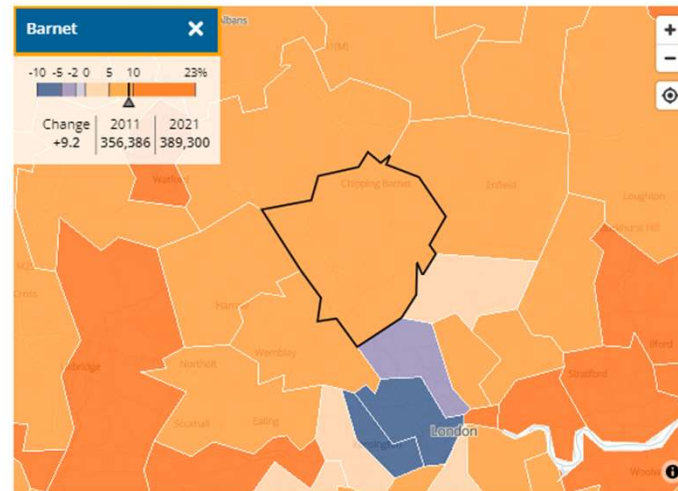
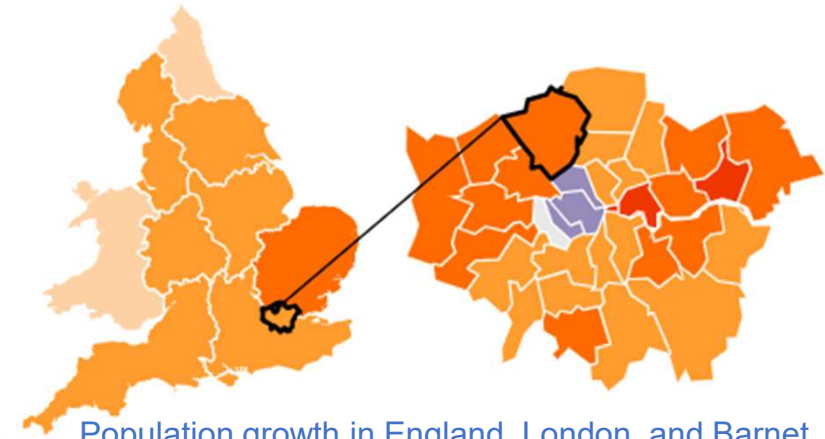
% of residents by age group

● 2011 ● 2021



Older age groups increased compared to the 2011 Census (35 to 84). There was a reduction in people younger than 35, with the exception of the group 10-15 years old.

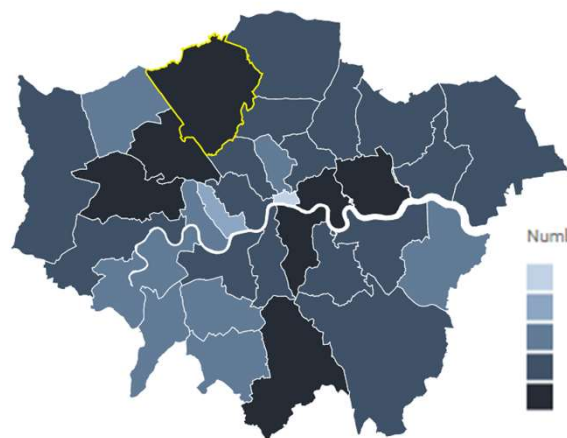
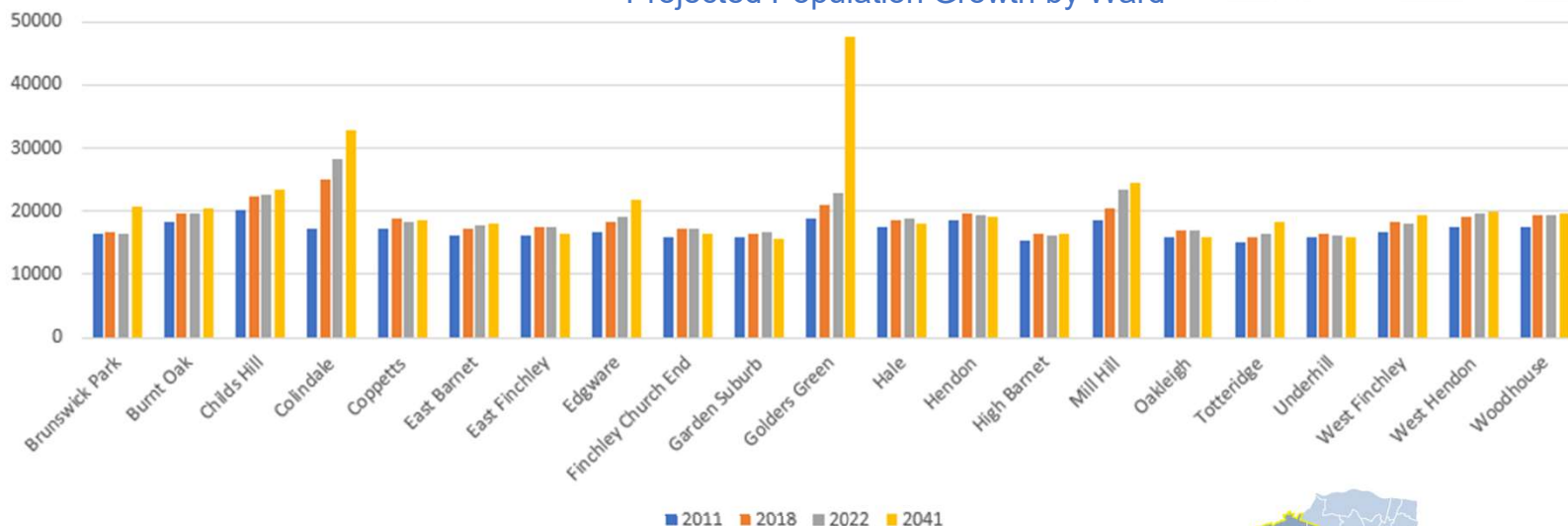
England ▲ 6.6% London ▲ 7.7% Barnet ▲ 9.2%



Population growth was higher in Barnet than in England and the London average.

A growing population

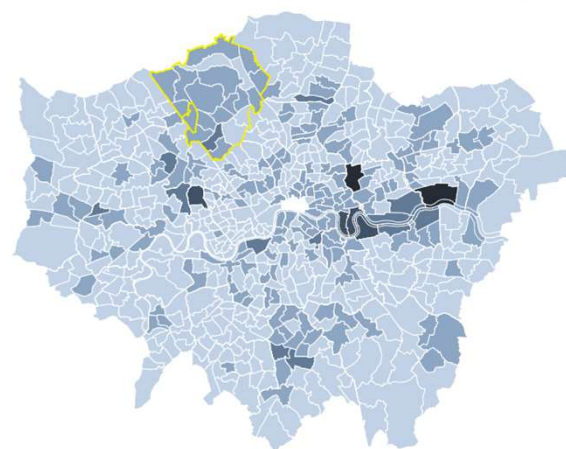
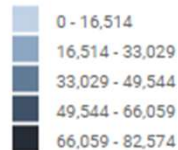
Projected Population Growth by Ward



Number of People in Borough



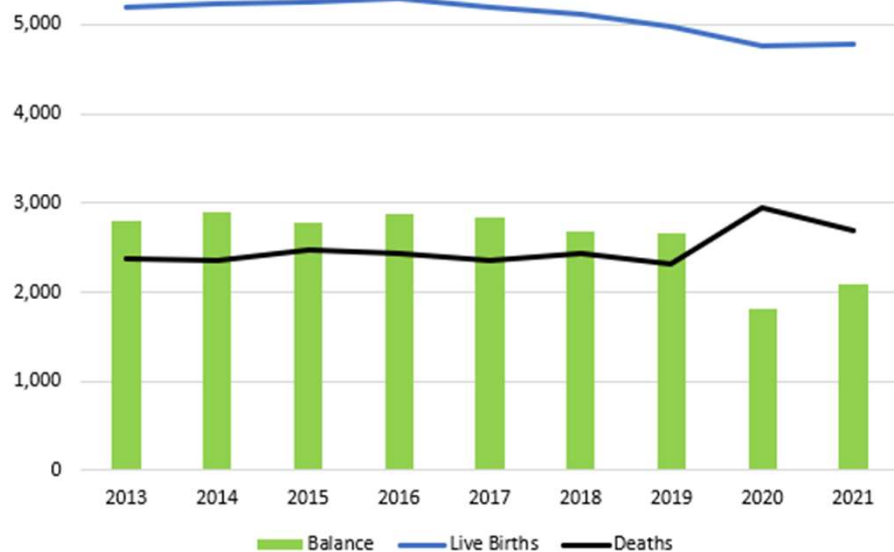
Number of People in Ward



- Largest population increases by wards between 2011 and 2022 were Colindale (+64.5%) and Mill Hill (+26.4%).
- Smallest increases were Brunswick (+0.3%) and Underhill (+1.1%).
- Largest projected population increases between 2022 and 2041 are Golders Green (+107.2%) and Brunswick (+25.4%).
- Smallest projected increases are Garden Suburb (-6.2%) and Oakleigh (-5.3%).

What's driving population growth?

Barnet Live Births and Deaths

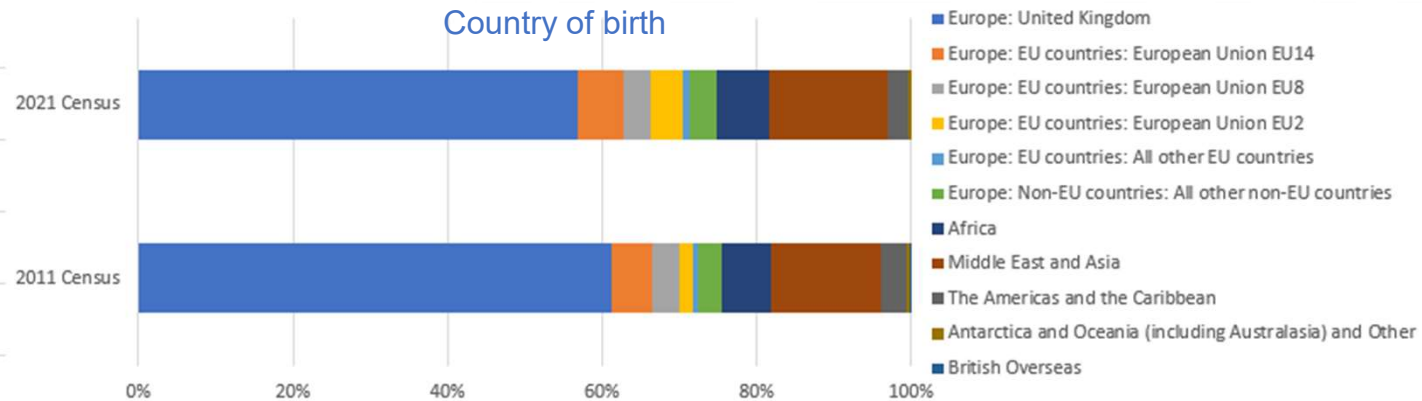
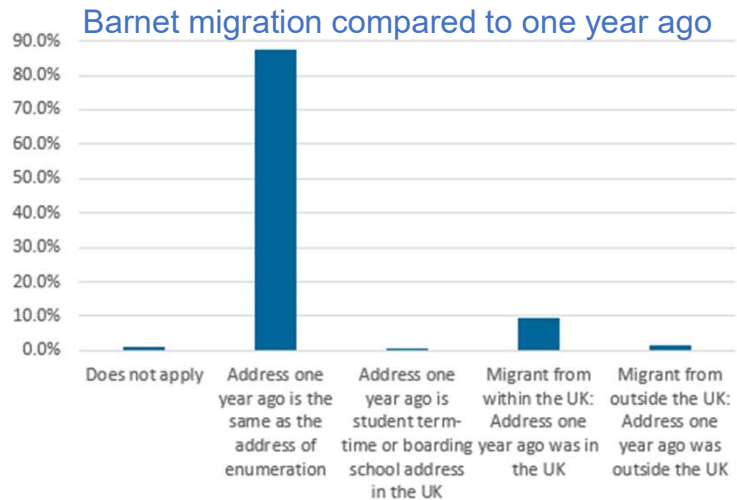
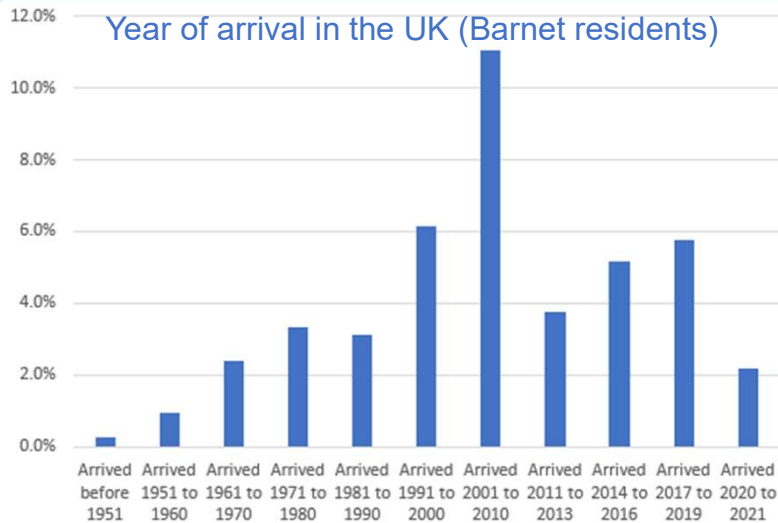


- Net migration (previous 5 years) is about **+1,382** per annum
- International migration (previous 5 years) is about **+4,056** per annum.
- Both are lower than in 2018 (**+2,700** and **+4,600** respectively). We might reasonably expect post-Brexit that there has been a decrease in migration from EU countries and an increase in other international migration.
- Net difference between live births and deaths is about **+2,600** per annum (down from +3,000 in 2018)

Barnet Migration Figures

		2010/11	2011/12	2012/13	2013/14	2014/15	2015/16	2016/17	2017/18	2018/19	2019/20	Overall
Long-Term International Migration	Inflow	8,311	6,748	6,092	7,720	8,636	8,257	7,622	7,085	7,269	7,395	75,135
	Outflow	3,329	3,033	2,793	3,321	2,969	3,450	3,506	2,864	3,792	3,736	32,793
	Net	4,982	3,715	3,299	4,399	5,667	4,807	4,116	4,221	3,477	3,659	42,342
Internal Migration (within UK)	Inflow	19,948	20,777	20,664	21,984	21,755	22,812	25,028	25,364	26,583	22,984	227,899
	Outflow	21,296	21,611	22,396	23,868	25,134	24,591	28,885	28,084	28,906	25,676	250,447
	Net	-1,348	-834	-1,732	-1,884	-3,379	-1,779	-3,857	-2,720	-2,323	-2,692	-22,548
Overall	Net Change	3,634	2,881	1,567	2,515	2,288	3,028	259	1,501	1,154	967	19,794

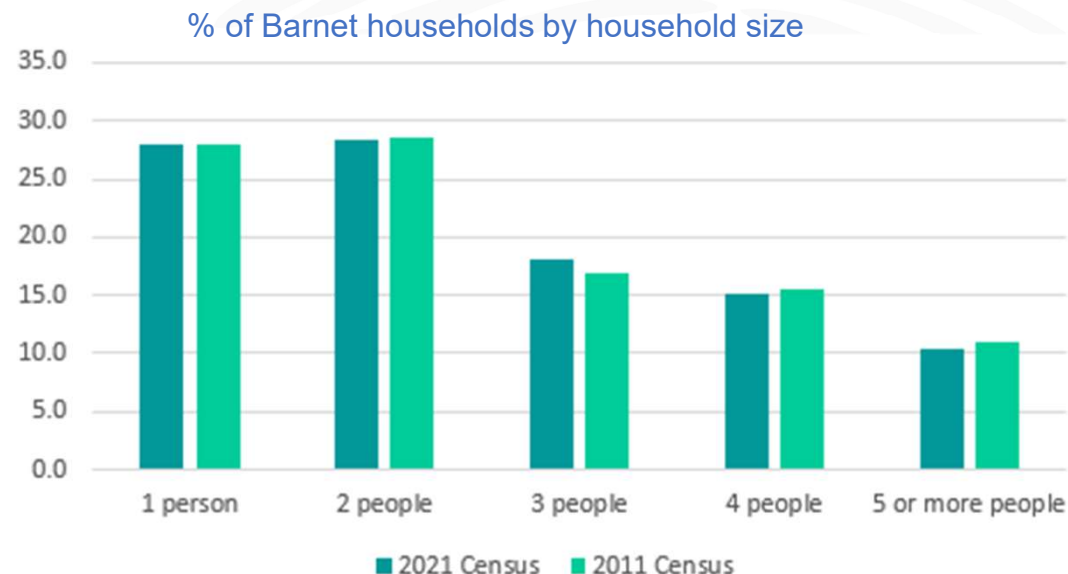
Migration



- 58.1% of Barnet residents were born in the UK.
- Migration peaked in 2001-2010, and declined from 2020 when it was likely to be affected by the COVID-19 pandemic and Brexit.
- 87.6% of Barnet residents lived in the same property as a year before the 2021 Census. 9.4% had migrated within the UK, and 1.5% had migrated from outside the UK.
- Reduction in Barnet Residents who were born in the UK compared to the 2011 Census (-4.3%). The largest regional increases were the EU2 countries (Bulgaria and Romania, +2.6%), and the Middle East and Asia (+1%).

The way people live is changing

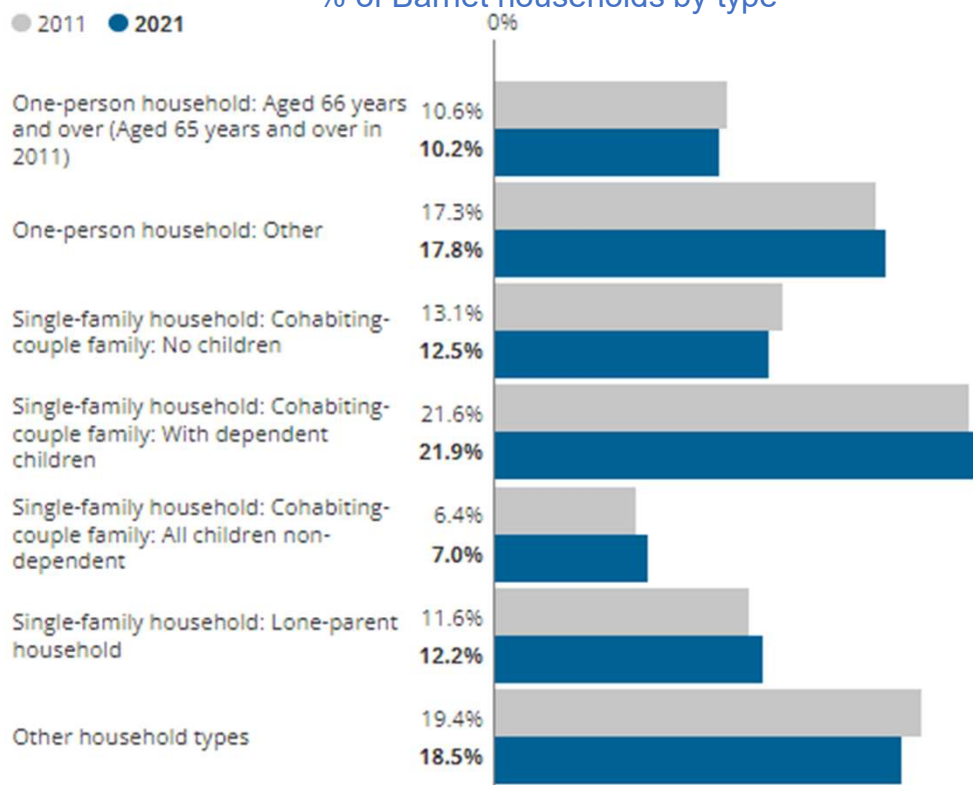
- There are **148,900** households in Barnet (up from 135,900 in 2011)
- There is an increase in smaller properties (1 bedroom **+1.1%**) and larger properties (4 or more bedrooms **+2.6%**).



- There is continued high prevalence of smaller, single person households, with **28%** of residents living alone (**42,300** people), however the most common household size was now 2 people (**28.4%**), and the largest % increase was for 3-people households (**+1%**, with 26,800 households).

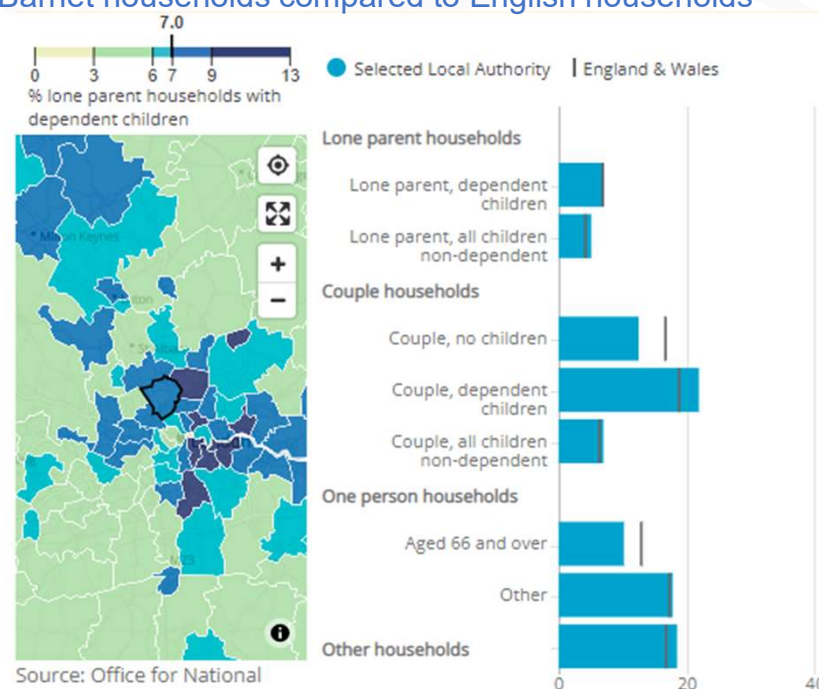
The way people live is changing

% of Barnet households by type



- Compared to 2011, there were more households in Barnet that were one-person households aged up to 65, lone parent family households, and family households with children.

% of Barnet households compared to English households



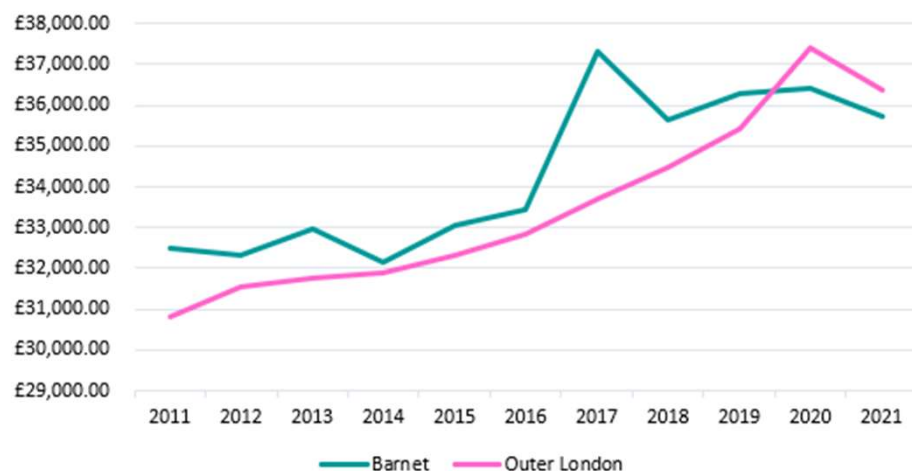
- Compared to the 2011 Census data across England, Barnet had more households with lone parents with dependent and non-dependent children, couples with dependent and non-dependent children, and other households. There were fewer households made up of couples with no children, and those aged 66 and over.

Economy



Relatively high incomes

Average incomes



- Median income in Barnet decreased by **4.5%** between 2017 and 2021, indicating a squeeze on standards of living.
- Median incomes in Outer London and Inner London increased during the same period by 7.6% and 8.5% respectively.

Earnings by place of residence (2022)

	Barnet (Pounds)	London (Pounds)	Great Britain (Pounds)
Gross Weekly Pay			
Full-Time Workers	735.6	765.4	642.2
Male Full-Time Workers	756.0	804.9	687.5
Female Full-Time Workers	723.0	713.7	584.5
Hourly Pay - Excluding Overtime			
Full-Time Workers	19.37	20.00	16.37
Male Full-Time Workers	19.26	20.59	16.97
Female Full-Time Workers	19.37	19.35	15.49

Workless Households (Jan-Dec 2021)

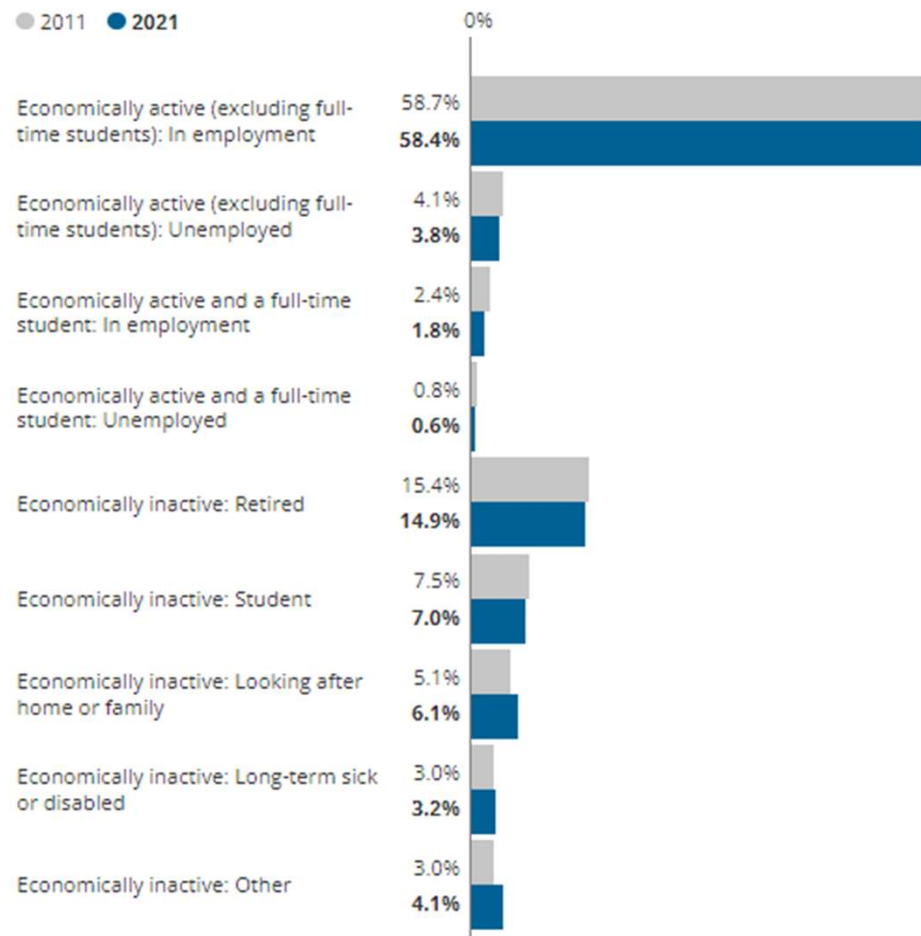
	Barnet	London	Great Britain
Number Of Workless Households	18,600	367,900	2,866,800
Percentage Of Households That Are Workless	15.0	12.2	14.0
Number Of Children In Workless Households	!	171,900	1,249,200
Percentage Of Children Who Are In Households That Are Workless	!	9.5	10.2

Economic inactivity (Jul 2021-Jun 2022)

	Barnet (Level)	Barnet (%)	London (%)	Great Britain (%)
All People				
Total	62,000	23.8	20.3	21.4
Student	17,300	27.9	34.2	27.1
Looking After Family/Home	10,600	17.0	23.6	19.7
Temporary Sick	!	!	1.7	2.2
Long-Term Sick	17,500	28.2	19.8	25.4
Discouraged	!	!	#	0.2
Retired	#	#	6.7	13.7
Other	14,200	22.9	13.8	11.6

Employment

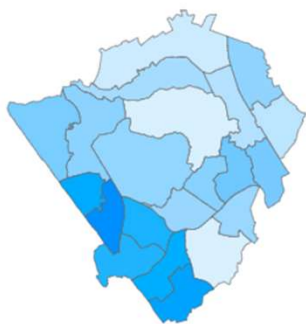
% of Barnet residents aged 16 years and over by economic activity status



- The 2021 Census took place during the COVID-19 pandemic, which would have affected the labour market.
- The percentage of people aged 16 years and over (excl. full time students) who were employed fell from 58.7% in 2011 to **58.4%**. During the same period, the percentage in London increased from 58.6% to 59.4%.
- The percentage who were unemployed fell from 4.1% to **3.8%**, and the percentage who were retired (economically inactive) decreased from 15.4% to **14.9%**.
- More residents worked short hours (15 hours or fewer per week) – **12.8%** compared to 10.5% in 2011.
- Barnet went from being among the highest 30% of English local authority areas based on its share of residents working short hours to being among the highest **10%**. It had the highest percentage in Greater London.

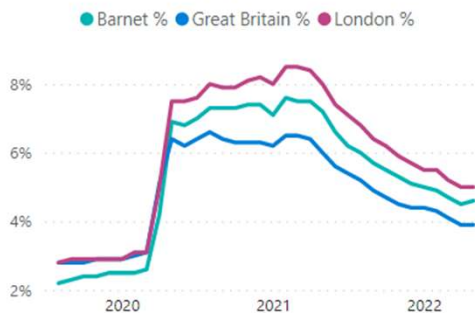
Welfare benefits and welfare reform

11650
Number of Out of Work Benefit Claimants

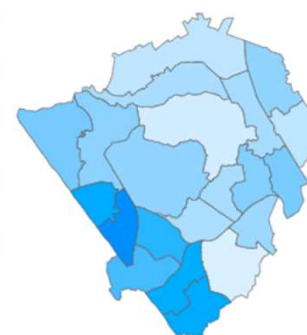


4.6%
% Working Age on Out of Work Benefits

Percent of Working Age on Out of Work Benefits

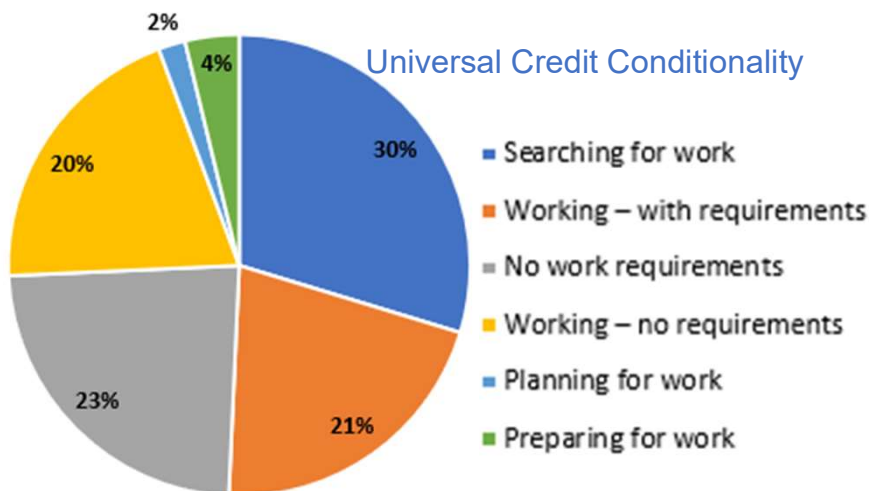
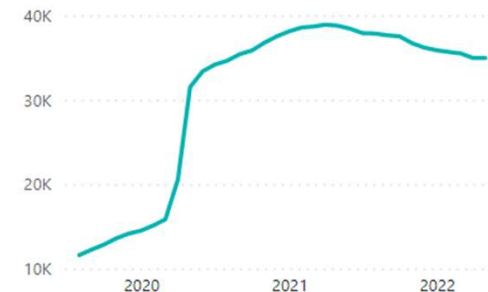


34949
Number of Universal Credit Claimants



9.0%
% Population on Universal Credit

Universal Credit Claimants by Month

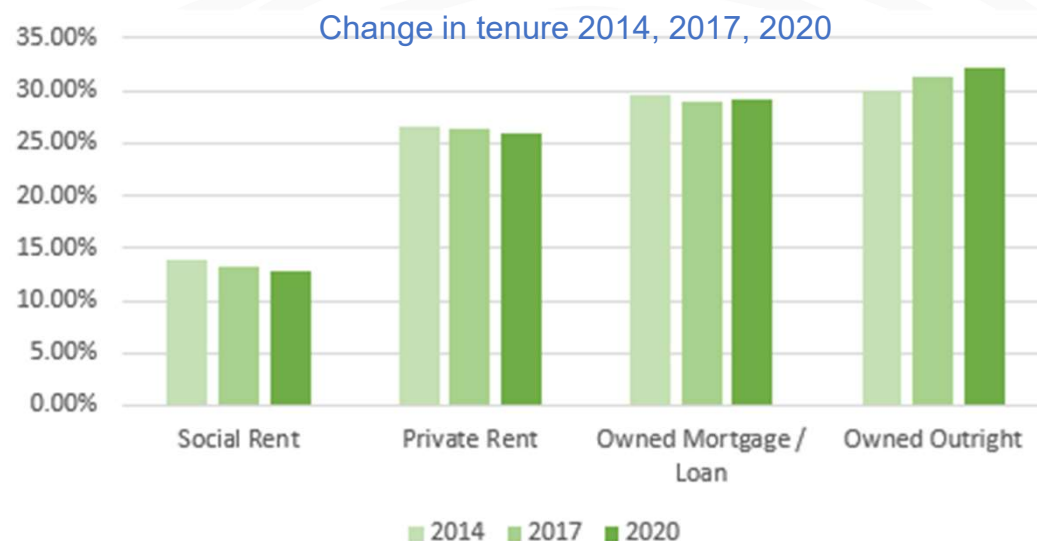
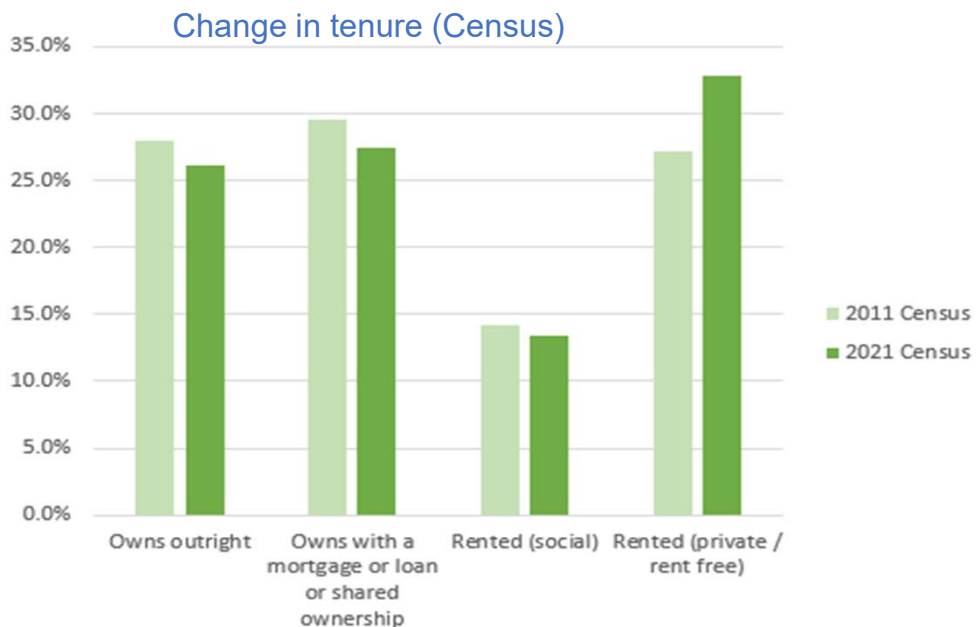


- As of March 2020, the number of Out of Work benefits claimants had risen sharply in Barnet and has been higher than Great Britain's but lower than London's levels. From June 2021 the number has slowly decreased. Barnet wards affected with the highest numbers of unemployment are Colindale, Burnt Oak and Child's Hill.
- The number of Universal Credit Claimants has more than doubled since 2020 and is equal to **9.9%** of Barnet's population. The most affected wards are Colindale, Burnt Oak and Child's Hill, with Hendon, Golder's Green, West Hendon and Woodhouse following closely behind.

The Housing Market



Tenure shift



- 2011 Census showed significant shift in tenure:
- Increase in Private Renting (+53%)
 - Reduction in owner-occupation (-12%)
 - Increase in council / housing association renting (+6%)
- 2021 Census showed continued tenure shift:
- Increase in Private Renting (+5.6%)
 - Reduction in owner-occupation (-3.9%)
 - Reduction in social rented (-0.8%)

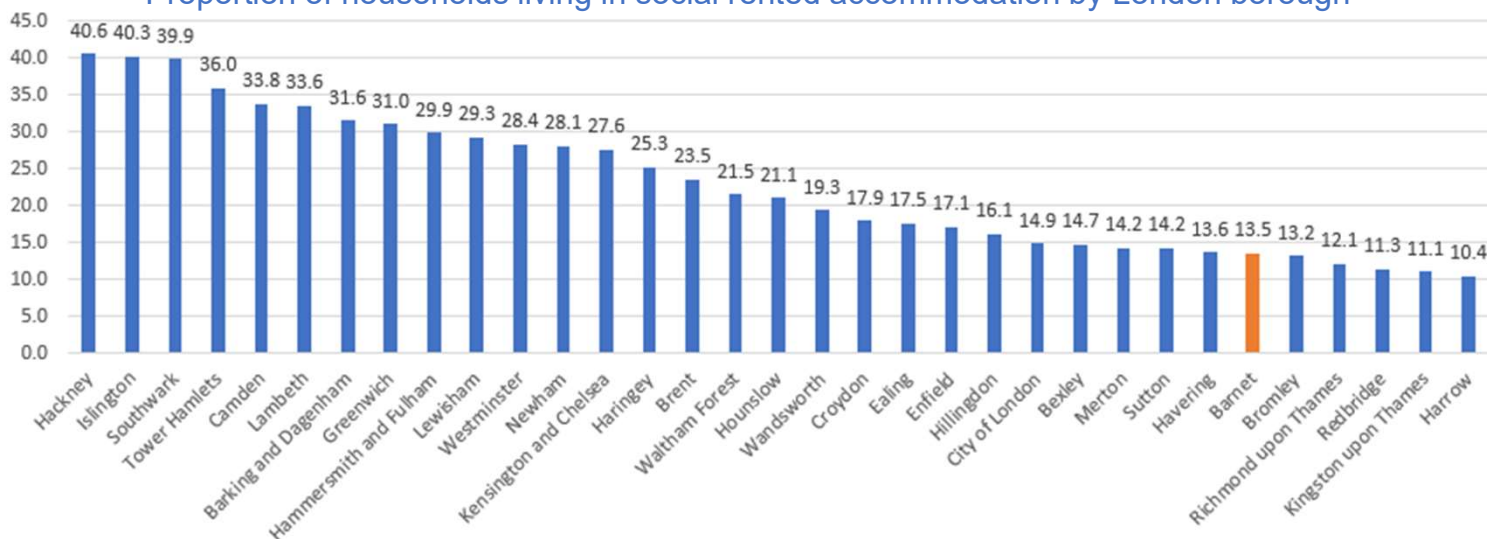
Annual ONS population survey shows a changing picture in the ensuing years. From 2017 to 2020:

- Decrease in council / housing association renting (-0.41%)
- Decrease in private renting (-0.41%)
- Increase in owner-occupation – especially in those owning their property outright (+0.82%)

In the 2021 Census results, Barnet had the **28th** highest proportion of households in social rented properties in London, the **12th** highest in private rented, the **12th** highest owner-occupied, and **10th** highest owned outright.

Social rented accommodation

Proportion of households living in social rented accommodation by London borough



Of all London boroughs in the 2021 Census, Barnet had the sixth smallest proportion of households living in social rented accommodation.

About half of Grahame Park’s households were renting socially; this was triple the average of households in England (17.1%), and 2.2 times as high as that of London (22.8%).

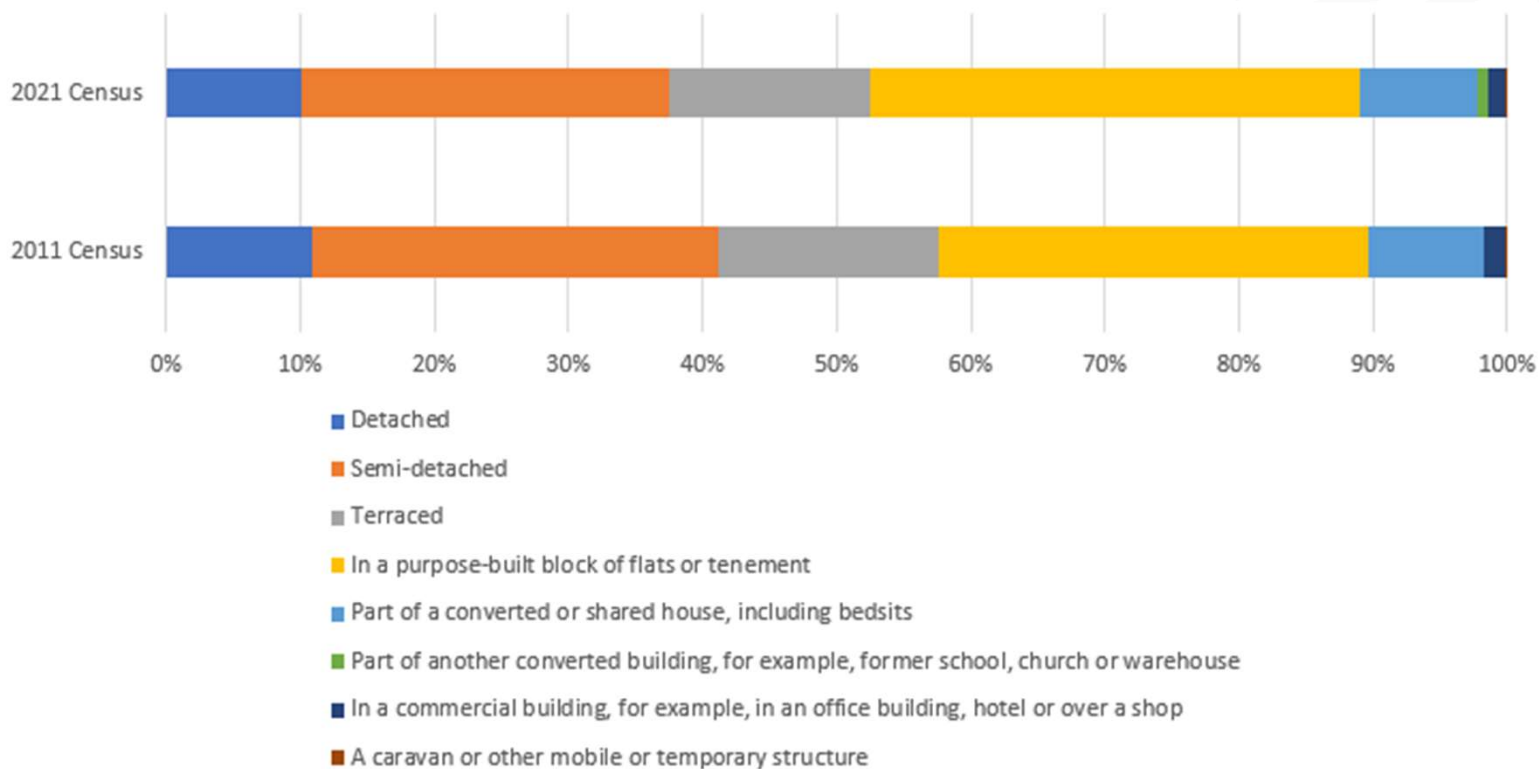
Top 10 Barnet MSOAs with highest proportion of social rented accommodation

Rank	MSOA	% Social rented (2021)
1	Grahame Park	50.6%
2	Burnt Oak & Watling Park	31%
3	Ducks Island & Underhill	29%
4	Mill Hill Broadway	27.5%
5	Brent Cross & Staples Corner	27.4%
6	Fallow Corner	25.1%
7	Childs Hill	24.8%
8	Colney Hatch	21.2%
9	Colindale	17.9%
10	Mill Hill East	17.7%

Top 10 Barnet MSOAs with highest increase in social rented accommodation

Rank	MSOA	% Increase in social rented
1	Colindale	170.3%
2	New Barnet West	64%
3	High Barnet & Hadley	57.5%
4	Hendon Park	42.3%
5	North Cricklewood	41.1%
6	Golders Green South	34%
7	Golders Green North	24.4%
8	Osidge	17.3%
9	Hampstead Garden Suburb	13.7%
10	Mill Hill Park	12.9%

Accommodation type



- 2021 Census showed an increase in residents living in purpose-built flats (+4.8%), which was the property type most lived-in within the borough.
- The largest decrease in property types was semi-detached properties (-2.5%), which was the second most common property type (27.5% of all households).

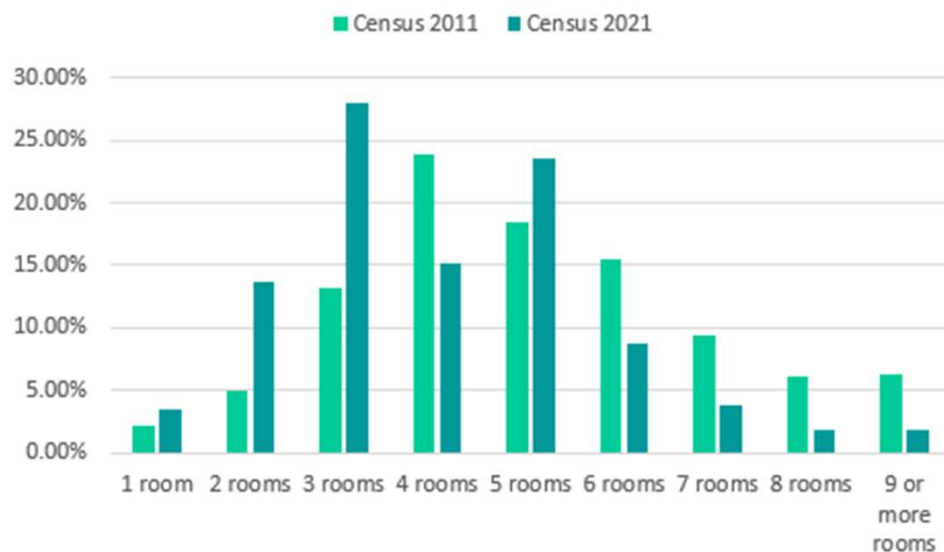
Increase in purpose-built blocks of flats

Rank	MSOA	% Change in purpose-built block of flats or tenement from 2011 to 2021
1	Colindale	239.4%
2	Mill Hill East	69%
3	Oakleigh Park	42.5%
4	Golders Green South	41.8%
5	Grahame Park	37.1%
6	Golders Green North	35.6%
7	Totteridge & Barnet Gate	33.6%
8	Mill Hill Park	31.1%
9	Edgware Central	30.8%
10	North Cricklewood	30%

- 2021 Census showed the highest % increase of purpose-built blocks of flats or tenements in Barnet's Middle Super Output Areas (MSOA) was Colindale, followed by Mill Hill East and Oakleigh Park.
- This demonstrates the substantial development and regeneration that have undergone in Colindale.

Property sizes

% of Barnet properties by number of rooms



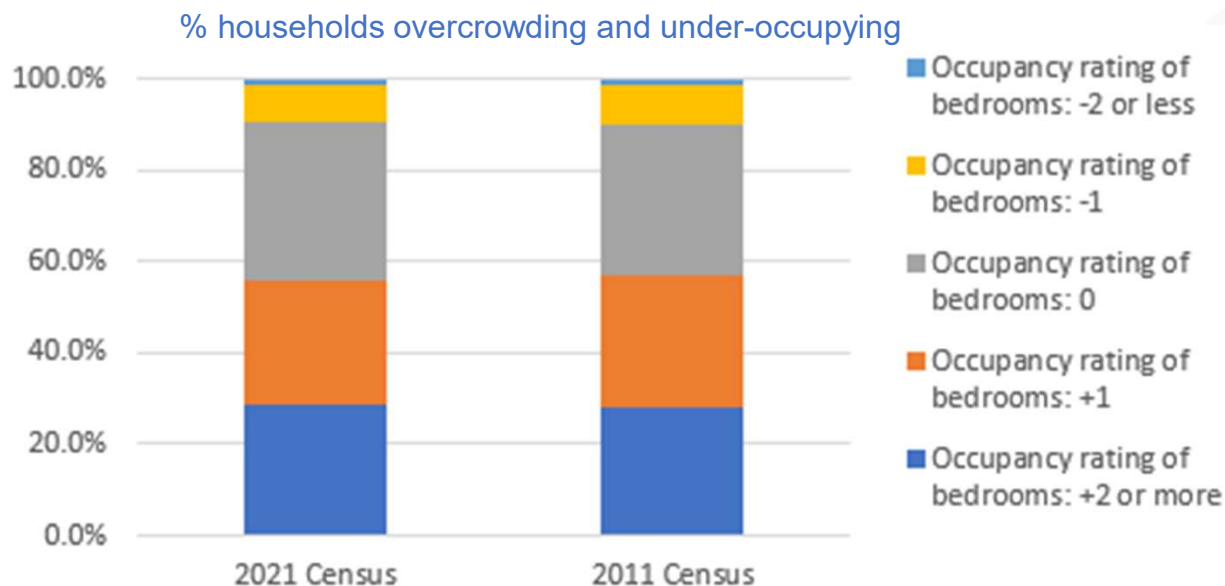
- Compared to 2011, there were fewer larger properties in Barnet, with a particular increase in the number of properties with 2-3 rooms.

% of Barnet properties by number of bedrooms



- Compared to 2011, there were more 1-bedroom properties and properties with 4 or more bedrooms.
- Most dwellings in Barnet remain 2- or 3-bedroom properties.

Overcrowding and underoccupancy

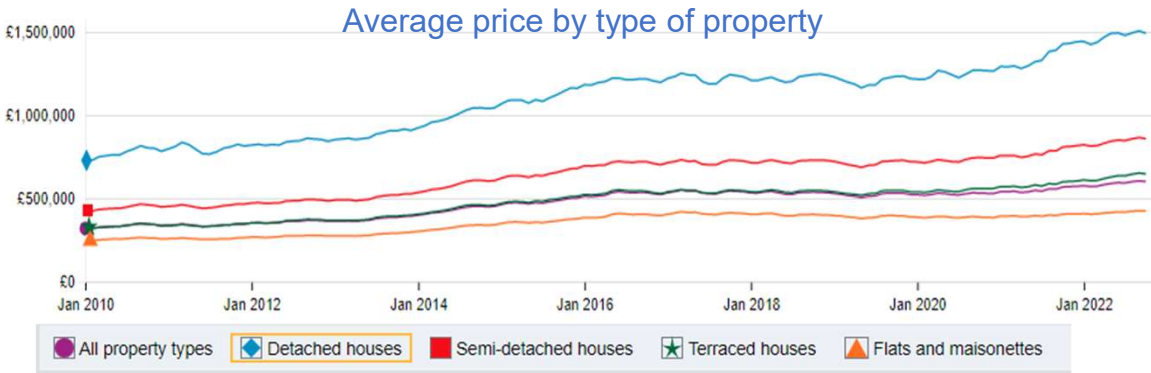


- Overcrowding and underoccupancy in Barnet was broadly comparable in 2011 and 2021.
- Around a fifth of households in Burnt Oak and Watling Park (**20.8%**) and Grahame Park (**19.3%**) were overcrowded. This was about 2.2 times higher than the average % of overcrowded households in Barnet (**9.4%**).

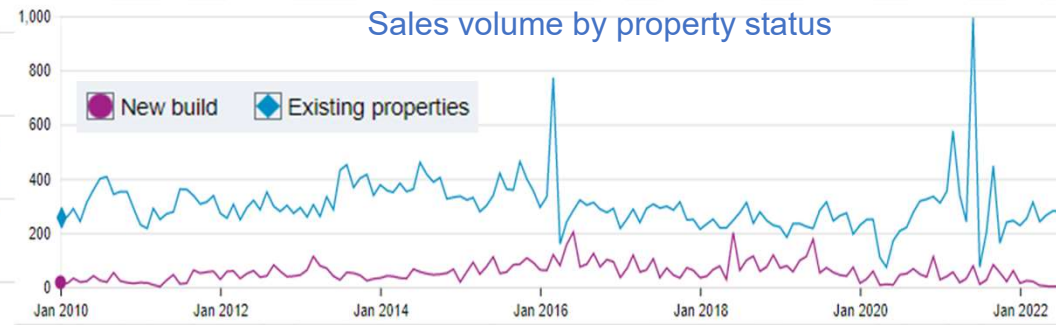
- Slightly fewer households were overcrowded in 2021 (**-0.1%** by 2 bedrooms or fewer and **-0.5%** by 1 bedroom)
- Slightly fewer households were under-occupying by 1 bedroom in 2021 (**-0.9%**)
- Slightly more households were under-occupying by 2 bedrooms or more in 2021 (by **+2.1%**).
- In 2021, 13,966 households were overcrowded.
- Barnet's average of overcrowded households was about double the average of England (4.4%), and less than London overall (11.1%). Barnet was ranked **11th** of all London boroughs for the least number of households with overcrowded bedrooms.

Average house prices

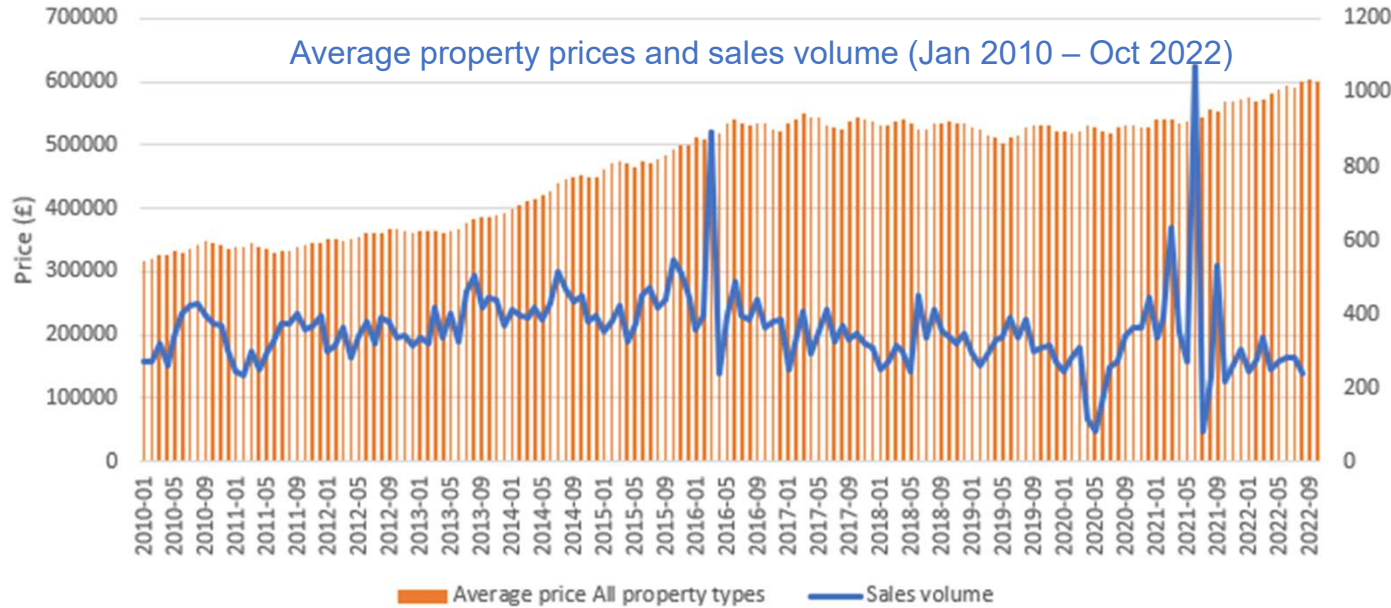
Average price by type of property



Sales volume by property status



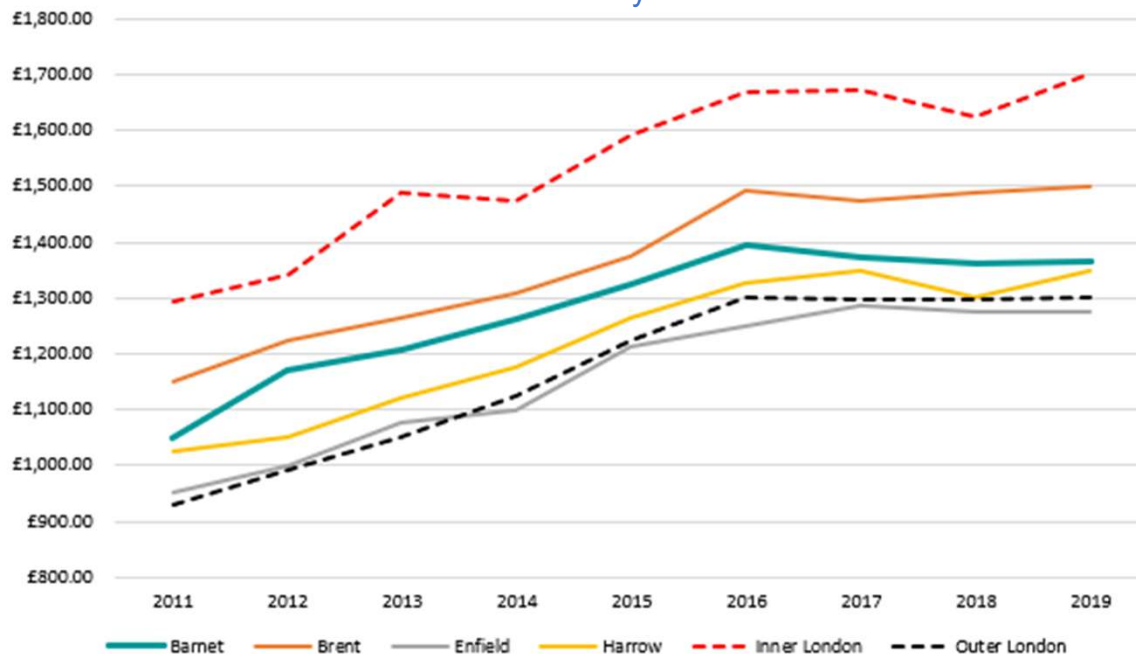
Average property prices and sales volume (Jan 2010 – Oct 2022)



- Average property prices in Barnet rose by **13.6%** between January 2019 and October 2022, which was approx. 15 x the average income of £39,700.
- The average property price in Barnet in October 2022 was **£600,389** (£422,846 for flats and maisonettes, £646,296 for terraced houses, £857,639 for semi-detached houses, and £1,491,095 for detached houses)

Private sector rents

Median Monthly Rents

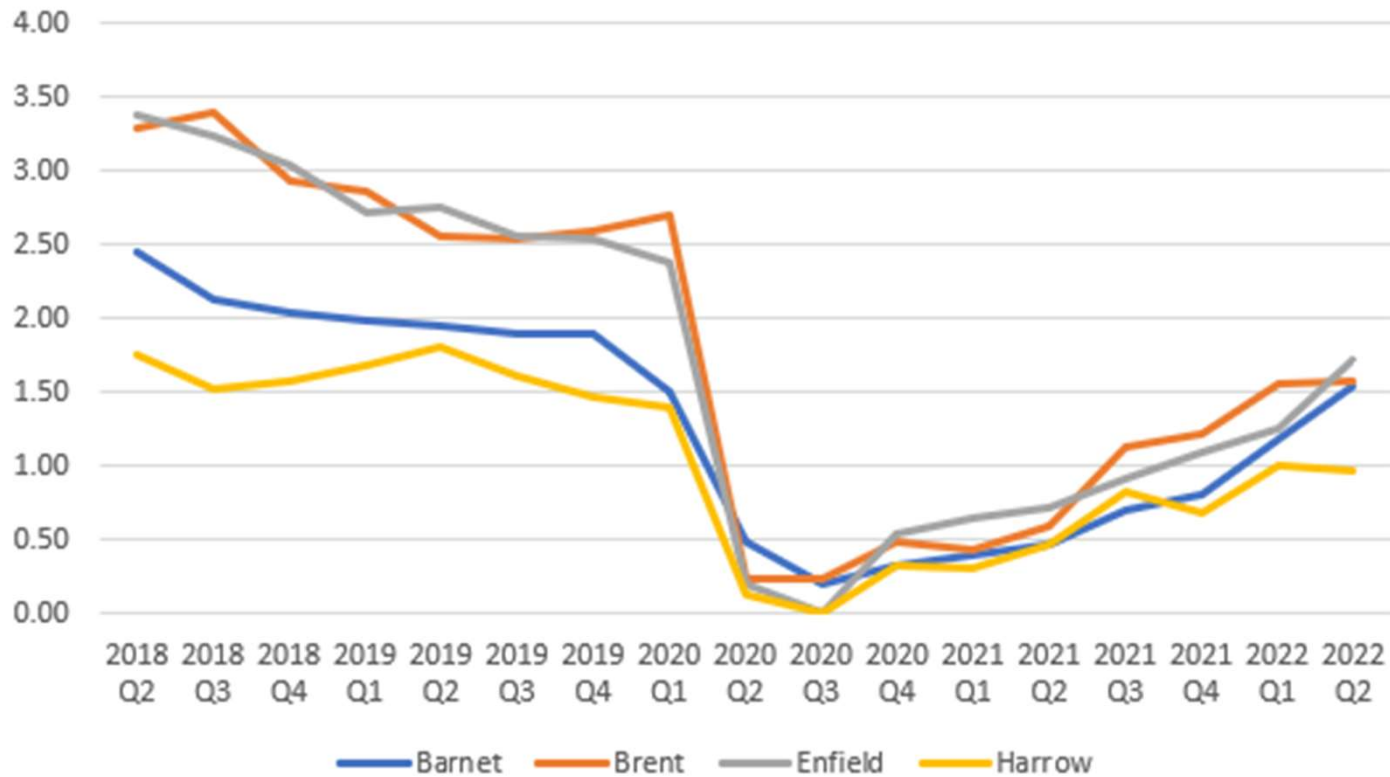


- Median monthly rent in Barnet in 2019 was **£1,365** compared to Outer London’s median of **£1,300**.
- Average rental prices decreased by **0.6%** between 2017 and 2019.

Barnet Median Rent Prices

	2011	2012	2013	2014	2015	2016	2017	2018	2019
Av. Rental Price	£ 1,048.33	£ 1,170.25	£ 1,206.50	£ 1,264.00	£ 1,325.00	£ 1,393.50	£ 1,372.50	£ 1,363.00	£ 1,365.00
Change (%)	-	11.6%	3.1%	4.8%	4.8%	5.2%	-1.5%	-0.7%	0.1%

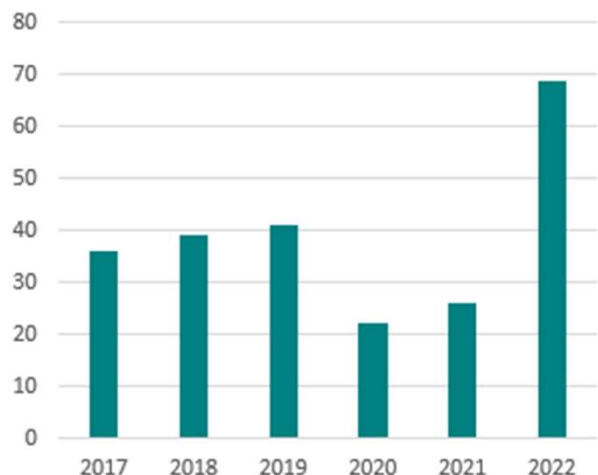
Landlord claims per 1,000 population



- Compared to neighbouring boroughs.
- Includes claims, repossessions, outright orders, and suspended orders, across accelerated landlords, private landlords, and social landlords.

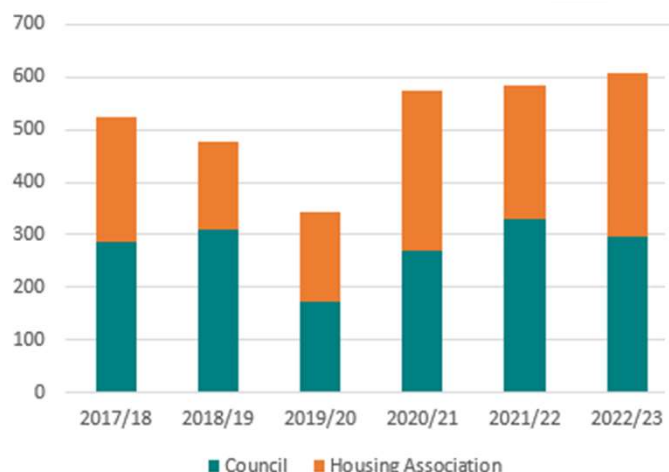
Right to buy and social housing lettings

Council homes sold under the Right to Buy



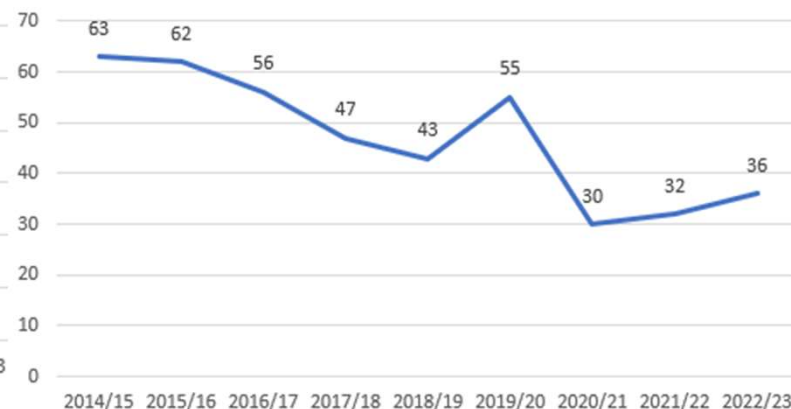
- The number of council homes sold under the Right to Buy increased steadily from 2017-19, but was impacted by the COVID-19 pandemic.
- There was a significant increase in sales in 2022.

Social housing lettings in Barnet



- The number of social housing lettings in Barnet has increased slightly in recent years, with council housing making up **49%** of all lets in 2022/23 compared to 57% in 2021/22.

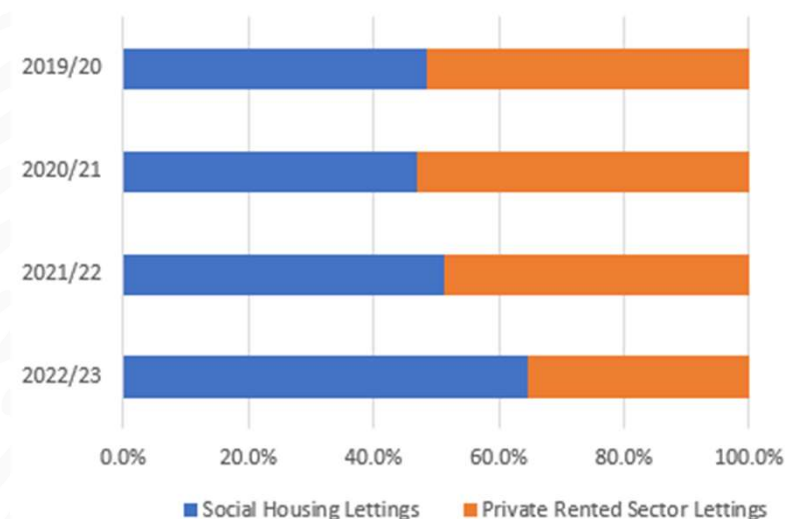
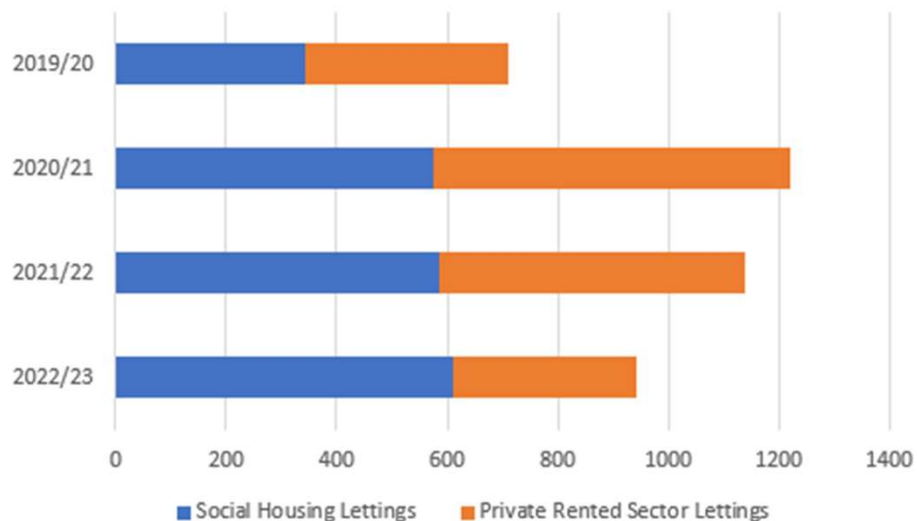
'Trade-downs' in Barnet



- The number of 'trade-downs', where council tenants downsize from a larger property to a smaller one, has also been decreasing, with a slight upturn over the past three years.

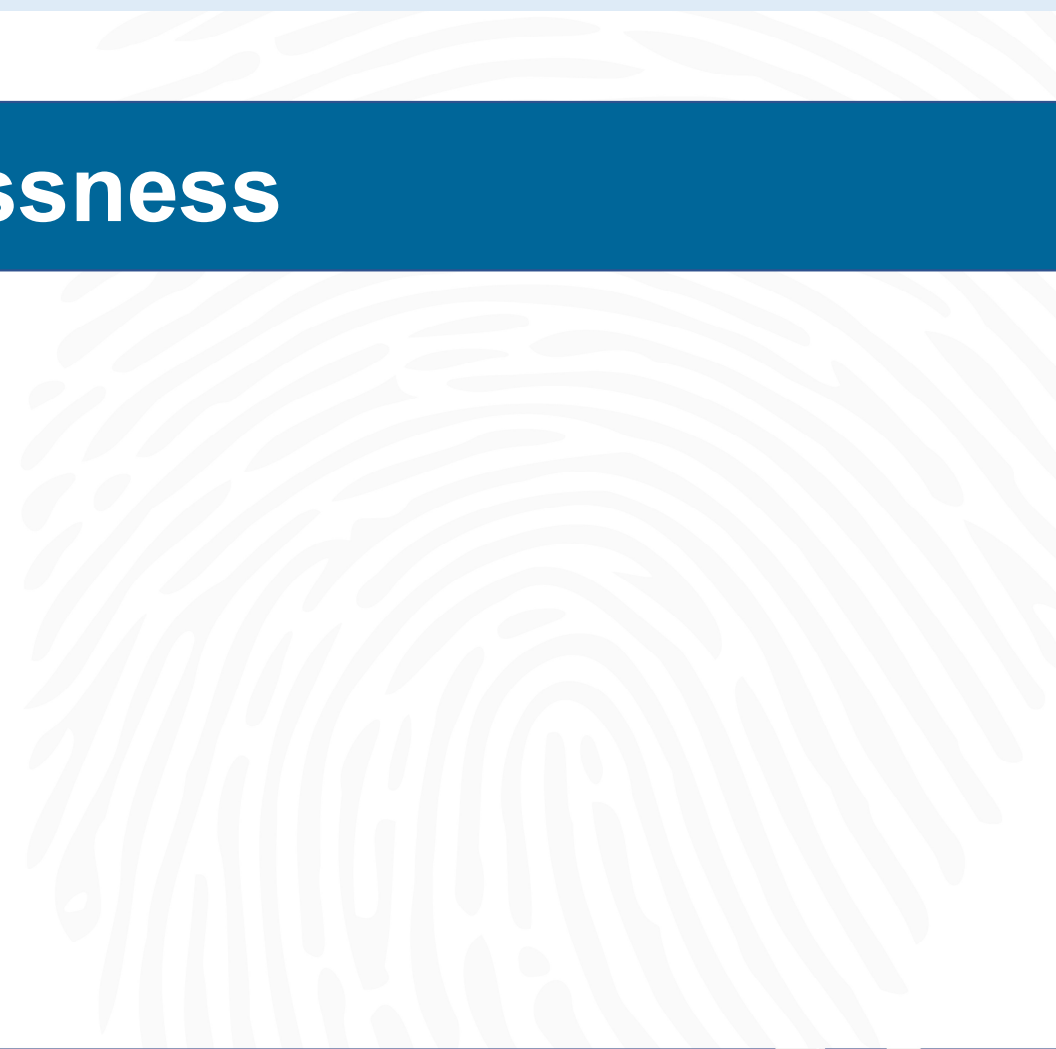
Social housing and private rented sector lettings

Proportion of social housing and private rented sector lettings



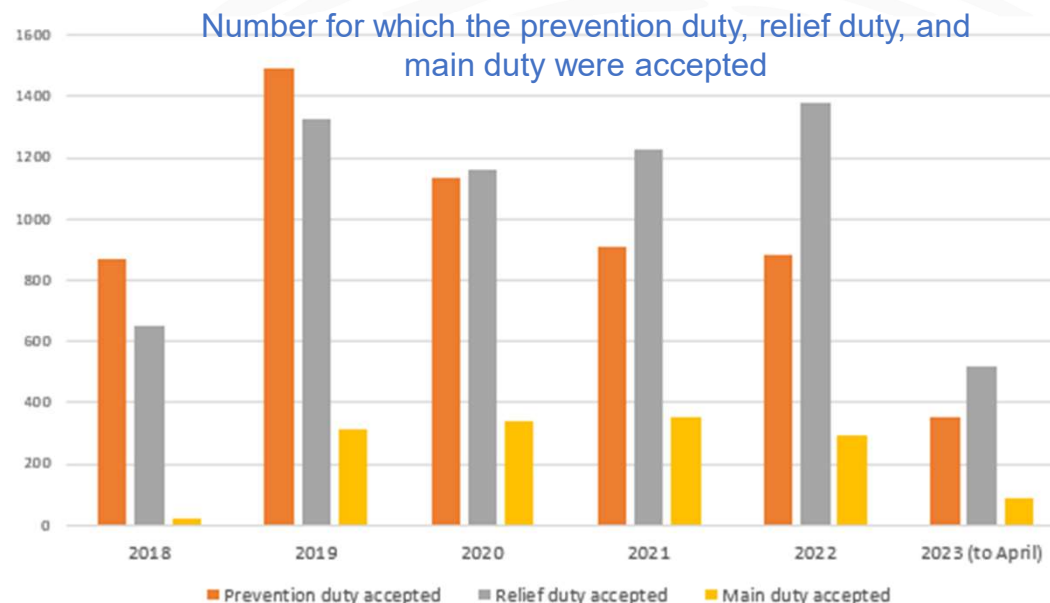
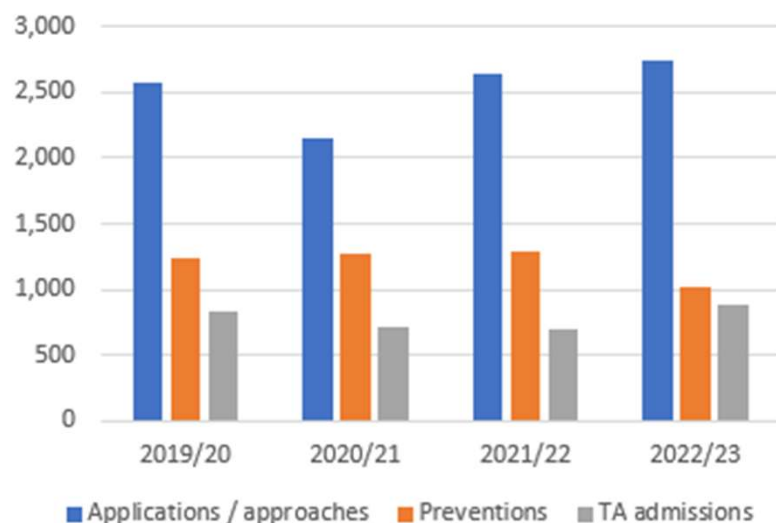
- Barnet has historically had strong access to the private rented sector, which has helped to lower the numbers in temporary accommodation.
- The private rented sector is contracting, and fewer private rented sector lettings are now being made.

Homelessness



Homelessness – applications

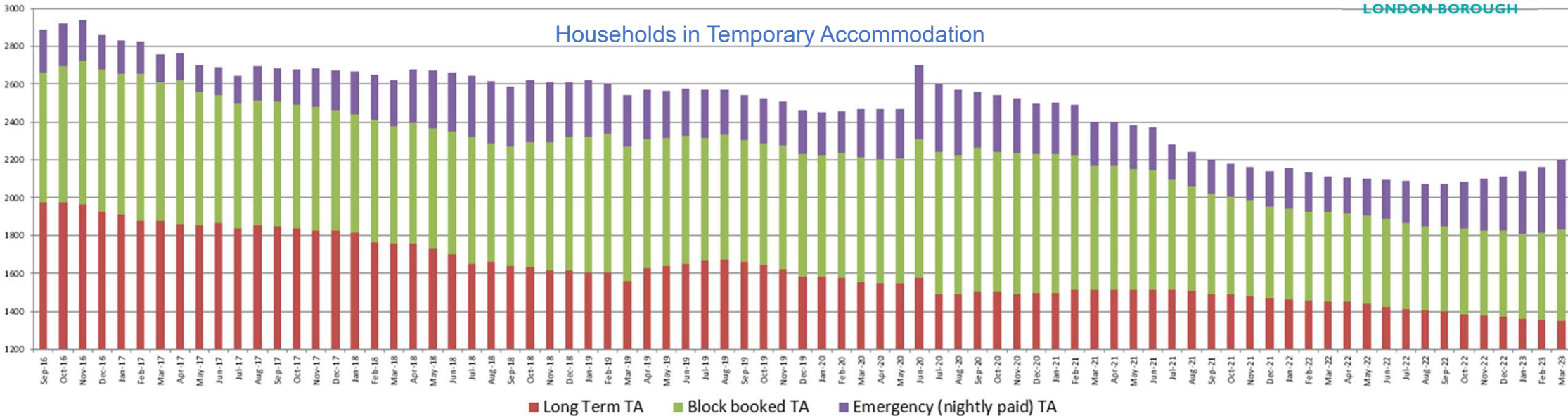
Applications, Preventions, and TA Admissions



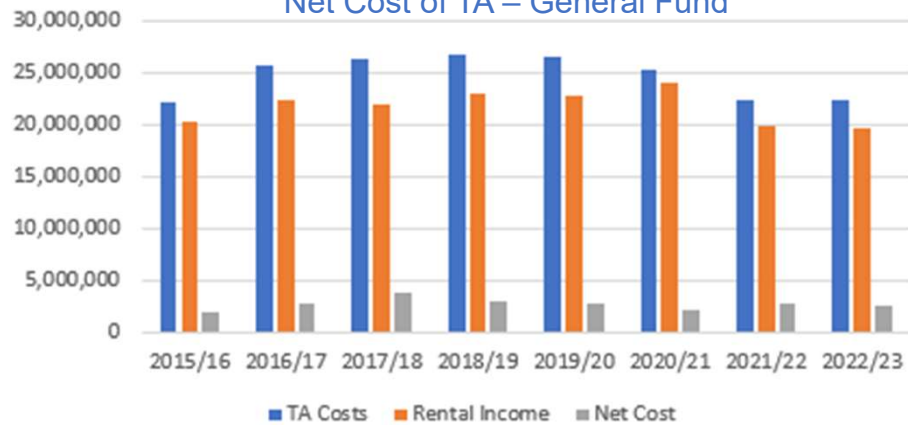
- Homelessness applications have increased, and preventions have reduced slightly.
- The number of households for which the prevention duty was accepted has declined since 2019, however the number of households for which the relief duty was accepted has increased slightly and the main duty was accepted has remained fairly consistent.

Homelessness – temporary accommodation

Households in Temporary Accommodation

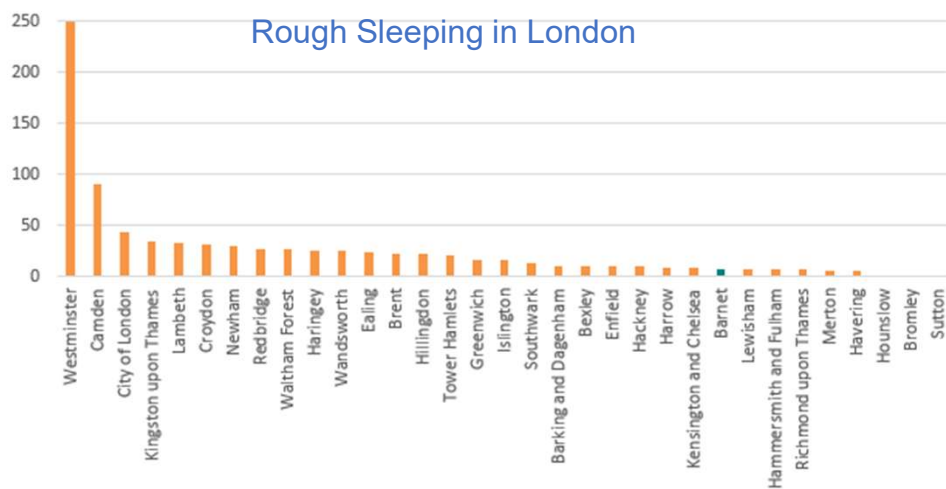


Net Cost of TA – General Fund

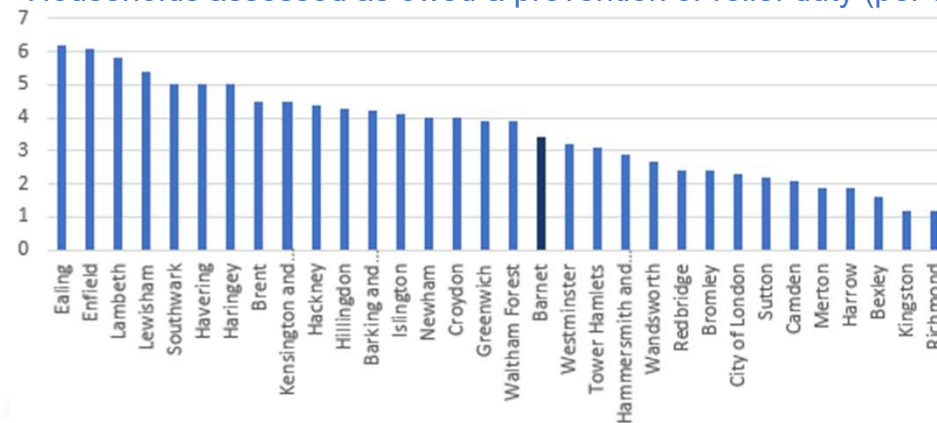


- Use of TA had been reducing and in August and September 2022 was at its lowest in over 10 years; however, numbers in TA have started to rise again due to challenges in the supply of suitable accommodation, including in the private rented sector.
- The net cost of temporary accommodation for 2022/23 (£20,283,745) was slightly higher than the previous year (£19,881,015).
- There was a significant upsurge in TA demand in the last quarter of 2022/23 as a result of the cost of living crisis. Households in TA increased from 2,111 in December 2022, to 2,202 in March 23. The number is expected to rise through 2023/24.
- Net costs are inclusive of TA payments, TA landlord incentives, TA rental income, and SDI rental income and costs.

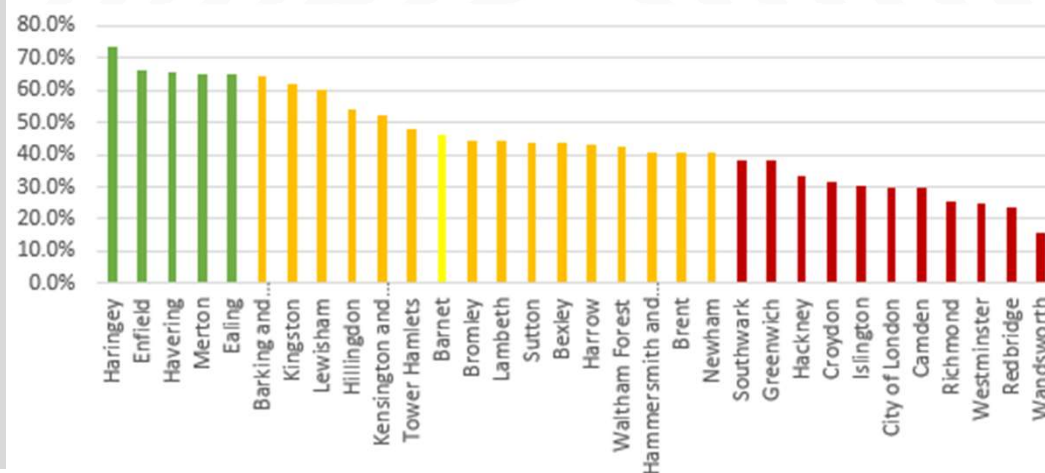
Homelessness performance comparison



Households assessed as owed a prevention or relief duty (per 000s)



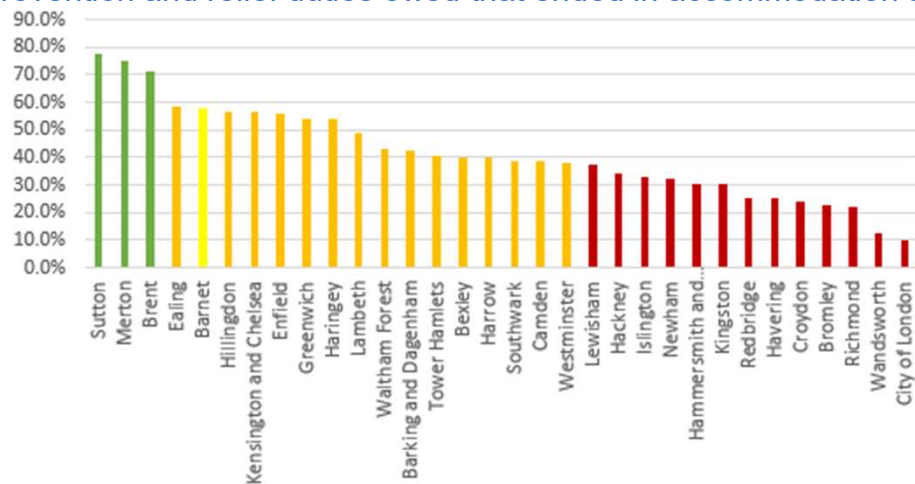
% owed a duty being accepted at prevention stage



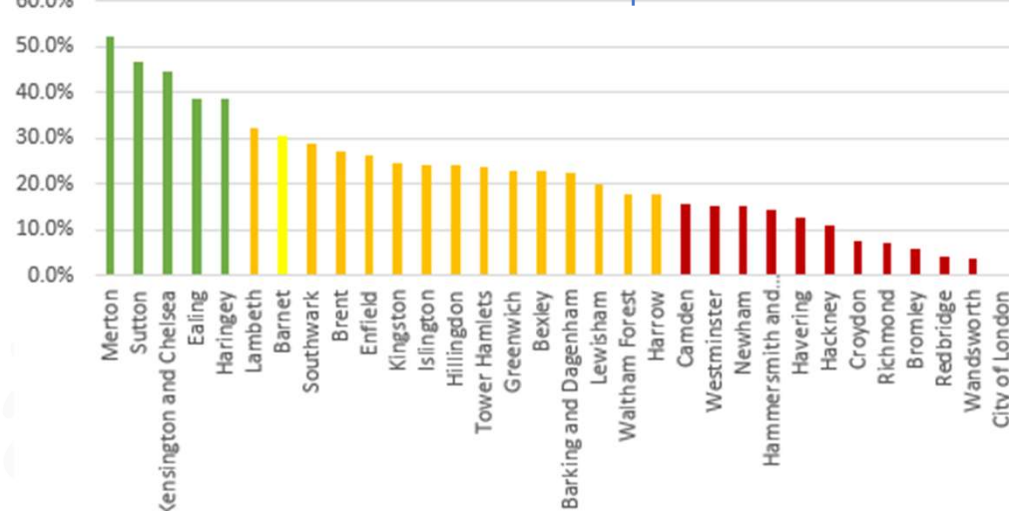
- Rough sleeping lower than London average in Barnet, and was lower in 2022 than all previous years except 2020.
- In the January – March 2022 quarterly data return on local authorities’ actions under statutory homelessness legislation, Barnet performed in the middle two quartiles nationally.
- 12 of 27 London boroughs had no households with children in B&B accommodation for over 6 weeks, including Barnet.
- 26 of 27 London boroughs had no 16-17 year olds in B&B accommodation, including Barnet.

Homelessness performance comparison

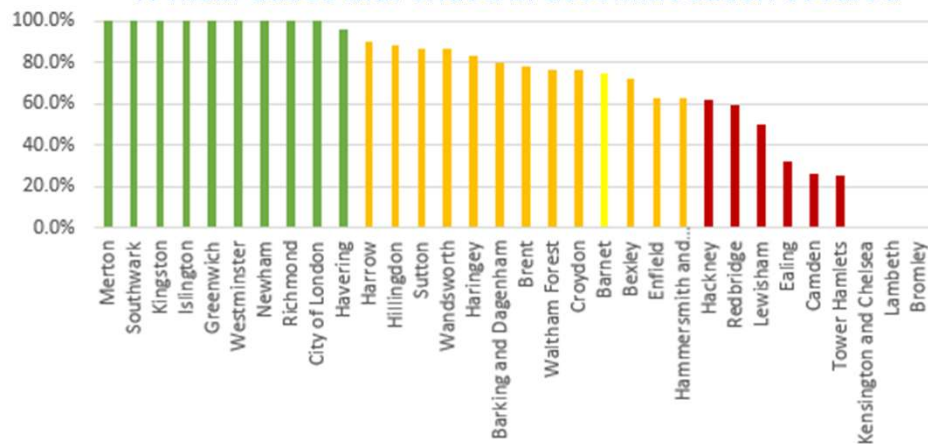
% prevention and relief duties owed that ended in accommodation secured



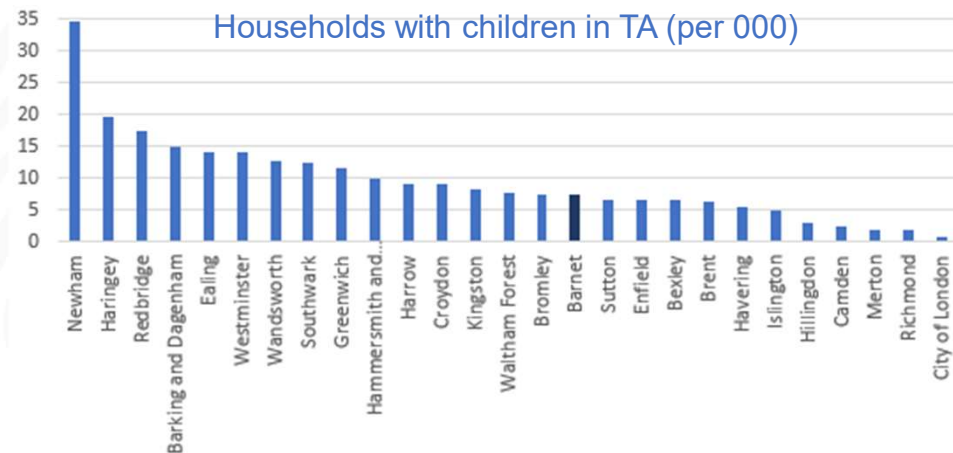
% duties owed that were prevented



% main duties that ended in accommodation secured

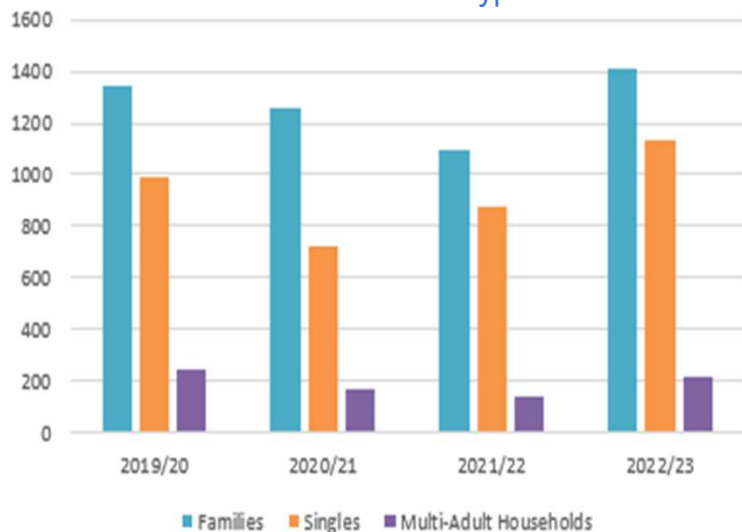


Households with children in TA (per 000)

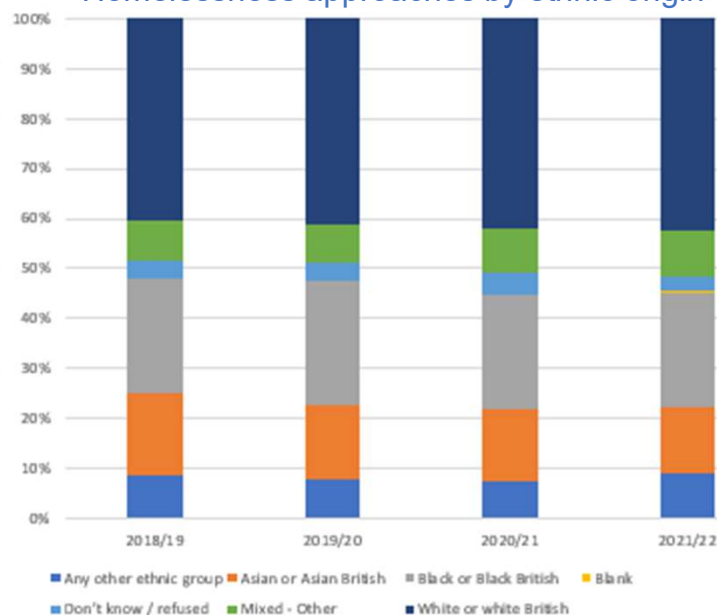


Characteristics of households approaching as homeless

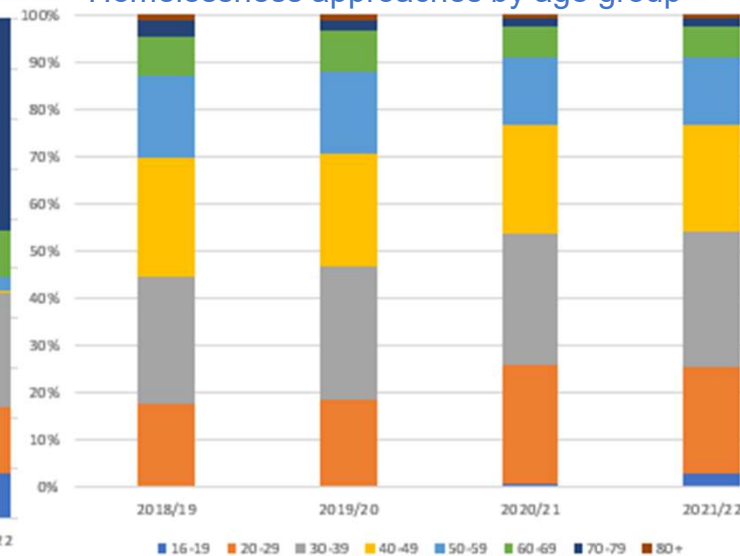
Homelessness applications opened by household type



Homelessness approaches by ethnic origin



Homelessness approaches by age group



- An increase in the number of households approaching for advice (**3,283** in 2019/20 and **4,332** in 2022/23) as well as in cases opened.
- The proportion of women has increased slightly to **55.8%**.
- A shift in the type of household, with more single applications opened (**41%** of cases in 22/23).

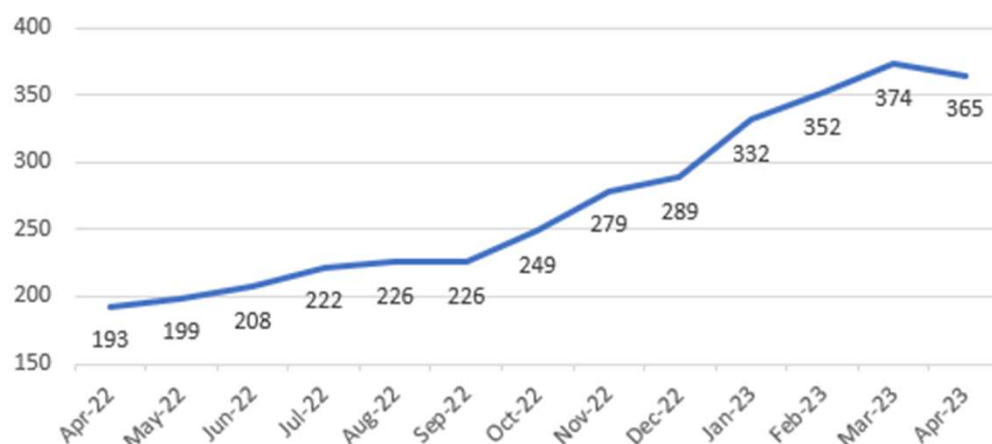
- High representation of those from an ethnic minority background, with those from a Black / Black British background highly represented (**23%**) alongside those from a White background (**42%**) in 2021/22.
- The age group 30-39 remains the most common, however there has been an increase in younger people approaching, with **3%** aged 16-19 in 2021/22.

Rising homelessness demand

Homelessness approaches by household type

Period	Q2 2021/22	Q3 2021/22	Q4 2021/22	Q1 2022/23	Q2 2022/23	Q3 2022/23	Q4 2022/23
Homelessness approaches from the private rented sector	145	142	166	170	170	283	308

Households in emergency temporary accommodation



Households in bed and breakfast accommodation

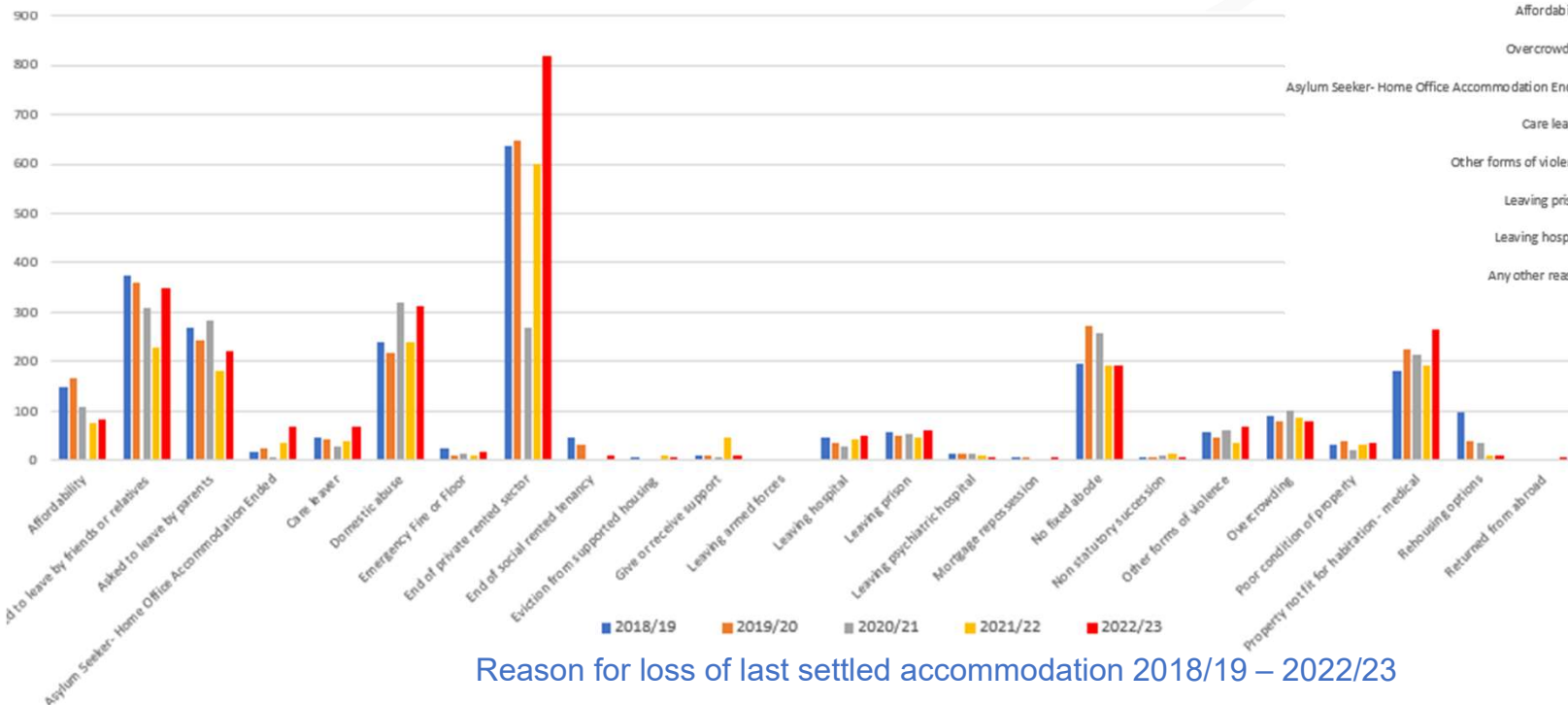
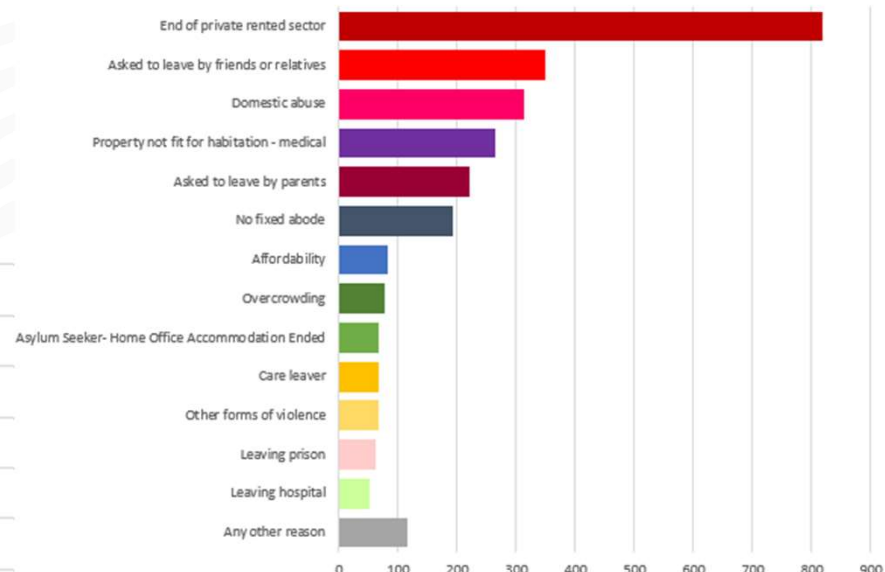
Period	Jun-22	Jul-22	Aug-22	Sep-22	Oct-22	Nov-22	Dec-22	Jan-23	Feb-23	Mar-23	Apr-23
Households in B&B accommodation	92	90	84	97	109	120	121	138	156	177	161
Families in B&B for more than 6 weeks	1	0	0	0	0	0	1	3	4	2	3

- Barnet Homes is seeing an increase in approaches for housing assistance from the private rented sector.
- There has also been a growing number of households that need to be housed in emergency temporary accommodation in 2022/23.
- In the past, Barnet Homes has rarely needed to use bed and breakfast accommodation. Since April 2018, only 18 families have been housed in shared facilities B&B accommodation beyond the 6-week statutory limit; four (22%) of these breaches have occurred since December 2022.

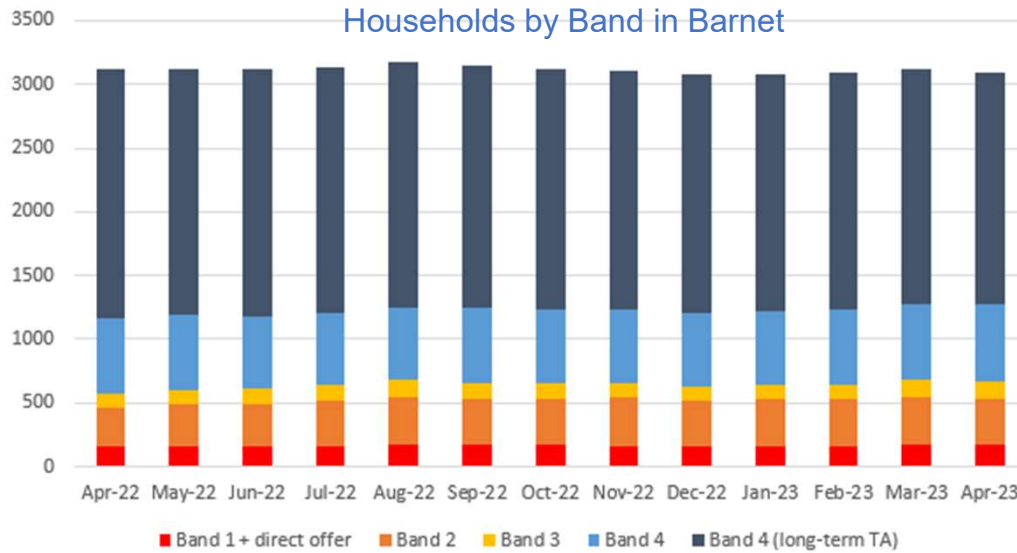
Reasons for approaching as homeless

- End of private rented sector tenancy remains the most common reason for approaching as homeless – from 2018/19 it increased by 5.2% to **29.7%** in 2022/23 and continues to grow.
- Other common reasons for approaching as homeless in 2022/23 were asked to leave by family or friends (**12.7%**), domestic violence (**11.4%**), property not fit for habitation (medical) (**9.6%**), asked to leave by parents (**8%**), and no fixed abode (**7%**).

Reason for loss of last settled accommodation 2022/23



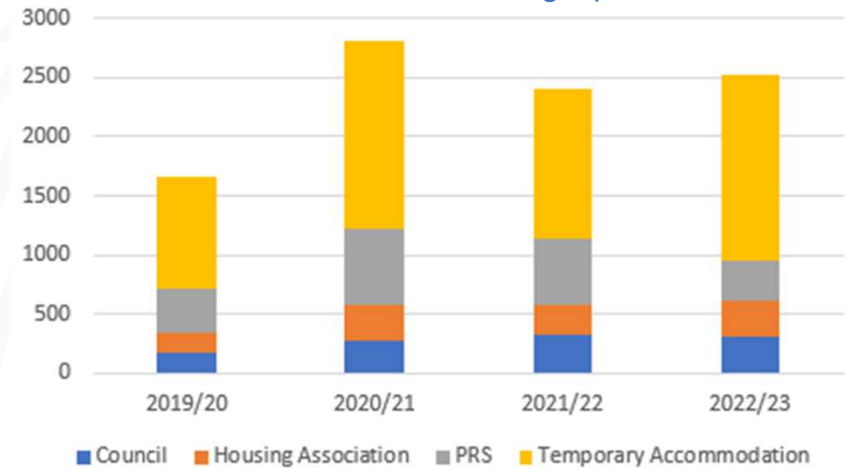
Housing needs



• Housing demand has remained high, with a slight increase in households being placed in Bands 1 and 2.

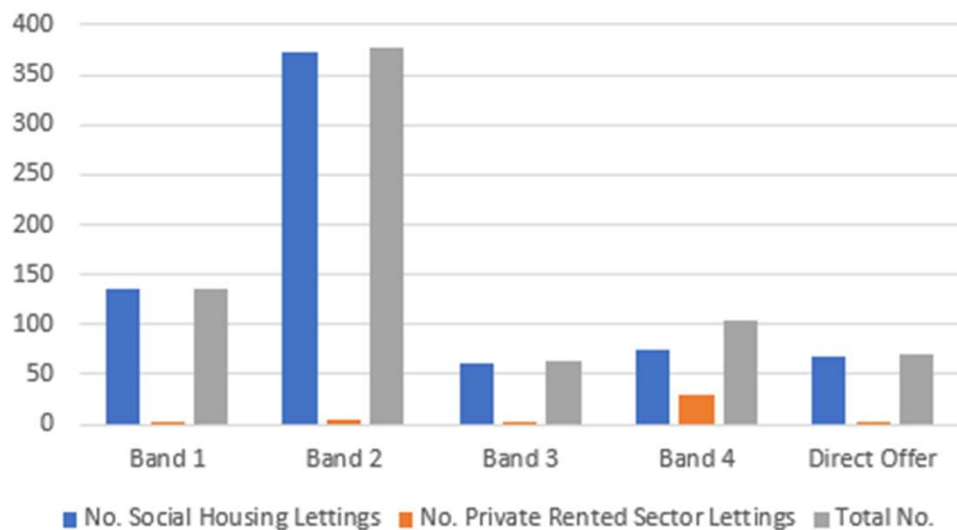
- The supply of social rented / affordable homes has fallen slightly.
- Since April 2021 the private rented market has become increasingly challenging, with a reduction in supply of 35% across London, PRS rents increasing by 16% in 2022, and more households declining PRS offers.

Households rehoused via Housing Options service

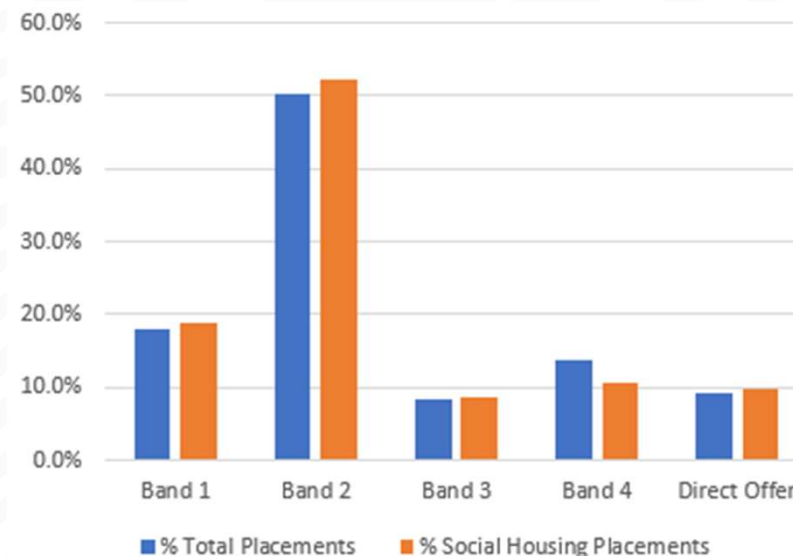


Housing placements by band

Placements (in numbers) from 1 July 2022 – 30 June 2023



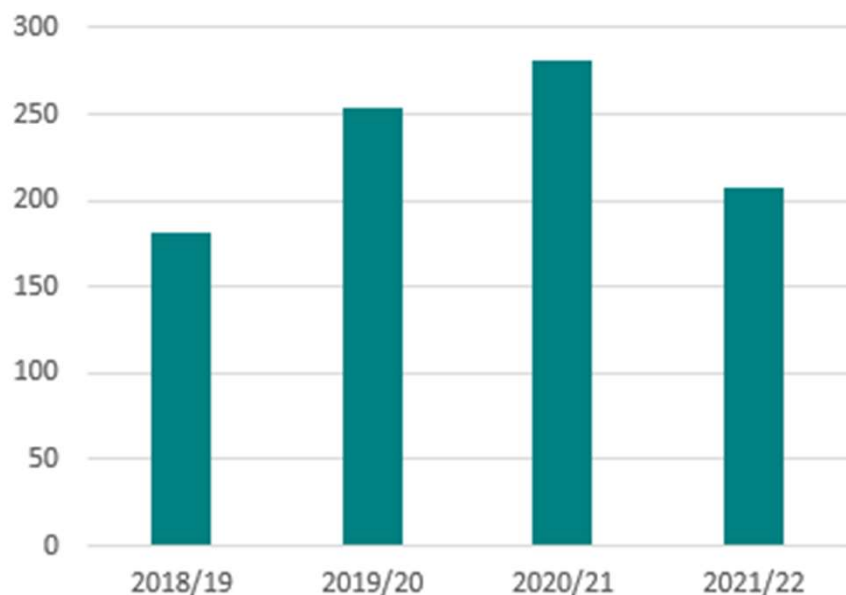
Proportion of placements (%) by band from 1 July 2022 – 30 June 2023



- Whilst the majority of placements affect Bands 1 and 2 and direct offers, in the period 1 July 2022 – 30 June 2022, 19.1% of Barnet’s social housing placements were made for applicants in Bands 3 and 4.

Homelessness prevention – sustaining existing accommodation

Number of households supported to remain in their accommodation



- High numbers of households have in the past been supported to remain in their households as part of Barnet Homes' homelessness prevention work, including through use of financial interventions such as Discretionary Housing Payments.
- It is becoming increasingly challenging to sustain people in their existing tenancies due to affordability constraints, and an increase in private sector landlords exiting the market.

Housing supply and high priority demand

Highest priority demand vs supply by bedroom size

Projected supply vs. demand						
Bed size	Category	Y1 22/23	Y2 23/24	Y3 24/25	Y4 25/26	Y5 26/27
Studios	Supply	77	84	60	71	60
	Demand	39	40	38	40	40
	Difference	38	44	22	31	20
1-beds	Supply	365	277	294	342	347
	Demand	353	428	445	340	405
	Difference	12	-151	-151	2	-58
2-beds	Supply	375	233	318	320	474
	Demand	142	224	205	172	217
	Difference	233	9	113	148	257
3-beds	Supply	227	140	195	237	207
	Demand	288	296	305	274	276
	Difference	-61	-156	-110	-37	-69
4-beds	Supply	73	49	44	62	66
	Demand	155	162	152	155	159
	Difference	-82	-113	-108	-93	-93

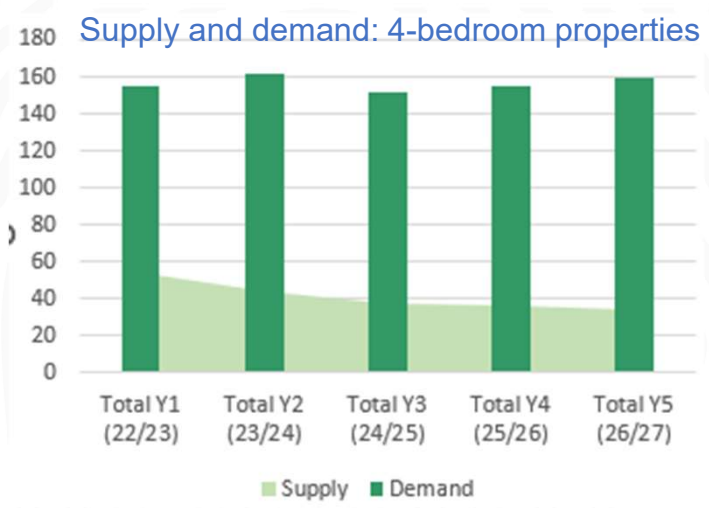
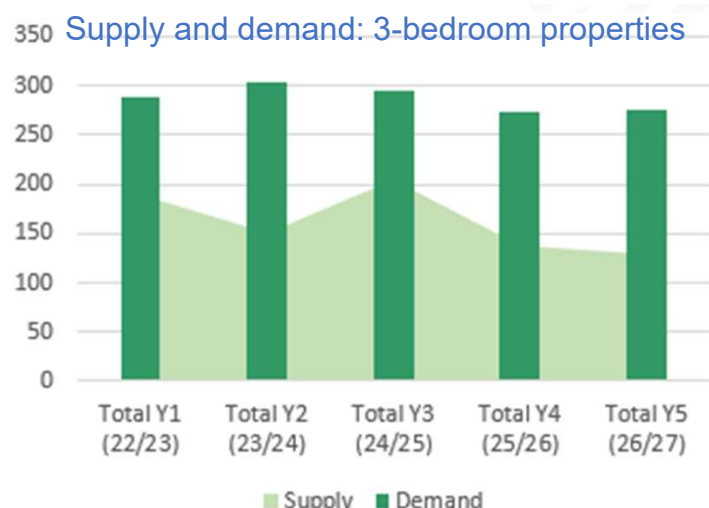
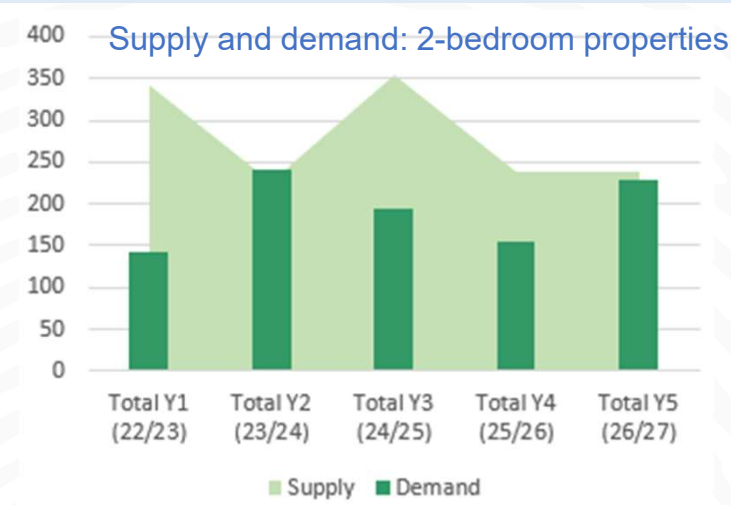
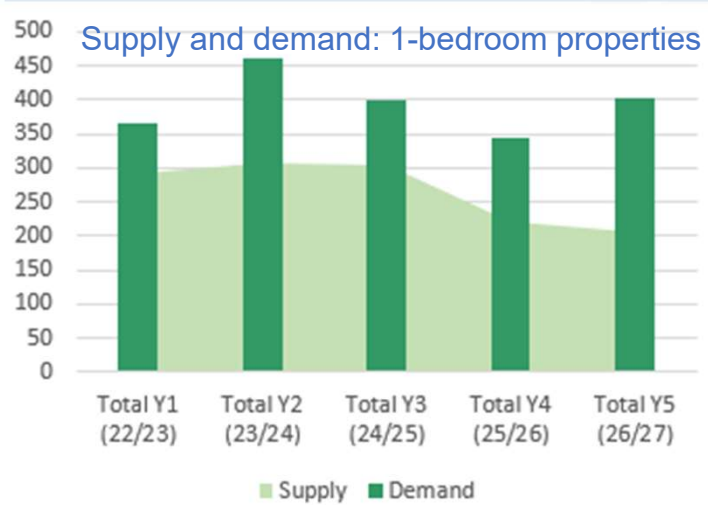
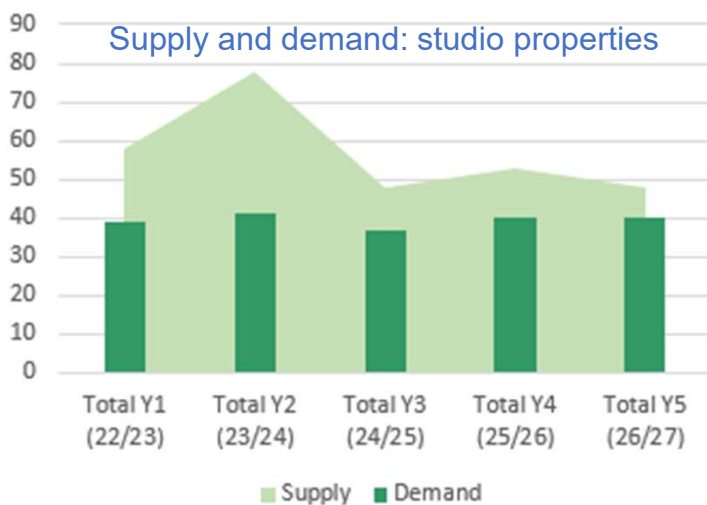
- Focusing on the demand from housing applicants in the highest priority Bands 1 and 2, direct offers, and regeneration and ad-hoc decanting schemes, there are particular housing supply pressures regarding 1-bedroom properties, 3-bedroom properties, and 4-bedroom properties.
- There is also a limited expected supply of wheelchair-adapted properties to meet the present need from Band 1 applicants.

All housing need by bedroom size – snapshot (26 June 2023)

Band / Bedroom Need	1 Bedroom	2 Bedrooms	3 Bedrooms	4 Bedrooms	5 Bedrooms	6 Bedrooms	7 Bedrooms	Total
Band 1	53	23	27	14	7			124
Band 2	160	53	71	55	6	2		347
Band 3	36	27	50	9	8			130
Band 4	276	115	174	32	6		1	604
Band 4 (Long-Term TA)	476	719	443	111	19	2	1	1,771
Direct Offers	18	9	3	1				31
Total Banded	1,019	946	768	222	46	4	2	3,007
Not Banded	716	435	214	59				1,424
Total	1,735	1,381	982	281	46	4	2	4,431

- Whilst the housing supply and high priority demand model looks at the housing needs of those who most urgently need to be housed who have the highest priority for housing, overall housing need in the borough outstrips supply across all property sizes. There are presently not enough homes of any size to meet the total demand.
- There is also demand for housing for refugees; whilst there is a small amount of known one-, two- and three-bedroom need for Ukrainian households living in temporary accommodation, future overall needs for refugee households remain uncertain and have the potential to grow.

Housing supply and high priority demand



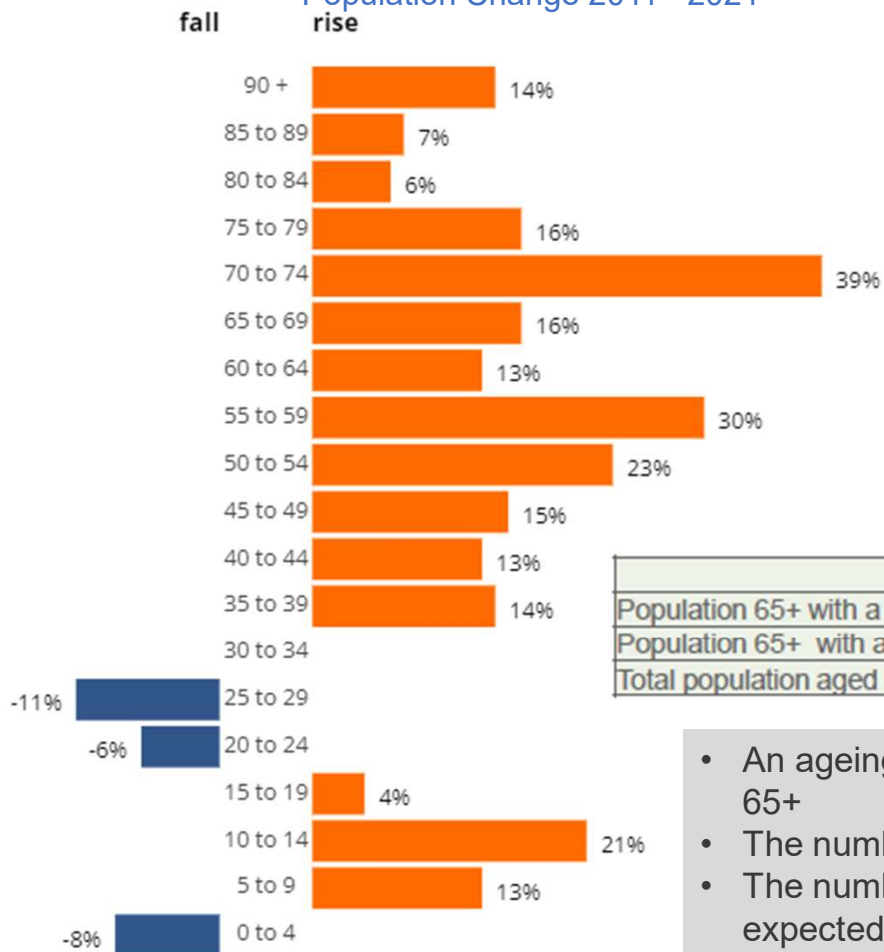
- Note: this shows projections only for Bands 1 and 2, direct offers, and regeneration and ad-hoc decanting schemes.
- A full snapshot of housing need by property size is included on the previous slide, and evidences significant demand across all property sizes.

Older People

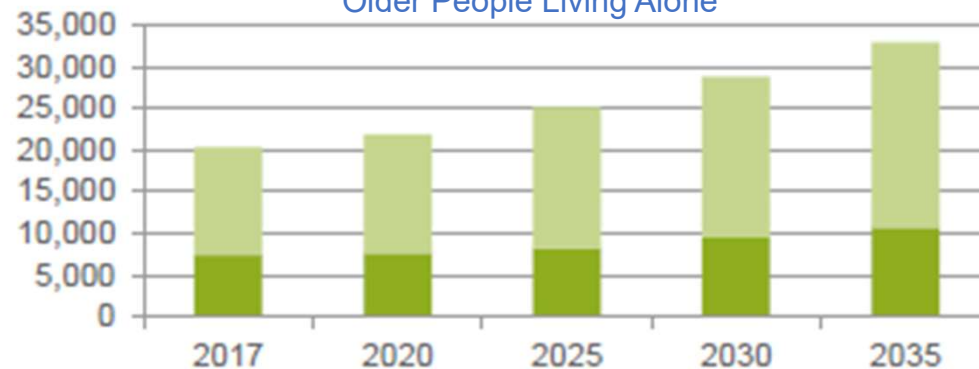


Older people

Population Change 2011 - 2021



Older People Living Alone



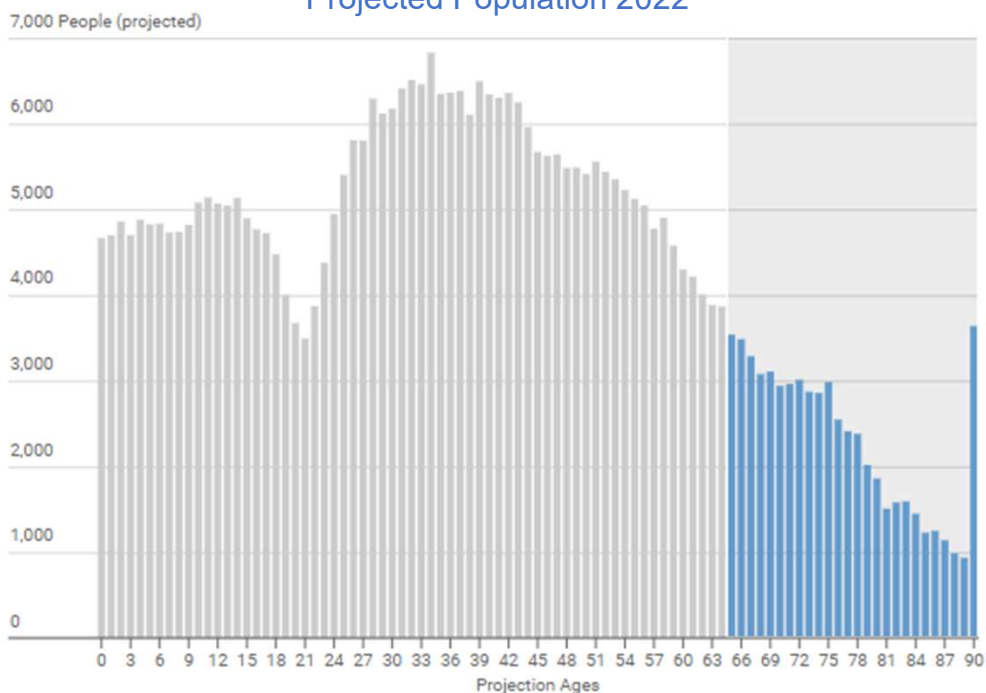
Total population aged 75 and over predicted to live alone

	2017	2020	2025	2030	2035
Population 65+ with a long term illness whose day-to-day activities are limited a little	13,151	14,102	16,138	18,512	21,061
Population 65+ with a long term illness whose day-to-day activities are limited a lot	11,804	12,725	14,696	17,011	19,727
Total population aged 65 and over predicted to have dementia	4,136	4,502	5,236	6,261	7,407

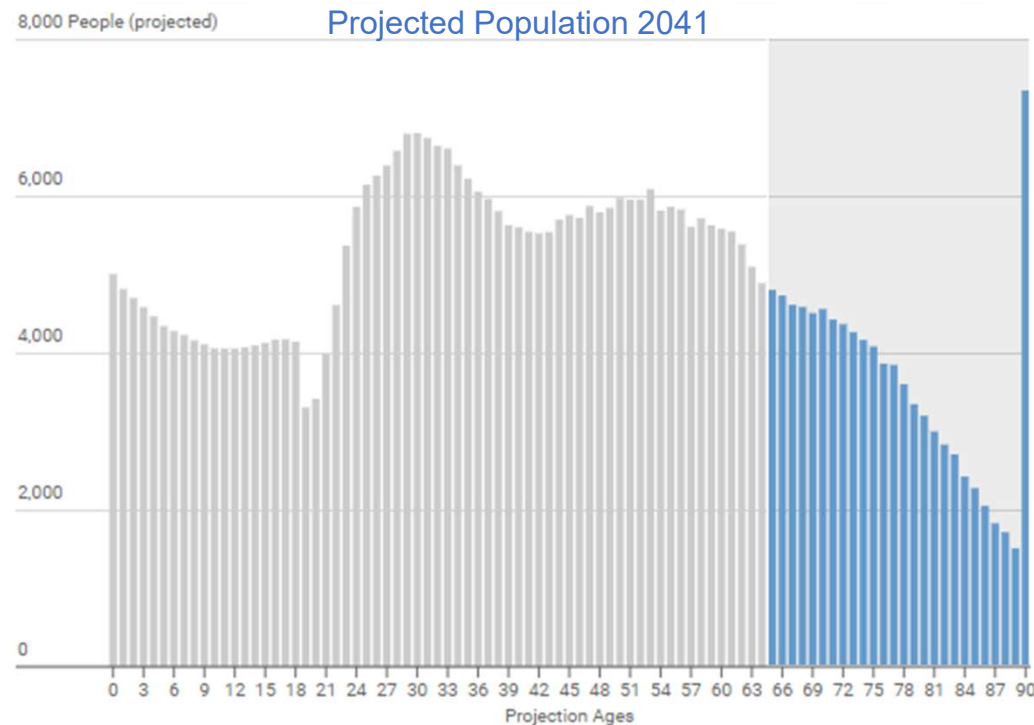
- An ageing population, although below the national average: **18.3%** increase in those aged 65+
- The number of people living alone is expected to increase.
- The number of older people with long-term limiting health conditions and dementia is expected to increase.

Older people

Projected Population 2022



Projected Population 2041



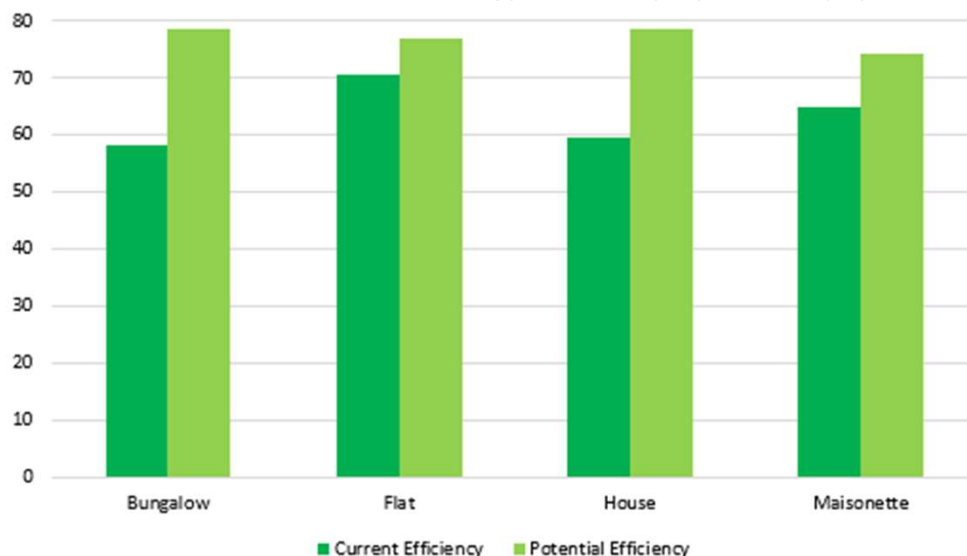
- Projections indicate an increase in people aged over 65 in Barnet by 2041.
- Population of those aged 0-17 projected to decrease by 11.6% by 2041.
- Population of those aged 18-64 projected to increase by 5.7% by 2041.
- Population of those aged 65+ projected to increase by 56% by 2041.

Stock Condition and Empty Homes



Stock condition

Current and potential energy efficiency by property type



- Across all postcode areas, domestic properties have an average of **9.4** improvement points to reach potential energy efficiency levels (down from 11 in 2018).
- On average, flats in Barnet have the highest current levels of energy efficiency (average score 70), while bungalows (58) and houses (60) are the lowest.

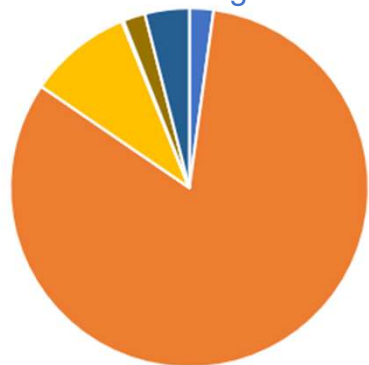
Domestic property energy efficiency rating

Ratings	Energy Rating (%) 2022	Energy Rating (%) 2018
A (92+)	0.2%	0.1%
B (81-91)	14.6%	12.3%
C (69-80)	30.5%	27.4%
D (55-68)	37.2%	36.5%
E (39-54)	14.7%	18.5%
F (21-38)	2.2%	4.4%
G (1-20)	0.4%	0.9%

- Most domestic properties in Barnet have a current energy performance certificate rating of either C or D.
- Since 2018, the proportion of domestic properties with an EPC of B, C, or D has increased, and of A, E, F, and G has decreased.

Central heating and renewable energy

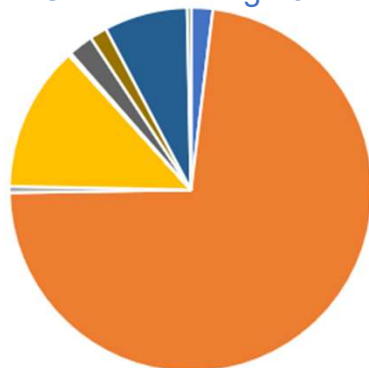
Central heating 2011



- No central heating
- Mains gas only
- Tank or bottled gas only
- Electric only
- Oil only
- Wood only
- Solid fuel only
- Renewable energy only
- District or communal heat networks only
- Other central heating only

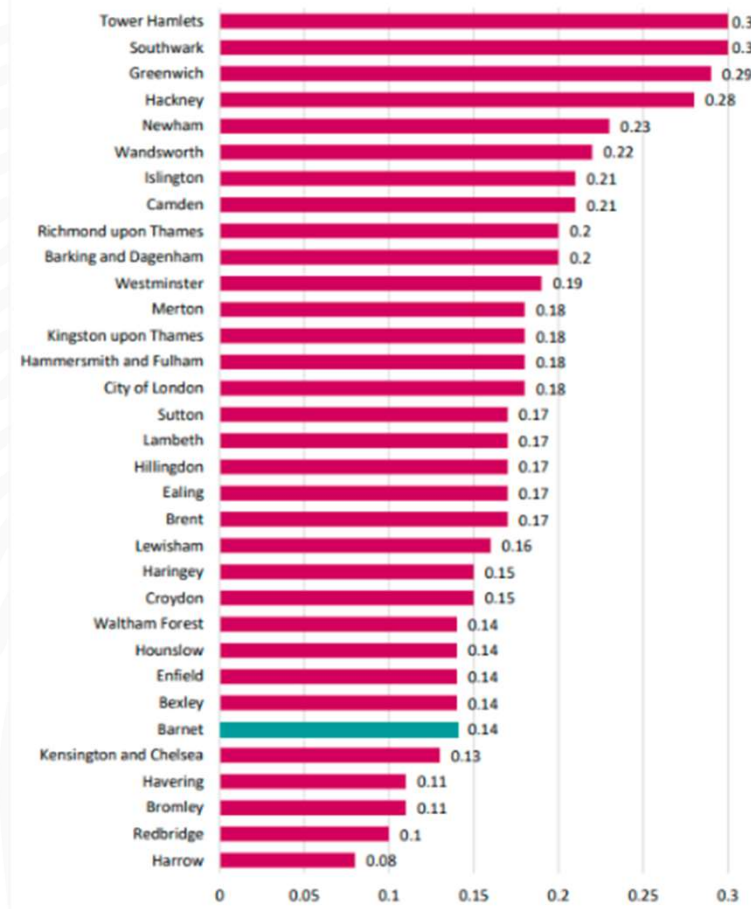
- Most households rely on gas central heating (**72.8%**), although this had reduced by 9% compared to 2011.
- The 2021 Census captured more information about central heating types – including separating mains and tank/bottled gas, separating wood and solid fuel, and adding district/communal heating and renewable energy only. **0.1%** of Barnet households had renewable energy central heating only in 2021.
- There was a slight reduction in households without central heating, from 2.2% to **1.9%** (2,886 households in total in 2021)

Central heating 2021



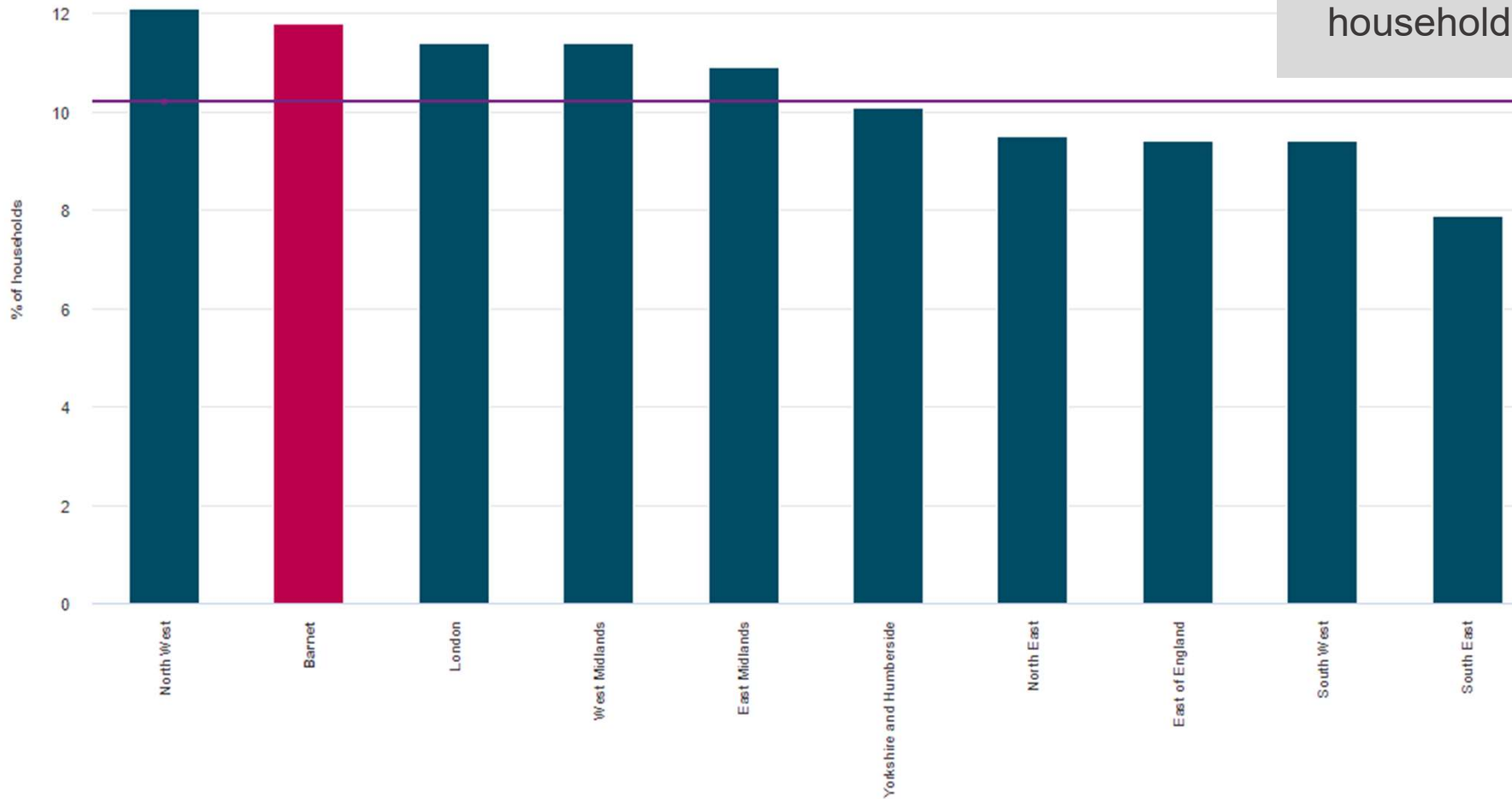
- Barnet ranked **24th** out of 33 London boroughs for the percentage of households that used renewable energy for central heating in 2021.
- Barnet had the **18th** highest percentage (0.34%) of households with two or more types of central heating including renewable energy.

% of households with renewable energy for central heating



Fuel poverty

Percentage of households in fuel poverty (LIHC) (2018) – Barnet and English regions



• In 2018 **11.8%** of Barnet households were fuel poor.

Housing Supply and Demand



Delivery of new homes (affordable housing)

- **2,086** new homes delivered on regeneration schemes between 2018 and 2020
- **2,133** new homes to be delivered on regeneration sites, of which **244** will be for social rent or London Affordable Rent, **546** will be for affordable rent, and **768** will be affordable homes for purchase
- Barnet Homes is also developing a programme of new homes on behalf of the council.

Regeneration sites (affordable housing)	2023	2024	2025	2026	2027	2028	2029	2030	2031	Total
Dollis Valley	4	89	7							100
Granville Road		46								46
West Hendon	78	72	34	96						280
Grahame Park		209			403	225	72		366	1,257
Total	82	416	105	160	505	225	72		566	1,701

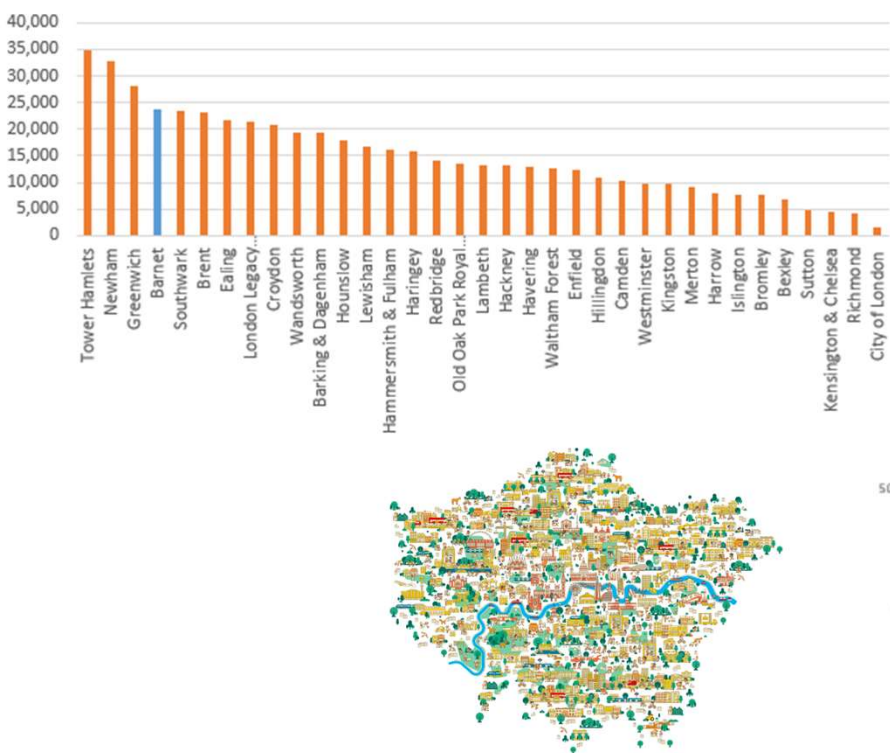
Barnet Homes	2023	2024	2025	2026	Type
Stag House	51				Extra Care
Cheshire House		75			Extra Care
Upper Lower Fosters			142		Shared ownership
Broadfields			28		London Affordable Rent (LAR)
The Grange			16		LAR
Little Strand		35			LAR
Coppetts		15			LAR
Moxon Street and Whitings			56		Shared ownership and Affordable Rent
Potential future programmes				50	Affordable Rent
Total	51	125	242	50	

Delivery of new homes (all regeneration properties)

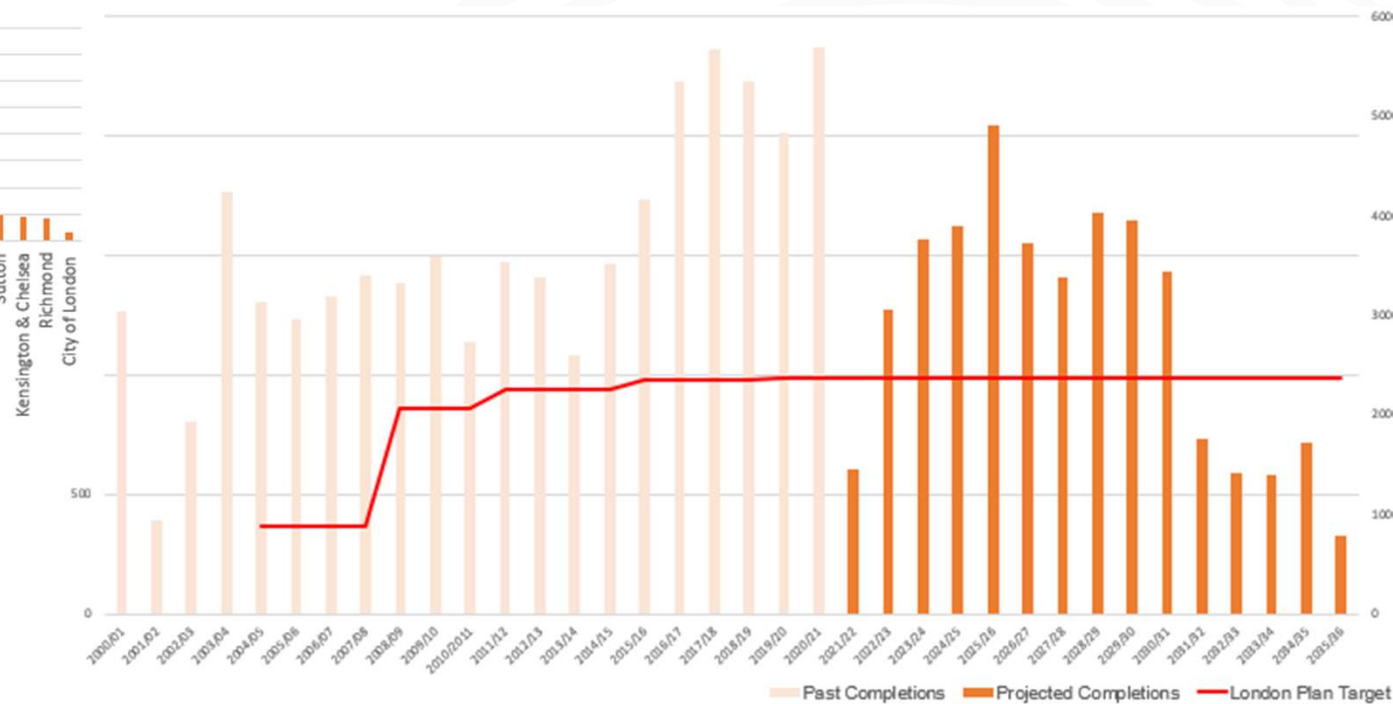
Regeneration sites (all tenure)	2023	2024	2025	2026	2027	2028	2029	2030	2031	Total
Dollis Valley	4	89	71	64						228
Housing type: Market			64	64						128
Housing type: S/O			7							7
Housing type: A/R	4	89								93
Granville Road		132								132
Housing type: Market		86								86
Housing type: S/O		46								46
West Hendon	324	161	115	116						716
Housing type: Market	246	89	81	20						436
Housing type: SO/SE	78	72	34	96						280
Grahame Park		209			150	354	72	106	166	1,057
Housing type: Social/LAR		149							88	237
Housing type: A/R					253				200	453
Housing type: S/O		60				225	72		78	435
Housing type: Market					402	129		106	200	837
Total	328	591	186	180	150	354	72	106	166	2,133

Context – targets for delivery of new homes in London

The London Plan's ten-year targets for housing completions in each London planning authority (2019/20 to 2028/29)



Barnet's London Plan housing trajectory



Barnet's housing trajectory shows that the borough will exceed the target in the London Plan.

Housing Strategy 2023-28 Consultation Report

June 2023

1. Aim of the consultation

- 1.1 Barnet Council is introducing a new Housing Strategy to improve housing and homelessness within Barnet with the aim of ensuring that everyone has a safe, secure, affordable home where they can thrive. The Strategy sets out the strategic direction for housing activity in the borough, taking into account the priorities of the administration and the challenges and opportunities within the operating environment.
- 1.2 The themes of the Housing Strategy are:
- Prevent homelessness and support rough sleepers off the streets. *[Note: to be articulated through the Homelessness and Rough Sleeping Strategy]*
 - Deliver the right homes in the right places.
 - Ensure safe, sustainable council housing.
 - Raise quality and standards in the private rented sector.
 - Support living well by promoting healthy homes and wellbeing.
- 1.3 As part of the development of the strategy, a consultation was held to seek residents' and stakeholders' feedback on the draft strategy. The Housing Strategy consultation ran for ten and a half weeks, from 5 April 2023 to 18 June 2023. It primarily consisted of an online survey on Engage Barnet. Supporting documents were also available on Engage Barnet, allowing interested parties to view the draft strategy.
- 1.4 A number of targeted focus groups were also held to give residents and partner agencies an opportunity to give feedback on the draft strategy.

2. Methodology

- 2.1 The questionnaire was available on the council's consultation webpage Engage Barnet, with paper copies available on request. The questionnaires asked respondents how much they agreed with the different priorities of the strategy. In total, 63 responses were received through Engage Barnet. There were free text boxes that allowed respondents to add in comments, including to note anything they thought was missing.
- 2.4 The consultation was well publicised through various mediums including:
- Email sent to all Private Registered Providers operating within the borough, encouraging them to review the proposals and respond to the consultation.
 - Email sent to key homelessness services partner agencies, encouraging them to review the proposals and respond to the consultation.
 - The council's social media channels, primarily on Twitter where the council has over 25,000 followers.
 - A paid Facebook and Instagram advertising campaign, which targeted people living in Barnet.
 - The Barnet Group's and its subsidiaries' social media channels, primarily on Twitter and Instagram where The Barnet Group has over 3,000 followers.
 - Prominent feature on the council's website and promoted in a press release following the review by the Housing and Growth Committee.

- Promoted in the council’s Barnet First magazine, which is sent to all residents in the borough.
- Promoted in the council’s Barnet Together CTN community news e-bulletin.
- Promoted in the Barnet Homes resident magazine atHome, which is distributed to over 13,000 homes.
- Promoted to involved residents by Barnet Homes.
- Promoted through a signature block in the emails of key frontline staff of the council and Barnet Homes as well as Labour councillors.
- Key council departments, managers, and staff from a range of stakeholder service areas were briefed on the proposed Housing Strategy and were given opportunity to provide feedback.

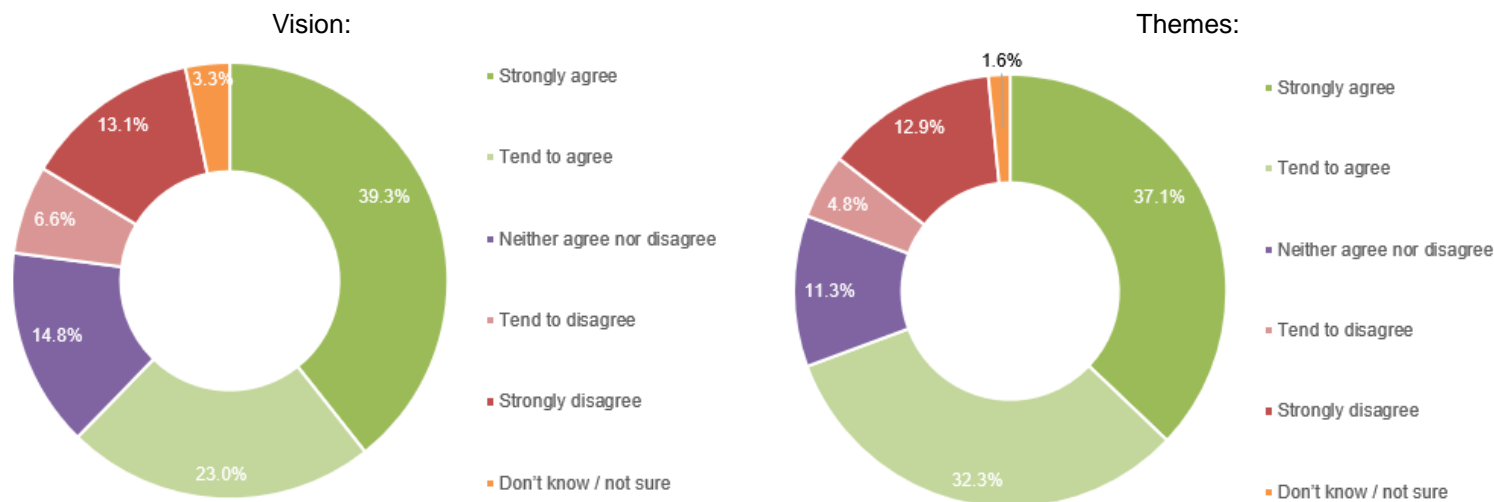
2.5 In total, there were 44 attendees at targeted focus groups; these included groups for council residents who have recently been housed, care leavers, adult social care clients, and key homelessness services partner agencies.

2.6 The Greater London Authority (GLA) was also invited to review the draft Housing Strategy and provide feedback.

3. Summary of key findings

3.1 The questionnaire asked respondents if they agreed with the vision stated in the strategy, with options of strongly agree, tend to agree, neither agree nor disagree, tend to disagree, strongly disagree, and don’t know. The majority (62.3%) agreed, whilst 19.7% disagreed. The questionnaire also asked respondents if they agreed with the themes stated in the strategy, with options of strongly agree, tend to agree, neither agree nor disagree, tend to disagree, strongly disagree, and don’t know. The majority (69.4%) agreed, whilst 17.7% disagreed.

3.2 Comments in support of the vision and themes highlighted a large number of concerns about a lack of affordable housing, as well as challenges in the private rented sector. Comments that highlighted gaps in or opposed the vision and themes raised concerns about overcrowding and overdevelopment, poor infrastructure or public services (including schools, GP surgeries, hospitals, street parking, road conditions, green spaces, policing), and anti-social behaviour. Many of the comments raised matters that do not fall under the scope of the Housing Strategy.



- 3.3 The questionnaire asked respondents if they believed the ambitions and areas of focus for each of the themes were clear, with options of very clear, quite clear, not that clear, not at all clear, and don't know. Across the five themes, the mean average agreement was 66.6%.
- 3.4 Respondents who stated that they felt the ambitions and areas of focus were not clear included isolated comments about a belief that the council will not be able to deliver its aims, concerns about infrastructure and public services (including green spaces, school places, overcrowding), concerns about the private rented sector, and concerns about the outgoing 2019-24 Housing Strategy. Many of the comments raised matters that do not fall under the scope of the Housing Strategy.
- 3.5 Respondents were also asked if they thought anything was missing from the five theme sections of the strategy. There were no clear trends, however comments received included concerns about a lack of affordable housing in the borough particularly in the private rented sector, concerns about regeneration, comments about what respondents felt was missing from other council strategies, comments about the Housing Allocation Scheme and how social housing is prioritised, and infrastructure, public services, and finance (including transport, overcrowding, policing, road conditions, schools, GPs, hospitals, green spaces, and energy prices, and mortgage rates). Many of the comments raised matters that do not fall under the scope of the Housing Strategy.
- 3.6 Overall, 69.1% of respondents felt the strategy is clear and easy to understand. 38.1% of respondents felt the draft strategy does not address the most important housing issues we face in Barnet over the next five years (33.3% said they feel it does), however the majority of comments regarding this raised matters that do not fall under the scope of the Housing Strategy, including public services and infrastructure, as well as matters that are addressed under other Barnet strategies.

3.10 All of the comments received have been reviewed and fed back into the strategy. Whilst many of the comments from respondents concerned matters that do not fall directly under the scope of the Housing Strategy, some of these areas of concern are covered under other existing or planned council strategies or policies, including the Local Plan, Sustainability Strategy, Growth Strategy, Health and Wellbeing Strategy, Highway Investment Strategy, Community Participation Strategy, and Parks and Open Spaces Strategy.

3.10 Changes made to the strategy include:

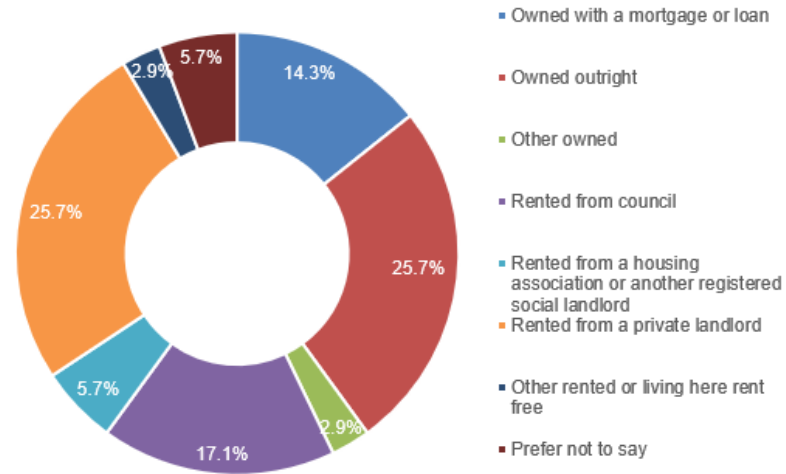
- Greater reference to the Growth Strategy and its role in shaping places and securing healthy, resilient, and cohesive communities.
- Greater reference to the diverse types of housing across all tenures that the borough aims to deliver through its Local Plan.
- A commitment to better understanding the needs of the Gypsy, Roma, and Irish Traveller community within Barnet.

Comments will also be considered in the development of the supporting implementation plan.

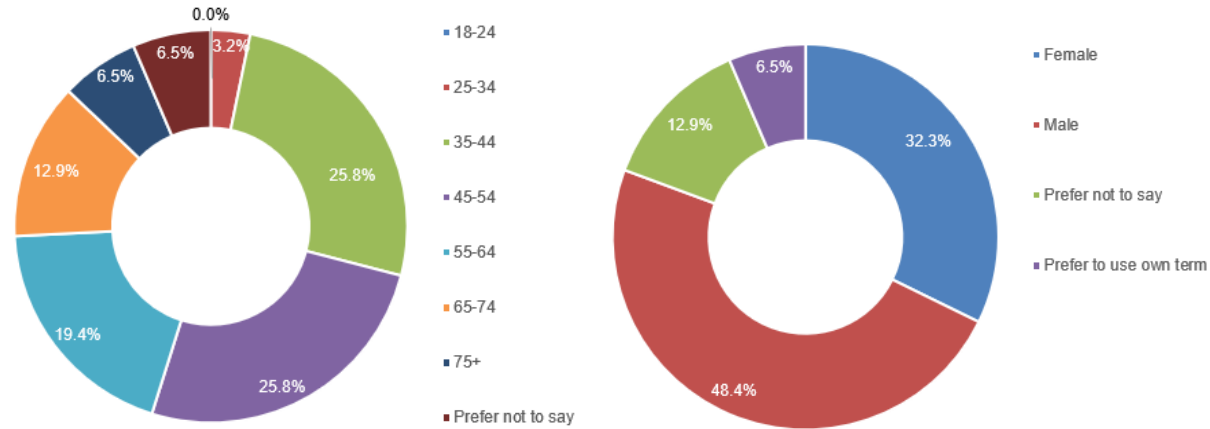
4. Consultation questionnaire demographic characteristics

4.1 Most of the 63 questionnaire respondents were residents of Barnet (76.6%), while others responded as representatives of a private registered provider (e.g., a housing association) (8.5%), representatives of a voluntary or community organisation (4.3%), representatives of a public sector organisation (4.3%), a Barnet business (2.1%), a person who works in the borough (2.1%), or a person who both lives and works in the borough (2.1%). 16 respondents chose to skip this question.

4.2 The housing tenure of respondents is shown below. A large proportion of respondents were home owners, with high representation also of those renting in the private sector and renting in the social housing sector. One respondent chose to skip this question.

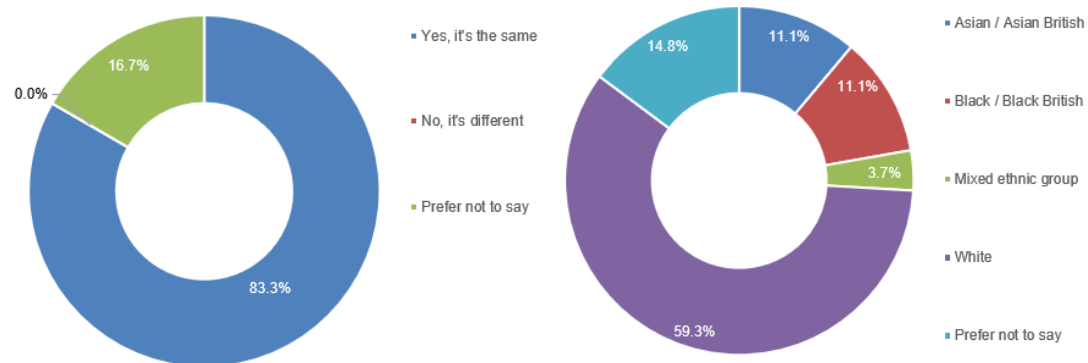


- 4.3 The council is required by law, under the Equality Act 2010, to monitor respondents against the protected characteristics. These questions were only asked of respondents who indicated they were residents of the borough (36 respondents in total).
- 4.4 There was a good range of ages within respondents, with no group higher than 25.8% (34-45 and 45-54 year olds). There were no recorded responses from 18-24 year olds, however 6.5% of respondents chose not to provide their age, and this was also partially addressed by discussing matters within the strategy with a focus group of care leavers. 5 respondents chose to skip this question.



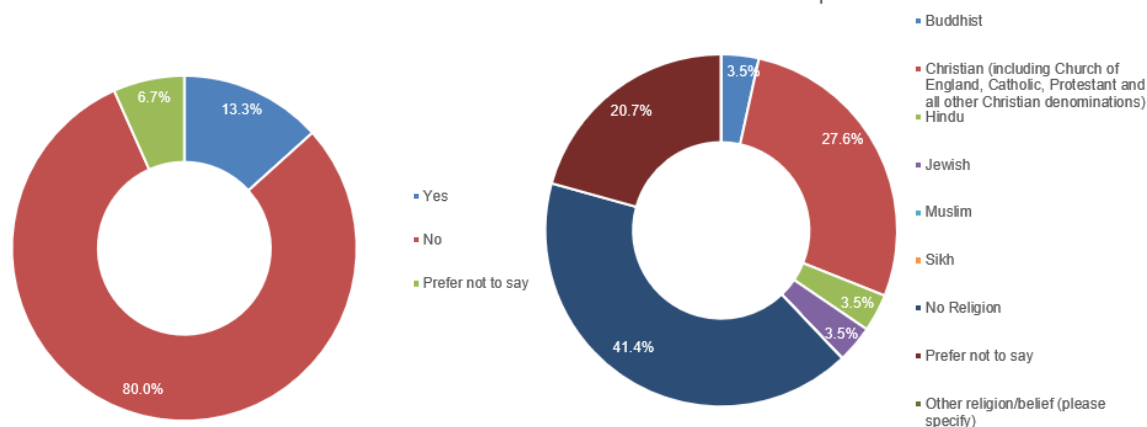
4.5 The results for sex / gender showed that most of the respondents were male, 32.3% were female, and 6.5% were non-binary, whilst 12.9% preferred not to say. 5 respondents chose to skip this question.

4.6 The majority of respondents, 83.3%, stated that their sex is the same sex they were assigned at birth, whilst 16.7% preferred not to say. 6 respondents chose to skip this question.



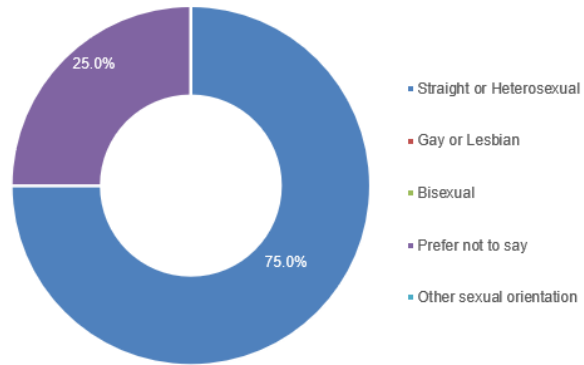
4.7 The largest race / ethnic group amongst respondents was White (59.3%), with 40.7% stating they were of a White British background. Other large groups included Asian - Indian (11.1%), Black – British (7.4%), and White Irish (7.4%). 9 respondents chose to skip this question.

4.8 The proportion of respondents who considered themselves to have a disability was 13.3%, broadly comparable to the 12.8% of Barnet residents who identified themselves as being disabled under the Equality Act in the 2021 Census. 6 respondents chose to skip this question. Of those who responded that they consider themselves to have a disability, 75% stated that they have a mental illness, 25% stated that they have a hearing impairment, and 25% stated that they have a mobility impairment.



4.9 Of those who stated their religion or belief, 41.4% stated they have no religion or belief, 27.6% stated they are Christian, and 3.5% stated they are each Buddhist, Hindu, or Jewish. 7 respondents chose to skip this question.

4.10 Of those who stated their sexual orientation, 75% stated they are heterosexual, and 25% preferred not to say. 8 respondents chose to skip this question.



5. Conclusion

5.1 The findings from the consultation overall show support for the proposed new Housing Strategy.

5.2 We thank all those who took the time to respond to the Housing Strategy consultation.

This page is intentionally left blank

Homelessness and Rough Sleeping Strategy 2023-28 Consultation Report

June 2023

1. Aim of the consultation

- 1.1 Barnet Council is introducing a new Homelessness and Rough Sleeping Strategy to set out the approach to preventing homelessness and supporting those who face or are at risk of becoming homeless, taking into account the challenges and opportunities within the operating environment.
- 1.2 The themes of the Homelessness and Rough Sleeping Strategy are influenced by the Government's 'Homelessness Code of Guidance' on publishing a homelessness strategy, and are:
 - Prevent homelessness
 - Ensure a sufficient supply of accommodation *[Note: to be delivered in part through the Housing Strategy]*
 - Provide support for people who are or have been homeless
- 1.3 As part of the development of the strategy, a consultation was held to seek residents' and stakeholders' feedback on the draft strategy. The Homelessness and Rough Sleeping Strategy consultation ran for ten and a half weeks, from 5 April 2023 to 18 June 2023. It primarily consisted of an online survey on Engage Barnet. Supporting documents were also available on Engage Barnet, allowing interested parties to view the draft strategy.
- 1.4 A number of targeted focus groups were also held to give residents and partner agencies an opportunity to give feedback on the draft strategy.

2. Methodology

- 2.1 The questionnaire was available on the council's consultation webpage Engage Barnet, with paper copies available on request. The questionnaires asked respondents how much they agreed with the different priorities of the strategy. In total, 16 responses were received through Engage Barnet. There were free text boxes that allowed respondents to add in comments, including to note anything they thought was missing.
- 2.4 The consultation was well publicised through various mediums including:
 - Email sent to all Private Registered Providers operating within the borough, encouraging them to review the proposals and respond to the consultation.
 - Email sent to key homelessness services partner agencies, encouraging them to review the proposals and respond to the consultation.
 - The council's social media channels, primarily on Twitter where the council has over 25,000 followers.
 - A paid Facebook and Instagram advertising campaign, which targeted people living in Barnet.
 - The Barnet Group's and its subsidiaries' social media channels, primarily on Twitter and Instagram where The Barnet Group has over 3,000 followers.
 - Prominent feature on the council's website and promoted in a press release following the review by the Housing and Growth Committee.
 - Promoted in the council's Barnet First magazine, which is sent to all residents in the borough.
 - Promoted in the council's Barnet Together CTN community news e-bulletin.
 - Promoted in the Barnet Homes resident magazine atHome, which is distributed to over 13,000 homes.

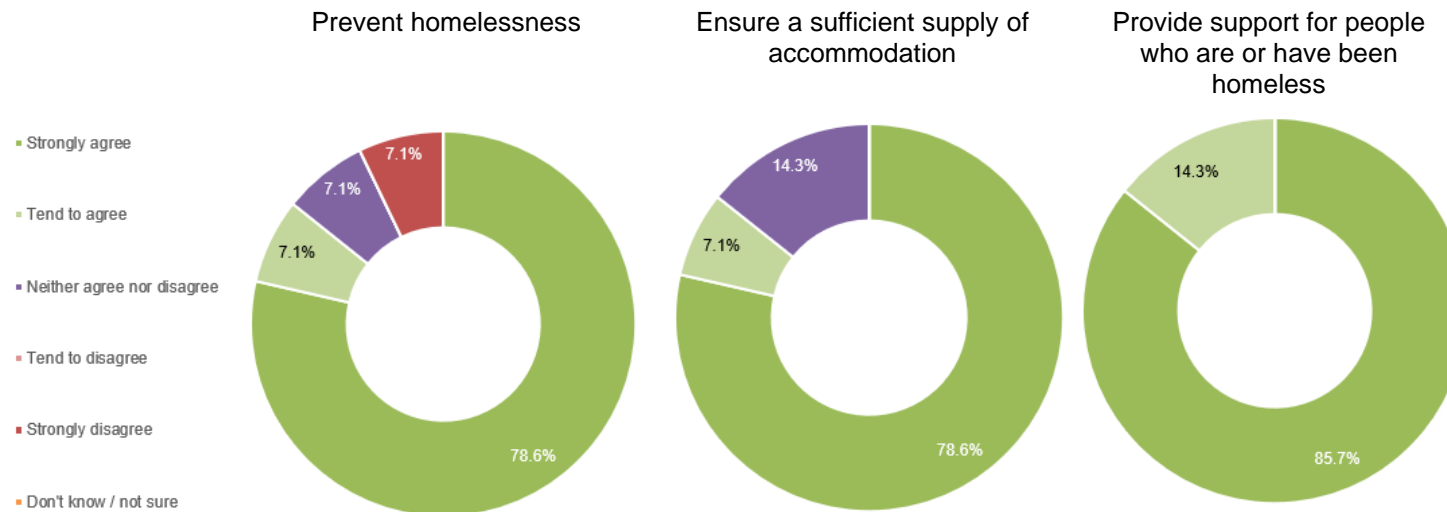
- Promoted to involved residents by Barnet Homes.
- Promoted through a signature block in the emails of key frontline staff of the council and Barnet Homes as well as Labour councillors.
- Key council departments, managers, and staff from a range of stakeholder service areas were briefed on the proposed Housing Strategy and were given opportunity to provide feedback.

2.5 In total, there were 44 attendees at targeted focus groups; these included groups for council residents who have recently been housed, care leavers, adult social care clients, and key homelessness services partner agencies.

2.6 The Greater London Authority (GLA) was also invited to review the draft Homelessness and Rough Sleeping Strategy and provide feedback.

3. Summary of key findings

3.1 The questionnaire asked respondents if they agreed with the themes stated in the strategy, with options of strongly agree, tend to agree, neither agree nor disagree, tend to disagree, strongly disagree, and don't know. The majority (mean of 90.5%) agreed, with 100% of respondents agreeing with the third theme. 7.1% disagreed with the theme on preventing homelessness. The comments received were very supportive of the proposed themes, and emphasised the need for ongoing support, adequate housing, and the council's social and moral duty to prevent homelessness. There was one negative comment about believing it is not acceptable to be asked for money by rough sleepers. The questionnaire also asked if respondents felt anything was missing from the three sections; there were comments received about training on mental health issues for Housing Options staff, delivering affordable homes, and support for tenants in the private rented sector.



- 3.2 72.7% of respondents felt the strategy was clear and easy to understand; 27.3% answered “don’t know” to this question, however there were no comments received about how it could be improved.
- 3.3 Overall, 54.6% of respondents felt the strategy addresses the most important housing issues we face in Barnet over the next five years (45.5% said they did not know), however there were no comments received about how it could be improved. A question was also included to seek any other comments from respondents. These included a suggestion to create a specialist physical health team, to ensure implementation, and increase affordable housing within private developments, and a comment about the impact of local area connection policies on transient residents.
- 3.4 The focus groups provided opportunity for discussion about the Homelessness and Rough Sleeping Strategy and the other key housing-related strategies and policies that Barnet Council is currently reviewing. These enabled quality discussions about residents’ aspirations and areas of concern, in addition to being an opportunity to explain the documents in more detail. The focus groups indicated good support for the aims of the Homelessness and Rough Sleeping Strategy. Attendees stated concerns about the following matters that are pertinent to the Homelessness and Rough Sleeping Strategy:
- Homelessness prevention, particularly the challenge of providing mental health support.
 - Ongoing support for those placed in temporary accommodation.
 - The need for intervention at an early stage.
 - The need for 1:1 support and advice.
 - Suggestion about the use of council buildings for temporary accommodation.
 - The need for more supported accommodation.
 - How people with no recourse to public funds can be accommodated.
- 3.4 Discussions were also held with key council services that are affected by the Homelessness and Rough Sleeping Strategy.
- 3.10 All of the comments received have been reviewed and fed back into the strategy. Comments will also be considered in the development of the supporting implementation plan.

4. Consultation questionnaire demographic characteristics

- 4.1 Most of the 16 questionnaire respondents were residents of Barnet (53.9%), while others responded as representatives of a private registered provider (e.g., a housing association) (15.4%), a person who works in the borough (15.4%), or representatives of a voluntary or community organisation (7.7%). 3 respondents chose to skip this question.
- 4.2 28.6% of respondents owned their home outright, 28.6% rented from the council, 28.6% rented from a registered social landlord, and 14.3% rented privately.
- 4.3 The council is required by law, under the Equality Act 2010, to monitor respondents against the protected characteristics. These questions were only asked of respondents who indicated they were residents of the borough (7 respondents in total). Due to the low number of questionnaire respondents,

a summary is provided in this report; however, the results are not considered to be statistically relevant. The diversity of respondents was improved through the targeted focus groups, which included people from a range of backgrounds and ages. Groups that the council typically finds hard to reach, including those experiencing homelessness and rough sleeping, were considered through the focus group with key partner agencies who were asked to consider the needs of their clients in their engagement with the council.

- Most respondents were aged 25-34, 35-44, and 65-74 (28.6% each).
- 50% were female and 50% were male.
- 100% of respondents said that their sex was the same as the sex they were assigned at birth.
- 60% of respondents were White British, 20% were of a mixed White and Asian background, and 20% preferred not to give their ethnicity.
- 33.3% of respondents said they considered themselves to have a disability.
- 40% of respondents were Christian, 20% had no religion or belief, and 40% preferred not to give their religion or belief.
- 60% of respondents were heterosexual, 20% were gay or lesbian, and 20% preferred not to give their sexual orientation.

5. Conclusion

- 5.1 The findings from the consultation overall show strong support for the proposed new Homelessness and Rough Sleeping Strategy.
- 5.2 We thank all those who took the time to respond to the Homelessness and Rough Sleeping Strategy consultation.

Tenancy Strategy Consultation Report

June 2023

1. Aim of the consultation

- 1.1 Barnet Council is revising its Tenancy Strategy in line with the statutory requirement to keep it under review and to take into account the priorities of the administration and set out the matters to which the registered providers of social housing for its district, including the council itself, are to regard in formulating policies relating to:
- the types of tenancies they will grant;
 - the circumstances under which different types of tenancies will be granted;
 - where they elect to grant fixed-term tenancies, the length of the fixed term; and
 - the circumstances in which they will grant a further tenancy when the fixed term expires.
- 1.2 The main change introduced in the revised strategy is a move to the council issuing secure periodic (“lifetime”) tenancies for all new council tenants, instead of 2- and 5-year flexible tenancies.
- 1.3 As part of this process, a consultation was held to seek residents’ and other stakeholders’ feedback on the draft strategy.
- 1.4 The Tenancy Strategy consultation ran for eight weeks, from 5 April 2023 to 31 May 2023. It primarily consisted of an online survey on Engage Barnet. Supporting documents were also available on Engage Barnet, allowing interested parties to view the draft strategy on there.

2. Methodology

- 2.1 The questionnaire was available on the council’s consultation webpage Engage Barnet, with paper copies available on request. The questionnaires asked respondents how much they agreed with the individual proposed changes to the strategy. There were also free text boxes which allowed respondents to add in comments if they disagreed with any of the proposed changes. Private Registered Providers also were offered a free text box to add in comments about why they believed or did not believe the strategic context included in the strategy was comprehensive.
- 2.2 In total, 177 responses were received through Engage Barnet.
- 2.3 The consultation was well publicised through various mediums including:
- Letter / email sent to all council tenants with a flexible tenancy or introductory tenancy that will become a flexible tenancy, encouraging them to review the proposals and respond to the consultation.
 - Email sent to all Private Registered Providers operating within the borough, encouraging them to review the proposals and respond to the consultation.
 - The council’s social media channels, primarily on Twitter where the council has over 25,000 followers.
 - The Barnet Group’s and its subsidiaries’ social media channels, primarily on Twitter and Instagram where The Barnet Group has over 3,000 followers.

- Prominent feature on the council's website and promoted in a press release following the review by the Housing and Growth Committee.
- Promoted in the council's Barnet First magazine, which is sent to all residents in the borough.
- Promoted in the council's Barnet Together CTN community news e-bulletin.
- Promoted in the Barnet Homes resident magazine atHome, which is distributed to over 13,000 homes.
- Promoted through a signature block in the emails of key frontline staff of the council and Barnet Homes.
- Promoted at several consultation focus groups that were held during the same period for the new Housing Strategy and Homelessness and Rough Sleeping Strategy.
- Key council departments, managers, and staff from a range of stakeholder service areas were briefed on the proposed changes to the Tenancy Strategy and were given opportunity to provide feedback.

3. Summary of key findings

3.1 The full results can be seen in section 5.

3.2 The response rate for the entire consultation period was **177 respondents**, including 91 flexible tenants, 13 secure tenants, 39 other Barnet residents, 5 registered providers and 29 non-residents. There is **very good overall agreement** with the new Tenancy Strategy: on average, 90% of respondents agreed with the 10 questions in the survey.

- The questions with the **lowest level of agreement** were question 2 on continued use of introductory tenancies, question 3 on continuing to grant lifetime tenancies to tenants transferring from another landlord, and question 8 converting existing flexible tenancies to secure tenancies. Nonetheless, agreement was still very high at 88.2%, 89.2%, and 89% respectively.
- The questions with the **highest level of agreement** were questions on the council's decision to discontinue granting flexible tenancies (92.6%), the key aims of the strategy (92.5%), and the council's intention to allow current flexible tenancies that are within 9 months of their review date to change to a secure period tenancy (92.4%).
- The questions which prompted the **most uncertainty** were question 8 on converting introductory tenancies to secure tenancies rather than flexible tenancies and question 9 on sustainment measures.

3.3 **Barnet residents** represented the main group of respondents (143) to the survey and responded very favourably to the new strategy with those agreeing or strongly agreeing representing 88% and above.

- **Flexible tenants** welcomed this initiative and mentioned that it will bring them 'peace of mind', 'security' and give them the 'chance to settle'. There were 91 respondents. They strongly agreed with all questions, except where the strategy indicates that tenants already on lifetime tenancies will be granted a lifetime tenancy provided there have been no breaches of their previous tenancy.
- **Secure tenants** on the other hand showed slightly more disapproval with the new strategy. However, the sample was smaller, with only 13 respondents. Where they disagreed with a question it represented less than 10% of the sample, except for the council's continued intention to grant introductory tenancies to new tenants where 15% disagreed. Secure tenants agree with converting flexible tenancy to secure tenancies, but only after a trial period, suggesting that they did not fully understand the question (6 months to a year, depending on the suggestion). Some also want Barnet council to make sure all tenants are aware of their responsibilities as council tenants to ensure the best living conditions for everyone.

- 3.4 A small group of **registered providers in Barnet** answered the survey (5 respondents). 60% either agreed or strongly agreed with the new tenancy strategy. 40% disagreed with the council's intentions to continue granting introductory tenancies to tenants who have never held a social tenancy, 40% also disagreed with the strategic context of the strategy. Further detail on this is included in section 4. The sample is small and not necessarily indicative of all registered providers.
- 3.5 In terms of **sub-group analysis by certain demographics**, the only relevant change in responses is for respondents from different age groups. In general, older respondents (aged 55 to 74) showed more disagreement with key questions than young ones (aged 18 to 34).

4. Free text responses

- 4.1 Respondents were given the opportunity to provide comments about why they disagreed with any of the proposed changes. This produced a range of responses, with a number of key words and phrases emerging repeatedly. These are summarised in the word cloud below.
- 4.2 Examples of comments included:
- I'm very glad that the council is introducing this new tenancy strategy, I strongly agree and support this strategy.
 - I feel that this strategy is good for council tenants' security and peace of mind. Strongly agree.
 - Fantastic very pleased and pray this comes into effect.
 - Speed up is the best strategy rather than waiting for review 2 or 5 years.
 - Flexible tenants should have right to secure tenancy especially if they pay their rent and maintain the house. After 12 months all tenancies should become secure lifetime tenancies, and this will ensure the tenants are not worried about becoming homeless after 5 years.



- 4.3 Private Registered Providers (PRPs) were also given the opportunity to provide comments about why they agreed or disagreed that the strategic context included in the strategy was comprehensive. There were two main points raised regarding information PRPs believed was missing:

- *“The strategic context might also mention the recently closed consultation from DLUHC on directions to the Social Housing Regulator on mutual exchange and tenant involvement. This could have implications for the Regulator’s Tenancy Standard affecting local authorities and registered providers.”*
 - Response: The Department for Levelling Up, Housing, and Communities’ consultation on revised directions to the regulator regarding mutual exchange and tenant involvement took place following the initial drafting of the Tenancy Strategy; however, the subjects of mutual exchange and tenant involvement do not fall under the scope of the Tenancy Strategy, and therefore will not be incorporated into the final version.
- *“The strategic context might also mention any implications of the Renters’ Reform Bill, which has just been introduced to Parliament.”*
 - Response: The Renters Reform Bill was introduced to Parliament on 17 May 2023, after the initial drafting of the Tenancy Strategy; however, the Bill is relevant to the private rented sector and its proposals do not fall under the scope of the Tenancy Strategy. It will therefore not be incorporated into the final version.

5. Consultation results summary and demographic characteristics

The results are presented as dashboards; an overall one with the combined results and then dashboards for flexible tenants, secure tenants, registered providers and others. Demographic characteristics included are living situation (tenure type), age, disability, gender, sex, sexuality, religion, and ethnicity.

Tenancy strategy consultation

Main Dashboard

Consultation period:
From 06/04/2023 to
01/06/2023



Total respondents:

177

Barnet residents:

143

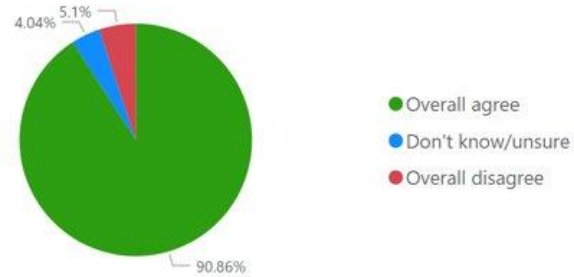
Flexible tenants:

91

Registered providers:

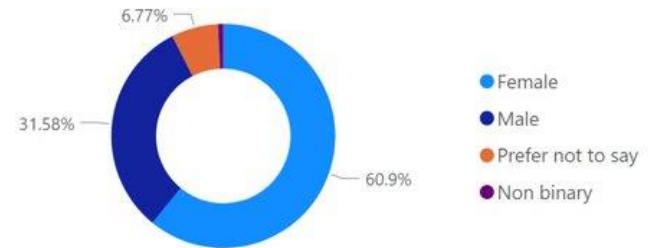
5

Overall agreement with the new tenancy strategy:

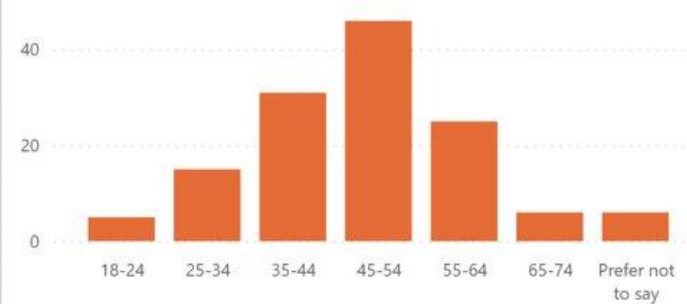


Questions	Overall agree	Don't know/unsure	Overall disagree
Q1	92.49%	4.05%	3.47%
Q2	88.17%	5.33%	6.51%
Q3	89.16%	4.22%	6.63%
Q4	95.12%	0.61%	4.27%
Q5	92.55%	1.86%	5.59%
Q6	92.41%	1.27%	6.33%
Q7	89.03%	5.81%	5.16%
Q8	88.96%	6.49%	4.55%
Q9	90.26%	6.49%	3.25%
Q10	90.26%	4.55%	5.19%

Respondents' gender:



Respondents' age:



Answers from all respondents to the survey (1)

Number of respondents:

177

Responding as:

A Barnet resident (143)

PRP in Barnet (5)

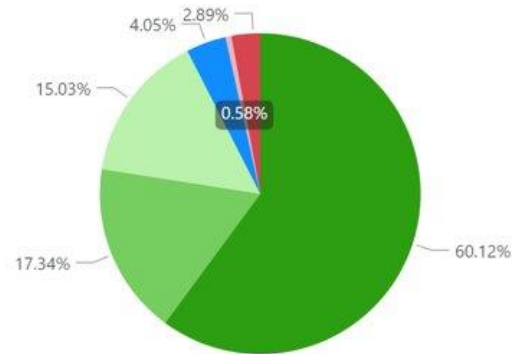
Other (2)

Councillor (1)

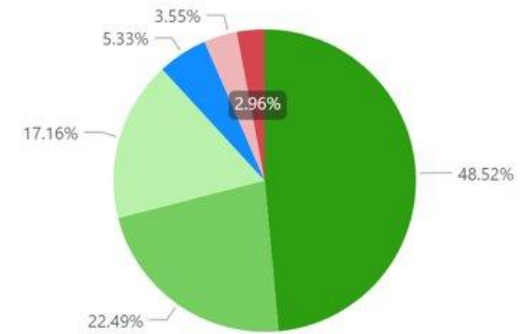
Working in Barnet (1)

- Strongly agree
- Agree
- Tend to agree
- Don't know / not sure
- Tend to disagree
- Strongly disagree

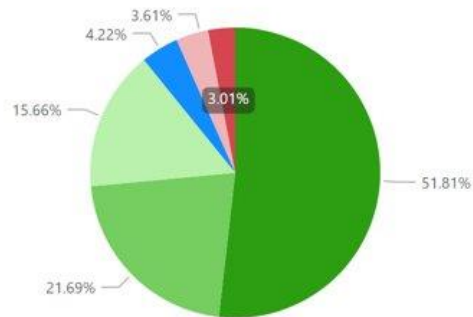
Q1. Agreement with the key aims in this strategy:



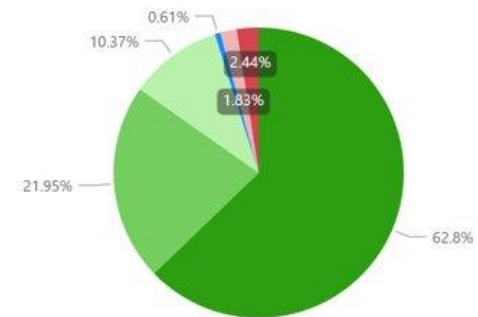
Q2. Agreement with the council's intention to continue to issue introductory tenancies to new tenants:



Q3. Agreement with the council's intention to continue to issue periodic tenancies to tenants transferring from another social landlord:



Q4. Agreement with the council's intention to continue to issue secure periodic tenancies to tenants transferring from another social landlord:



Answers from all respondents to the survey (2)

Number of respondents:

177

Responding as:

A Barnet resident (143)

PRP in Barnet (5)

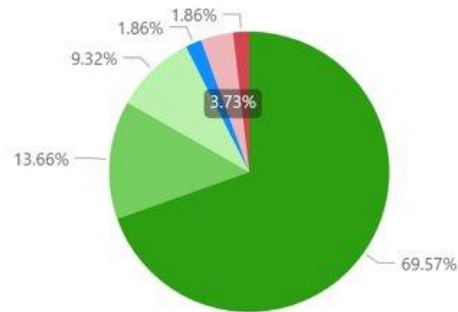
Other (2)

Councillor (1)

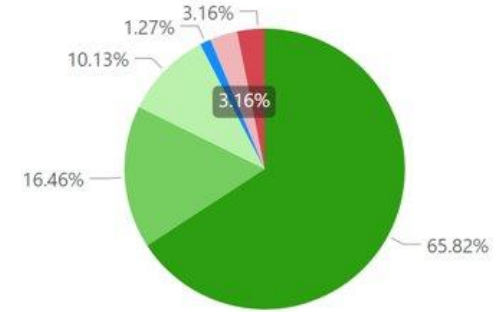
Working in Barnet (1)

- Strongly agree
- Agree
- Tend to agree
- Don't know / not sure
- Tend to disagree
- Strongly disagree

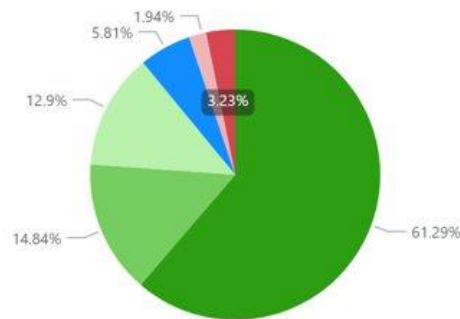
Q5. Agreement with the council's intention to cease to issue flexible tenancies to new tenants, and instead to issue secure periodic (lifetime) tenancies:



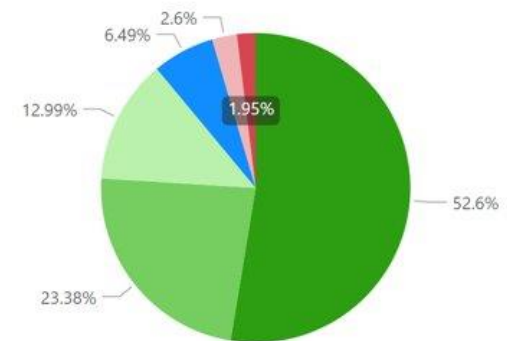
Q6. Agreement with the council's intention to allow current flexible tenancies that are within 9 months of their review to change to a secure periodic tenancy without review:



Q7. Agreement with the council's intention to serve a Notice of Variation for flexible tenancies within longer than 9 months until their review date:



Q8. Agreement with the council's intention to serve a Notice of Variation for introductory to flexible tenancies:



Answers from all respondents to the survey (3)

Number of respondents:

177

Responding as:

A Barnet resident (143)

PRP in Barnet (5)

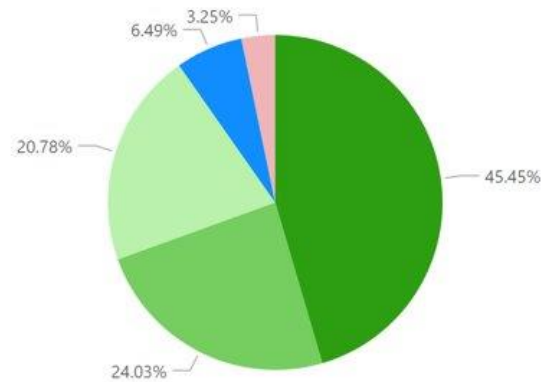
Other (2)

Councillor (1)

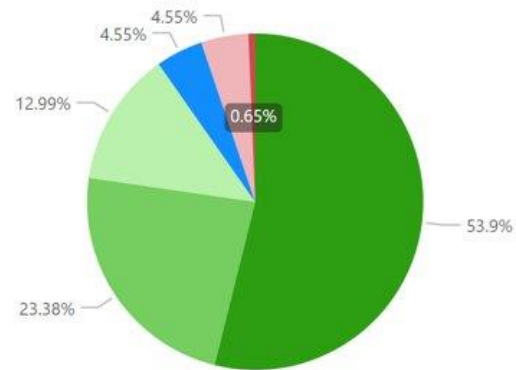
Working in Barnet (1)

- Strongly agree
- Agree
- Tend to agree
- Don't know / not sure
- Tend to disagree
- Strongly disagree

Q9. Agreement with the council's proposed expectations for tenancy sustainment measures:



Q10. Agreement with the council's proposed expectations regarding rent in advance:



Answers from Barnet residents (1)

Number of respondents:

143

Respondents renting
from the council:

Flexible tenants (91)

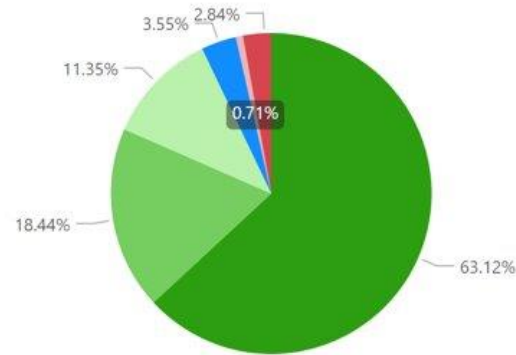
A secure periodic tenancy
(13)

Introductory tenancy to
become flexible (10)

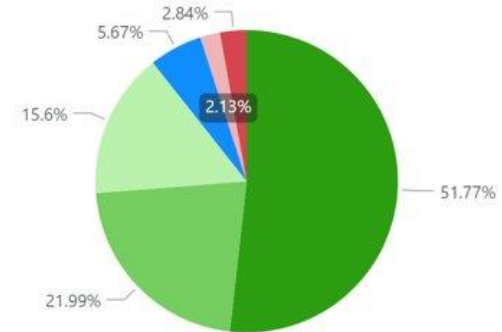
Introductory tenancy to
become secure (2)

- Strongly agree
- Agree
- Tend to agree
- Don't know / not sure
- Tend to disagree
- Strongly disagree

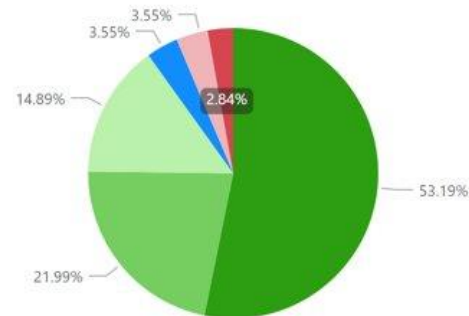
Q1. Agreement with the key aims in this strategy:



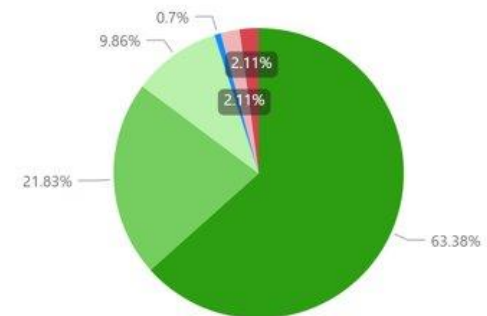
Q2. Agreement with the council's intention to continue to issue introductory tenancies to new tenants:



Q3. Agreement with the council's intention to continue to issue periodic tenancies to tenants transferring from another social landlord:



Q4. Agreement with the council's intention to continue to issue secure periodic tenancies to tenants transferring from another social landlord:



Answers from Barnet residents (2)

Number of respondents:

143

Respondents renting
from the council:

Flexible tenants (91)

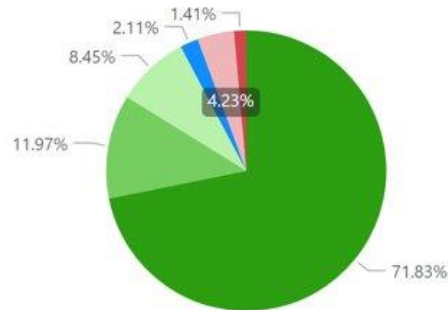
A secure periodic tenancy
(13)

Introductory tenancy to
become flexible (10)

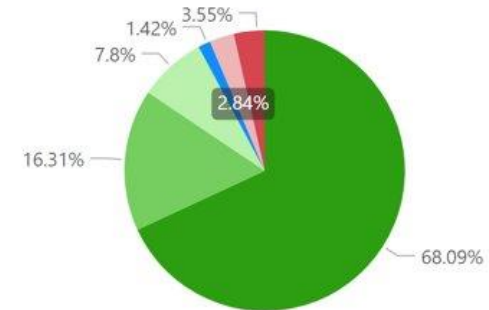
Introductory tenancy to
become secure (2)

- Strongly agree
- Agree
- Tend to agree
- Don't know / not sure
- Tend to disagree
- Strongly disagree

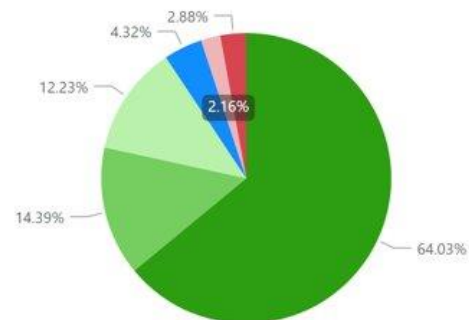
Q5. Agreement with the council's intention to cease to issue flexible tenancies to new tenants, and instead to issue secure periodic (lifetime) tenancies:



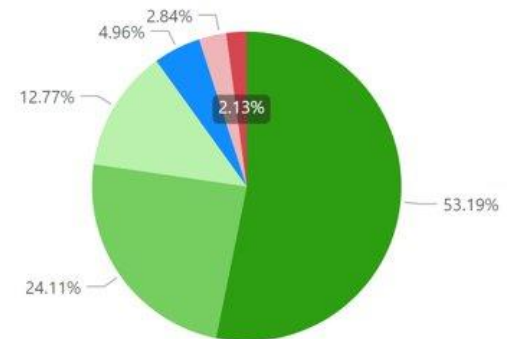
Q6. Agreement with the council's intention to allow current flexible tenancies that are within 9 months of their review to change to a secure periodic tenancy without review:



Q7. Agreement with the council's intention to serve a Notice of Variation for flexible tenancies within longer than 9 months until their review date:



Q8. Agreement with the council's intention to serve a Notice of Variation for introductory to flexible tenancies:



Answers from Barnet residents (3)

Number of respondents:

143

Respondents renting
from the council:

Flexible tenants (91)

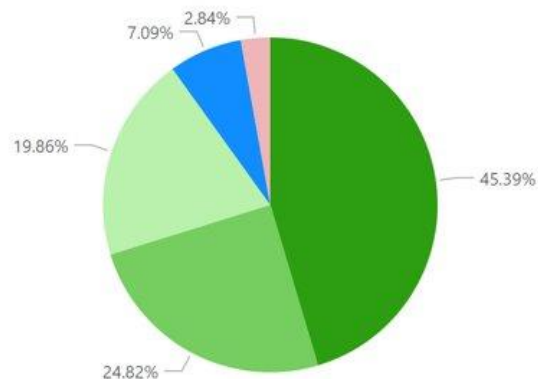
A secure periodic tenancy
(13)

Introductory tenancy to
become flexible (10)

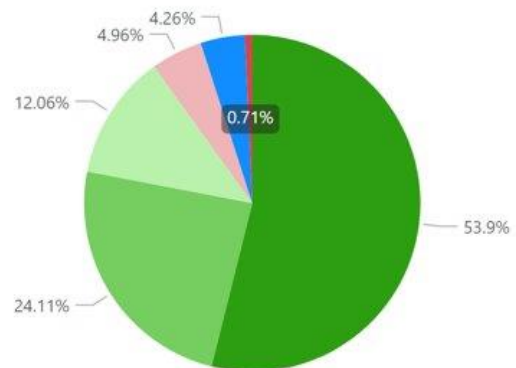
Introductory tenancy to
become secure (2)

- Strongly agree
- Agree
- Tend to agree
- Don't know / not sure
- Tend to disagree
- Strongly disagree

Q9. Agreement with the council's proposed expectations for tenancy sustainment measures:



Q10. Agreement with the council's proposed expectations regarding rent in advance:



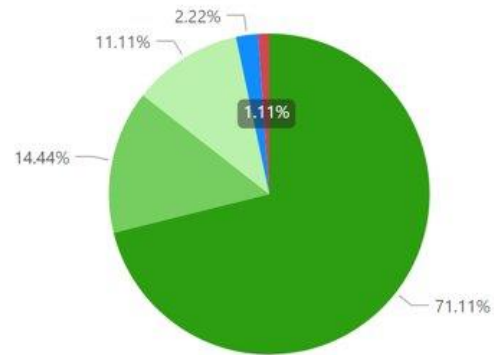
Answers from Flexible tenants in Barnet (1)

Number of respondents:

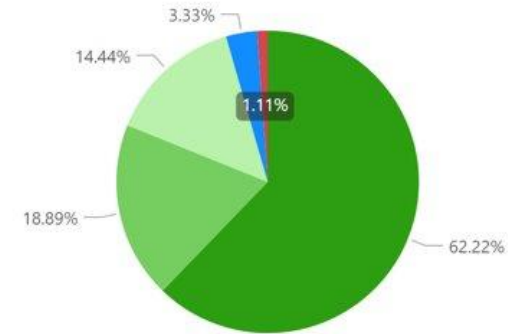
91

- Strongly agree
- Agree
- Tend to agree
- Don't know / not sure
- Tend to disagree
- Strongly disagree

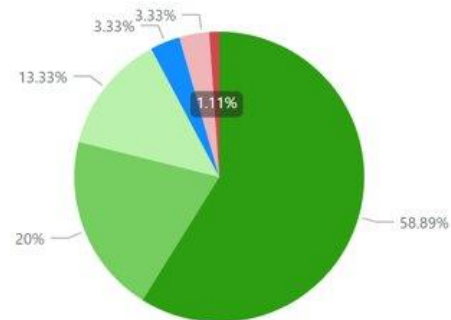
Q1. Agreement with the key aims in this strategy:



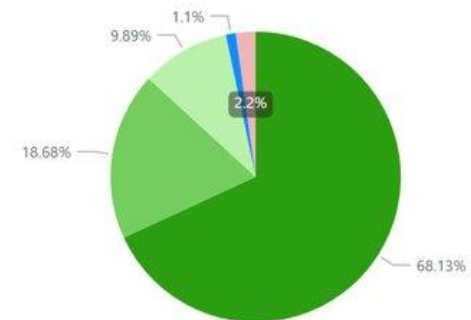
Q2. Agreement with the council's intention to continue to issue introductory tenancies to new tenants:



Q3. Agreement with the council's intention to continue to issue periodic tenancies to tenants transferring from another social landlord:



Q4. Agreement with the council's intention to continue to issue secure periodic tenancies to tenants transferring from another social landlord:



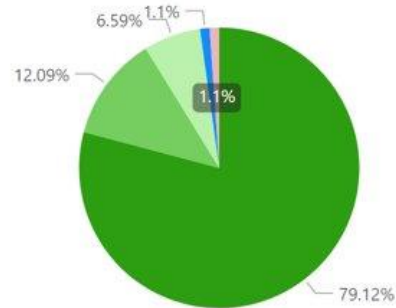
Answers from Flexible tenants in Barnet (2)

Number of respondents:

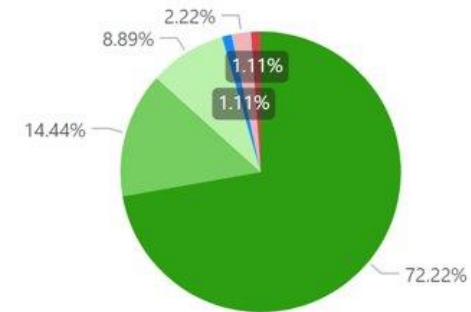
91

- Strongly agree
- Agree
- Tend to agree
- Don't know / not sure
- Tend to disagree
- Strongly disagree

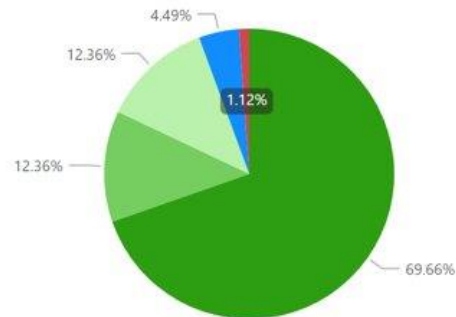
Q5. Agreement with the council's intention to cease to issue flexible tenancies to new tenants, and instead to issue secure periodic (lifetime) tenancies:



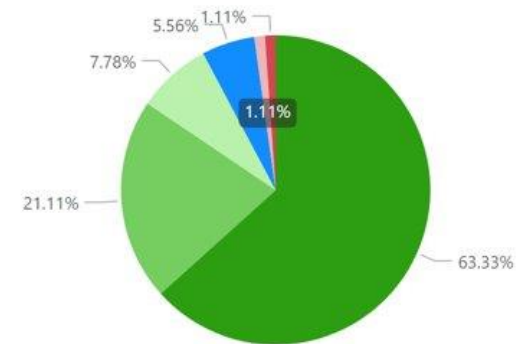
Q6. Agreement with the council's intention to allow current flexible tenancies that are within 9 months of their review to change to a secure periodic tenancy without review:



Q7. Agreement with the council's intention to serve a Notice of Variation for flexible tenancies within longer than 9 months until their review date:



Q8. Agreement with the council's intention to serve a Notice of Variation for introductory to flexible tenancies:



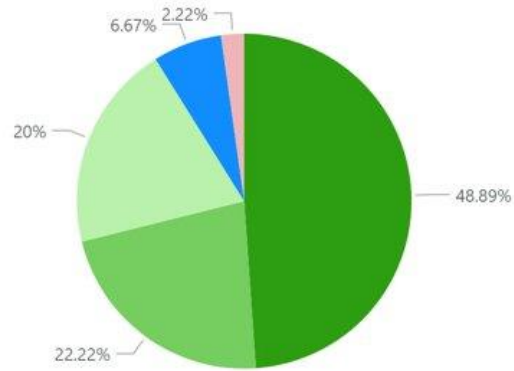
Answers from Flexible tenants in Barnet (3)

Number of respondents:

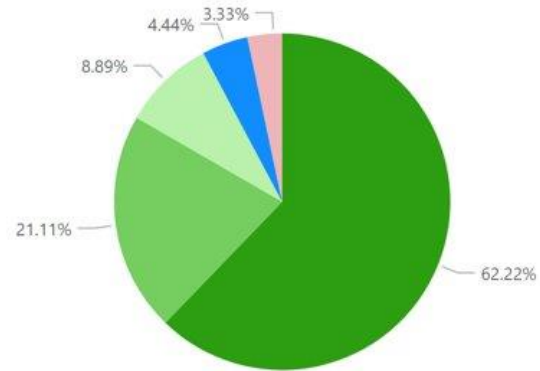
91

- Strongly agree
- Agree
- Tend to agree
- Don't know / not sure
- Tend to disagree
- Strongly disagree

Q9. Agreement with the council's proposed expectations for tenancy sustainment measures:



Q10. Agreement with the council's proposed expectations regarding rent in advance:



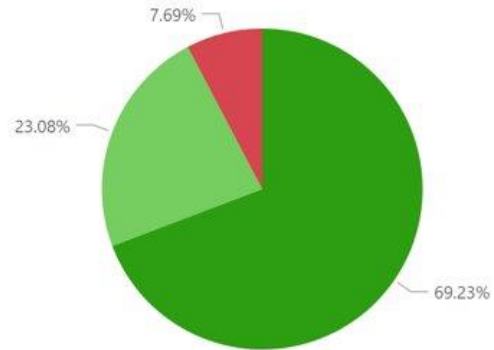
Answers from Secure tenants in Barnet (1)

Number of respondents:

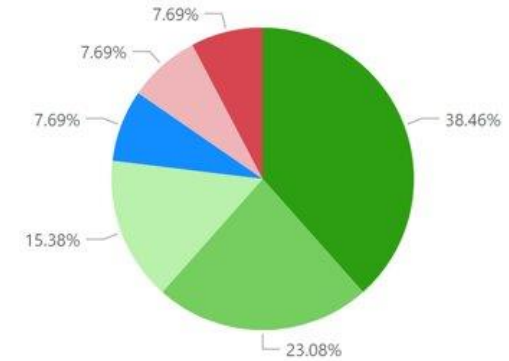
13

- Strongly agree
- Agree
- Tend to agree
- Don't know / not sure
- Tend to disagree
- Strongly disagree

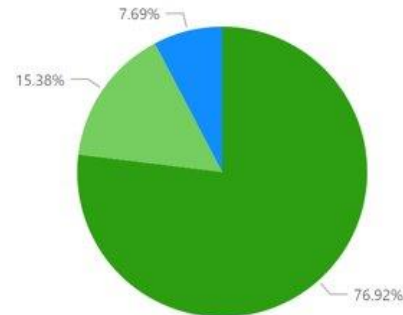
Q1. Agreement with the key aims in this strategy:



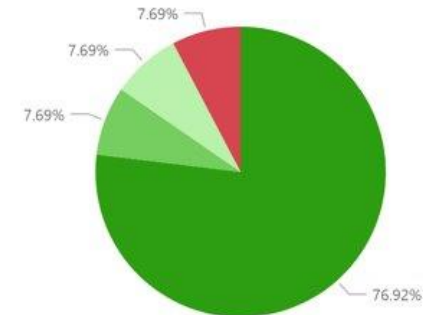
Q2. Agreement with the council's intention to continue to issue introductory tenancies to new tenants:



Q3. Agreement with the council's intention to continue to issue periodic tenancies to tenants transferring from another social landlord:



Q4. Agreement with the council's intention to continue to issue secure periodic tenancies to tenants transferring from another social landlord:



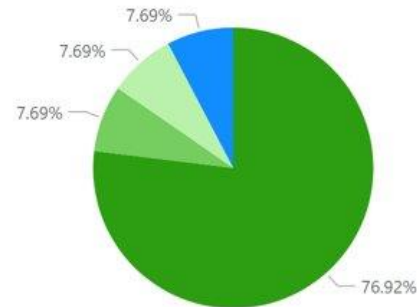
Answers from Secure tenants in Barnet (2)

Number of respondents:

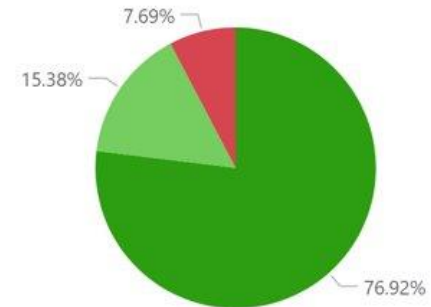
13

- Strongly agree
- Agree
- Tend to agree
- Don't know / not sure
- Tend to disagree
- Strongly disagree

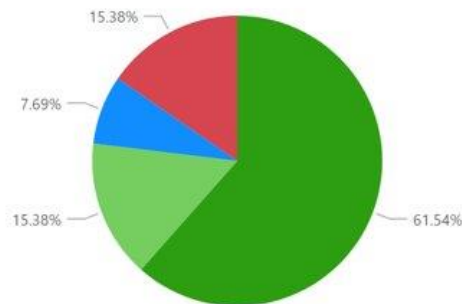
Q5. Agreement with the council's intention to cease to issue flexible tenancies to new tenants, and instead to issue secure periodic (lifetime) tenancies:



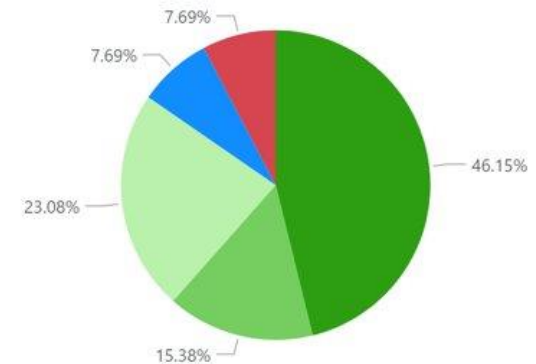
Q6. Agreement with the council's intention to allow current flexible tenancies that are within 9 months of their review to change to a secure periodic tenancy without review:



Q7. Agreement with the council's intention to serve a Notice of Variation for flexible tenancies within longer than 9 months until their review date:



Q8. Agreement with the council's intention to serve a Notice of Variation for introductory to flexible tenancies:



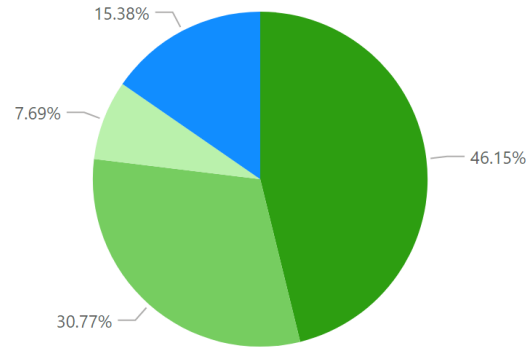
Answers from Secure tenants in Barnet (3)

Number of respondents:

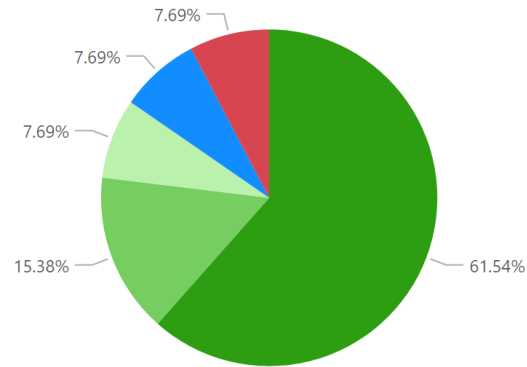
13

- Strongly agree
- Agree
- Tend to agree
- Don't know / not sure
- Tend to disagree
- Strongly disagree

Q9. Agreement with the council's proposed expectations for tenancy sustainment measures:



Q10. Agreement with the council's proposed expectations regarding rent in advance:



Answers from Private Registered Providers in Barnet (1)

Number of respondents:

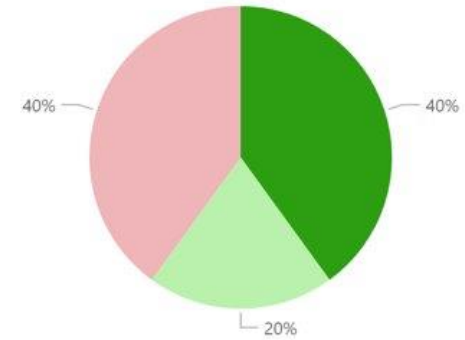
5

- Strongly agree
- Agree
- Tend to agree
- Don't know / not sure
- Tend to disagree
- Strongly disagree

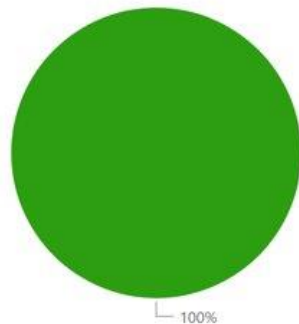
Q1. Agreement with the key aims in this strategy:



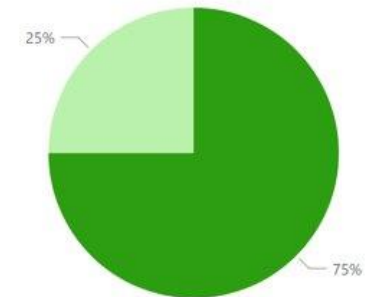
Q2. Agreement with the council's intention to continue to issue introductory tenancies to new tenants:



Q3. Agreement with the council's intention to continue to issue periodic tenancies to tenants transferring from another social landlord:



Q4. Agreement with the council's intention to continue to issue secure periodic tenancies to tenants transferring from another social landlord:



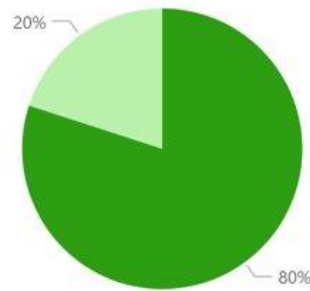
Answers from Private Registered Providers in Barnet (2)

Number of respondents:

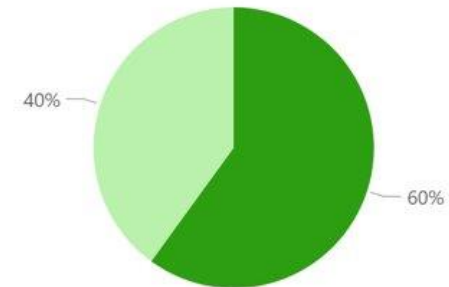
5

- Strongly agree
- Agree
- Tend to agree
- Don't know / not sure
- Tend to disagree
- Strongly disagree

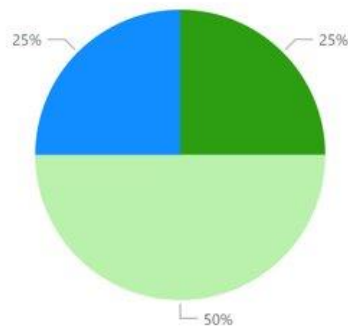
Q5. Agreement with the council's intention to cease to issue flexible tenancies to new tenants, and instead to issue secure periodic (lifetime) tenancies:



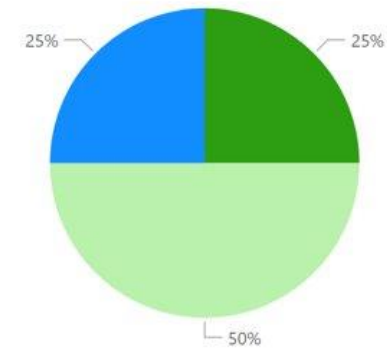
Q6. Agreement with the council's intention to allow current flexible tenancies that are within 9 months of their review to change to a secure periodic tenancy without review:



Q7. Agreement with the council's intention to serve a Notice of Variation for flexible tenancies within longer than 9 months until their review date:



Q8. Agreement with the council's intention to serve a Notice of Variation for introductory to flexible tenancies:



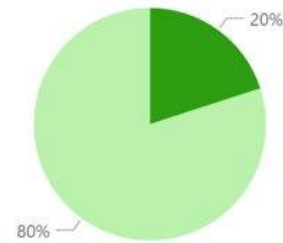
Answers from Private Registered Providers in Barnet (3)

Number of respondents:

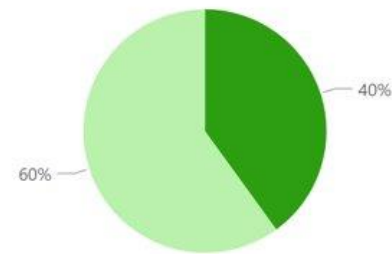
5

- Strongly agree
- Agree
- Tend to agree
- Don't know / not sure
- Tend to disagree
- Strongly disagree

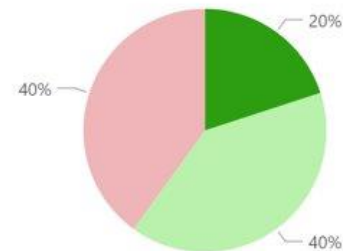
Q9. Agreement with the council's proposed expectations for tenancy sustainment measures:



Q10. Agreement with the council's proposed expectations regarding rent in advance:



Q16. To what extent do you agree or disagree that the strategic context in the strategy is comprehensive?



Answers from other types of respondents (1)

Number of respondents:

29

Responding as:

Blank (25)

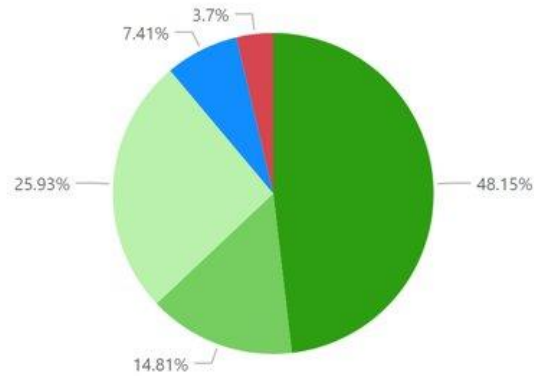
Other (2)

Councillor (1)

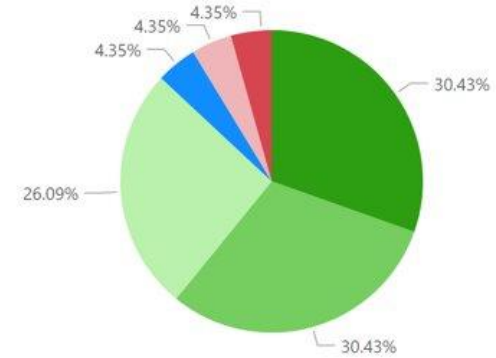
Working in Barnet (1)

- Strongly agree
- Agree
- Tend to agree
- Don't know / not sure
- Tend to disagree
- Strongly disagree

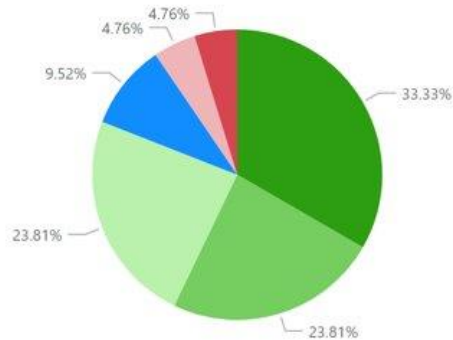
Q1. Agreement with the key aims in this strategy:



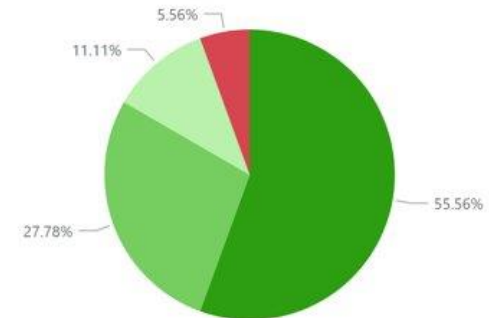
Q2. Agreement with the council's intention to continue to issue introductory tenancies to new tenants:



Q3. Agreement with the council's intention to continue to issue periodic tenancies to tenants transferring from another social landlord:



Q4. Agreement with the council's intention to continue to issue secure periodic tenancies to tenants transferring from another social landlord:



Answers from other types of respondents (2)

Number of respondents:

29

Responding as:

Blank (25)

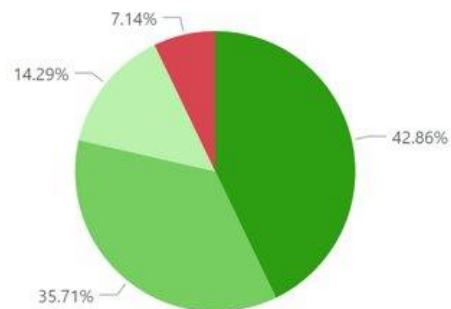
Other (2)

Councillor (1)

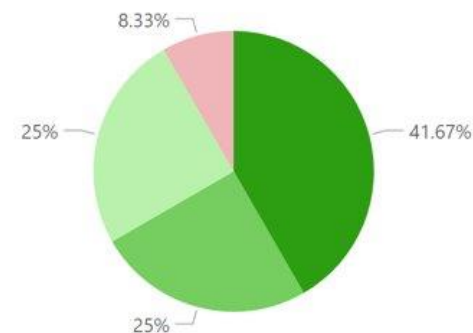
Working in Barnet (1)

- Strongly agree
- Agree
- Tend to agree
- Don't know / not sure
- Tend to disagree
- Strongly disagree

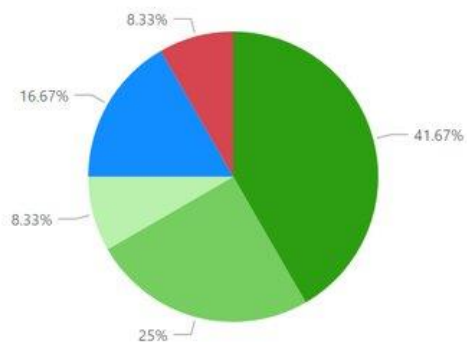
Q5. Agreement with the council's intention to cease to issue flexible tenancies to new tenants, and instead to issue secure periodic (lifetime) tenancies:



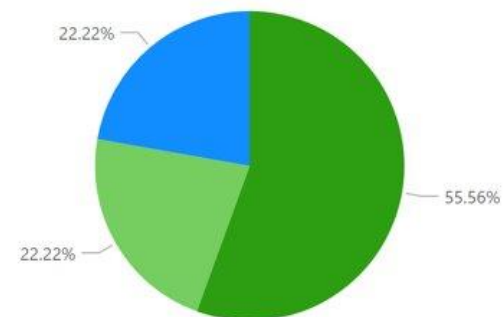
Q6. Agreement with the council's intention to allow current flexible tenancies that are within 9 months of their review to change to a secure periodic tenancy without review:



Q7. Agreement with the council's intention to serve a Notice of Variation for flexible tenancies within longer than 9 months until their review date:



Q8. Agreement with the council's intention to serve a Notice of Variation for introductory to flexible tenancies:



Answers from other types of respondents (3)

Number of respondents:

29

Responding as:

Blank (25)

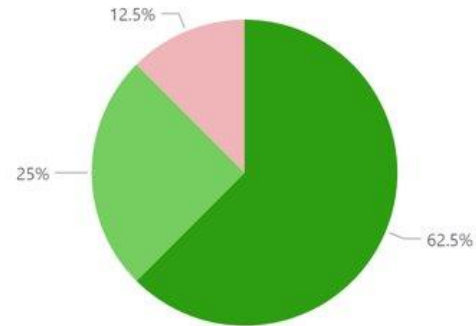
Other (2)

Councillor (1)

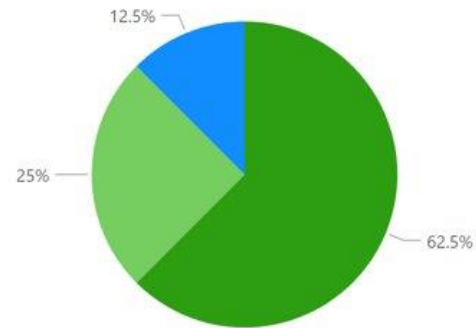
Working in Barnet (1)

- Strongly agree
- Agree
- Tend to agree
- Don't know / not sure
- Tend to disagree
- Strongly disagree

Q9. Agreement with the council's proposed expectations for tenancy sustainment measures:



Q10. Agreement with the council's proposed expectations regarding rent in advance:



Answers from sub group

Sub-group 1:

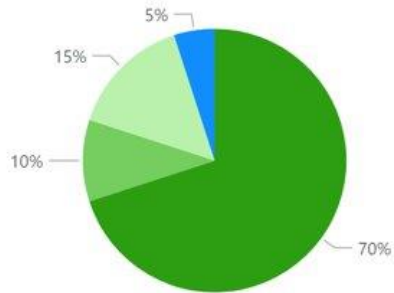
Respondents aged 18 to 34 (20)

Sub-group 2:

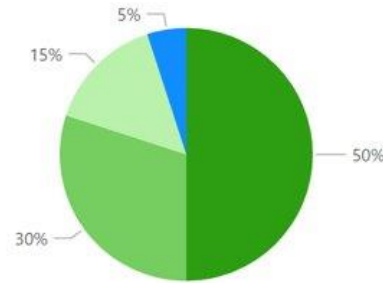
Respondents aged 55 to 74 (31)

- Strongly agree
- Agree
- Tend to agree
- Don't know / not sure
- Tend to disagree
- Strongly disagree

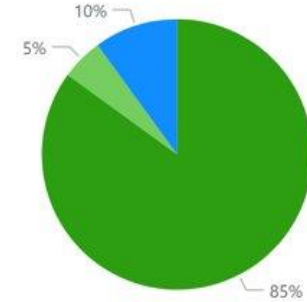
Q1. Agreement with the key aims in this strategy:



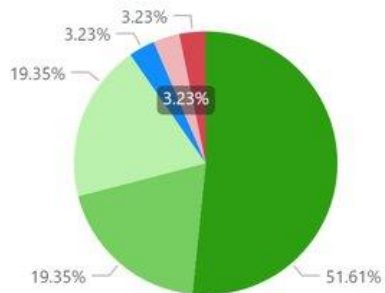
Q2. Agreement with the council's intention to continue to issue introductory tenancies to new tenants:



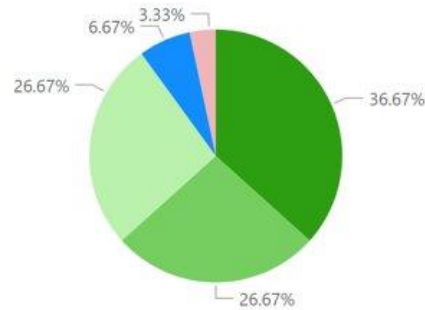
Q5. Agreement with the council's intention to cease to issue flexible tenancies to new tenants, and instead to issue secure periodic tenancies:



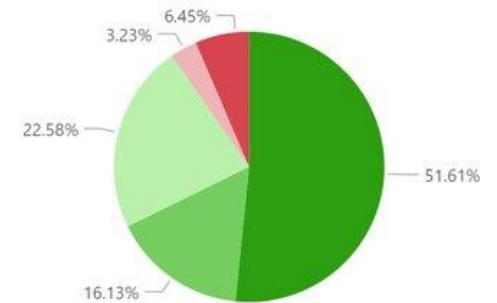
Q1. Agreement with the key aims in this strategy:



Q2. Agreement with the council's intention to continue to issue introductory tenancies to new tenants:

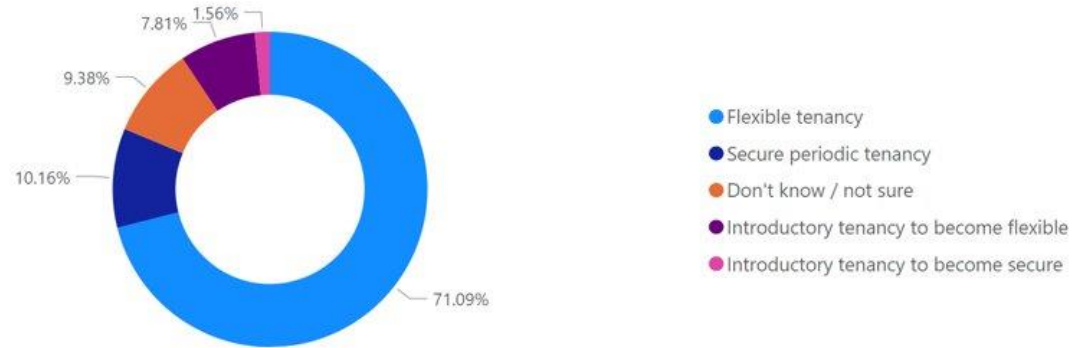


Q5. Agreement with the council's intention to cease to issue flexible tenancies to new tenants, and instead to issue secure periodic tenancies:

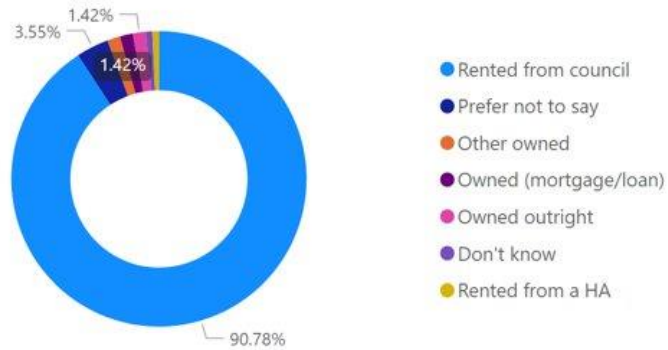


Respondents' profile (1) - Living situation

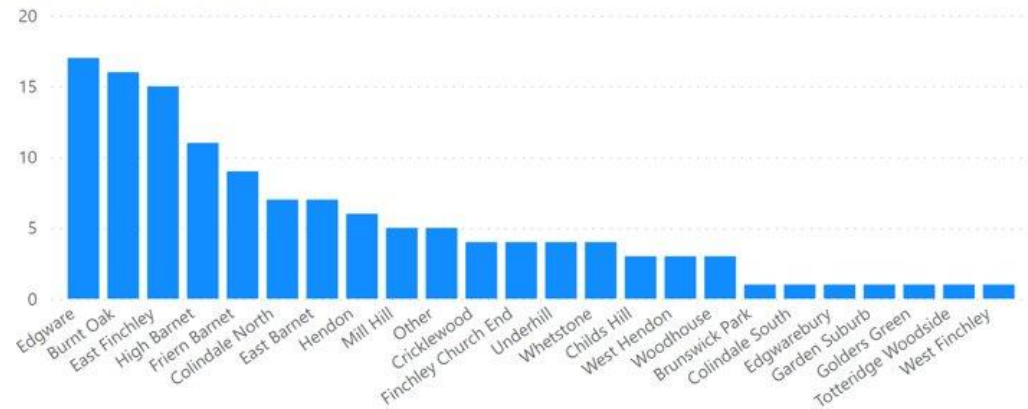
If you rent from the council, what type of tenancy do you currently hold?



Does your household own or rent your accommodation?

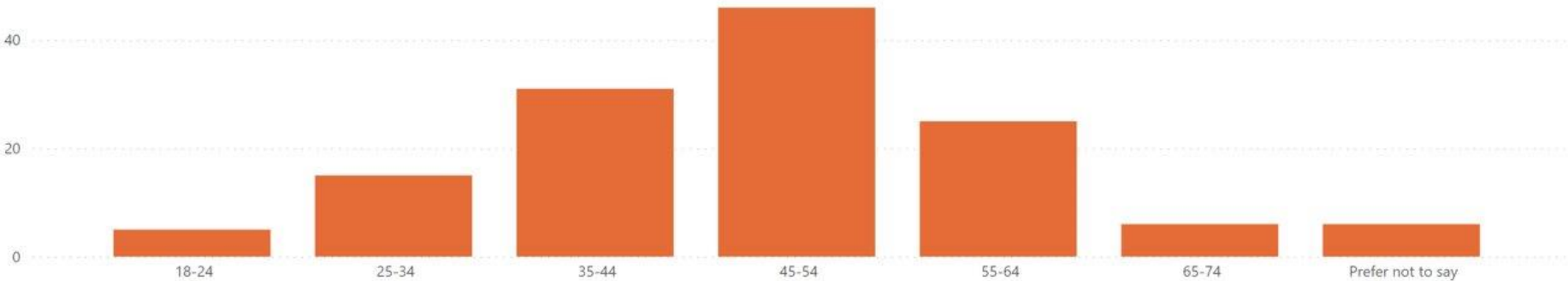


Which ward do you live in?

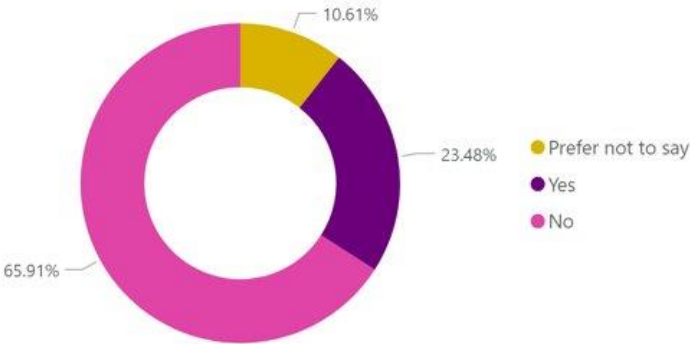


Respondents' profile (2) - Age and Disability

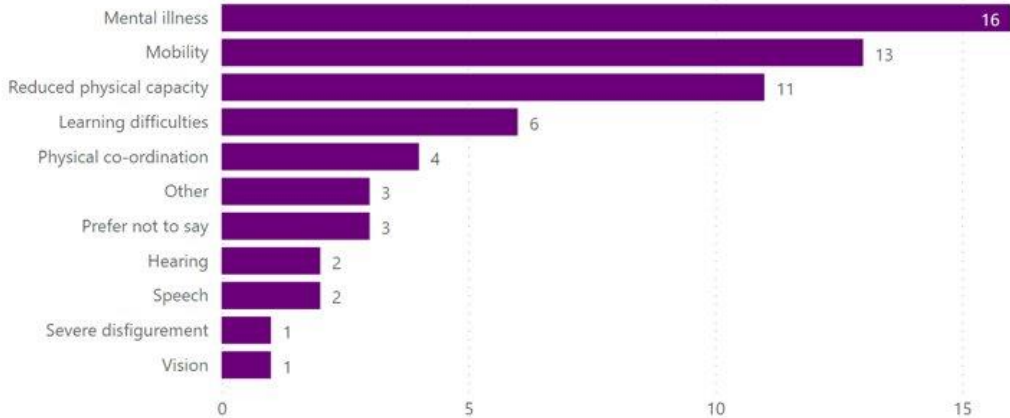
In which age group do you fall?



Do you consider that you have a disability as described above?

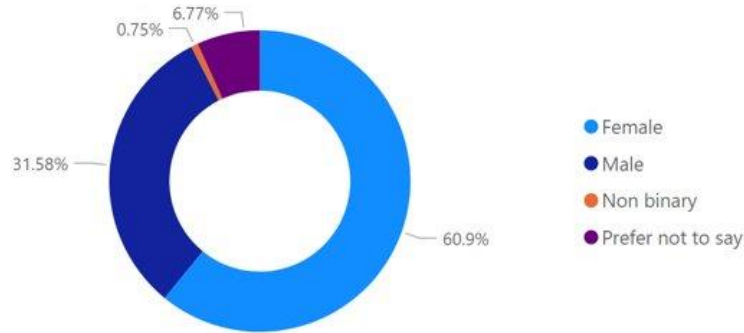


Type of disabilities:

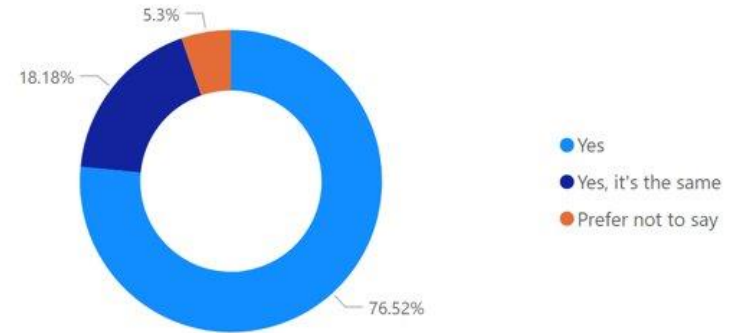


Respondents' profile (3) - Gender, Sex and Sexuality

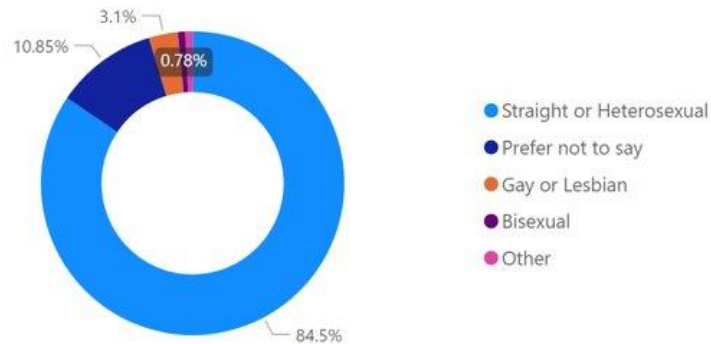
What is your gender?



Is your sex the same as the sex you were assigned at birth?

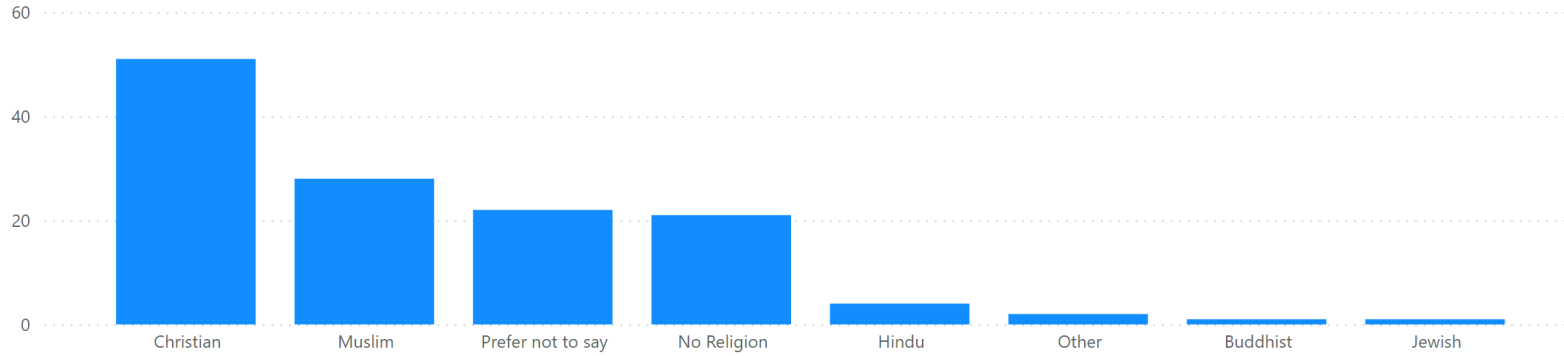


What is your sexual orientation?



Respondents' profile (4) - Ethnicity and Religion

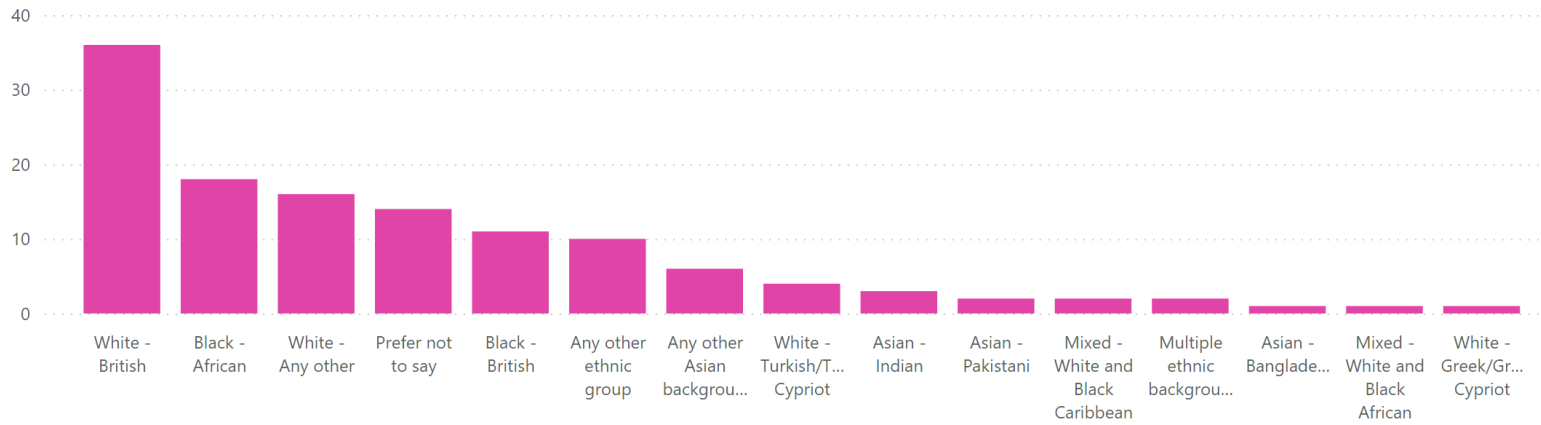
What is your religion or belief?



Other religions/beliefs:

- Bahai 1
- Jehovah's Witnesses 1

What is your ethnic group?



Other ethnic groups:

- Arabic 1
- British East Indian 1
- Iranian 1
- North African 1
- South American 1
- Thai 1
- Asian British (Hong Kong) 1
- Afghan 1

6. Conclusion

- 6.1 The findings from the consultation show a strong support for the proposed new Tenancy Strategy.
- 6.2 Of those who responded, over 85% agreed to the ten questions outlining the key components of the new strategy especially the council's intention to cease to grant flexible tenancies and converting those already on flexible tenancies to secure tenancies.
- 6.3 The main areas where slightly less agreement was received were for:
- Registered providers who did not agree with the continued granting of introductory tenancies (25%) of 5 responses.
 - Secure tenants who did not agree with granting lifetime tenancies to transferring tenants already on lifetime tenancies (less than 5%) of 13 responses.
- 6.4 We thank all those who took the time to respond to the Tenancy Strategy consultation.

This page is intentionally left blank

Housing Allocation Scheme Consultation Report

June 2023

1. Aim of the consultation

- 1.1 Barnet Council is revising its Housing Allocation Scheme in line with the statutory requirement to keep it under review and to take into account the priorities of the administration as well as feedback from the Housing Options service to improve clarity and the smooth-running of the policy or to confirm the approach where discretion is currently taken.
- 1.3 The three main changes to the scheme are:
- To revert to a two reasonable offers policy, meaning an applicant would not be sanctioned after refusing their first offer.
 - After allocating homes to secure tenants living on a regeneration estate, at the point of decanting a non-secure tenant the council will look to provide a new home on that regeneration estate for any non-secure tenant owed a main homelessness duty (under Section 193(2) of the Housing Act 1996) who has held that non-secure tenancy for five years or more at the point vacant possession of the property is sought.
 - Under a local lettings policy the council will give priority for local people living on any regeneration estate to be allocated a new home on that estate ahead of those who are otherwise waiting for housing and even if their home is not being demolished.
- 1.3 As part of the development of the scheme, a consultation was held to seek residents' and stakeholders' feedback on the draft policy. The Housing Allocation Scheme consultation ran for ten and a half weeks, from 5 April 2023 to 18 June 2023. It primarily consisted of an online survey on Engage Barnet. Supporting documents were also available on Engage Barnet, allowing interested parties to view the draft policy.
- 1.4 A number of targeted focus groups were also held to give residents and partner agencies an opportunity to give feedback on the draft policy.

2. Methodology

- 2.1 The questionnaire was available on the council's consultation webpage Engage Barnet, with paper copies available on request. The questionnaires asked respondents how much they agreed with the main changes being proposed. In total, 40 responses were received through Engage Barnet. There were free text boxes that allowed respondents to add in comments.
- 2.4 The consultation was well publicised through various mediums including:
- Email sent to all Private Registered Providers operating within the borough, encouraging them to review the proposals and respond to the consultation.
 - Email sent to key homelessness services partner agencies, encouraging them to review the proposals and respond to the consultation.
 - The council's social media channels, primarily on Twitter where the council has over 25,000 followers.
 - A paid Facebook and Instagram advertising campaign, which targeted people living in Barnet.
 - The Barnet Group's and its subsidiaries' social media channels, primarily on Twitter and Instagram where The Barnet Group has over 3,000 followers.
 - Prominent feature on the council's website and promoted in a press release following the review by the Housing and Growth Committee.

- Promoted in the council’s Barnet First magazine, which is sent to all residents in the borough.
- Promoted in the council’s Barnet Together CTN community news e-bulletin.
- Promoted in the Barnet Homes resident magazine atHome, which is distributed to over 13,000 homes.
- Promoted to involved residents by Barnet Homes.
- Promoted through a signature block in the emails of key frontline staff of the council and Barnet Homes as well as Labour councillors.
- Key council departments, managers, and staff from a range of stakeholder service areas were briefed on the proposed Housing Strategy and were given opportunity to provide feedback.

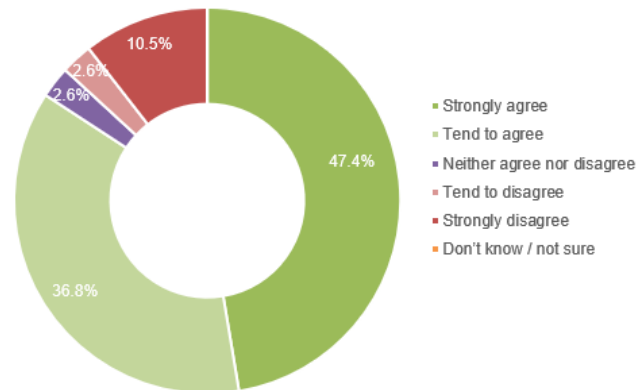
2.5 In total, there were 44 attendees at targeted focus groups; these included groups for council residents who have recently been housed, care leavers, adult social care clients, and key homelessness services partner agencies.

2.6 The Greater London Authority (GLA) was also invited to review the draft Housing Allocation Scheme and provide feedback.

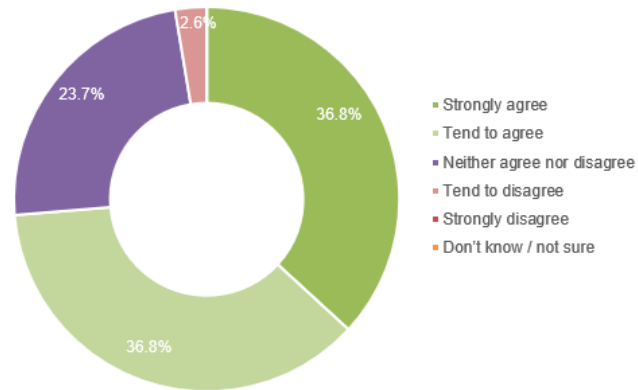
3. Summary of key findings

3.1 The questionnaire asked respondents if they agreed with the main changes being proposed. The results are shown below.

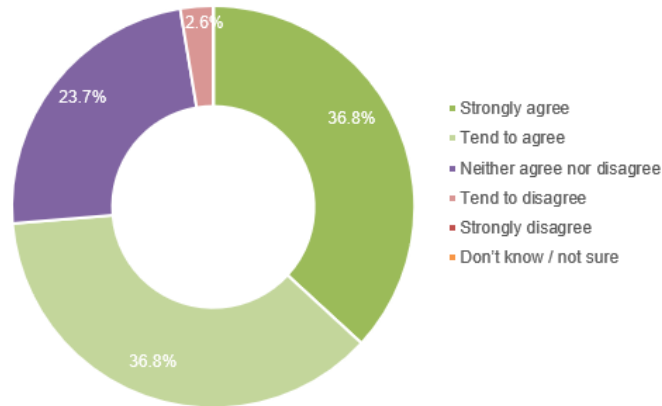
3.2 84.2% agreed with the change to revert from one suitable offer to two suitable offers of accommodation.



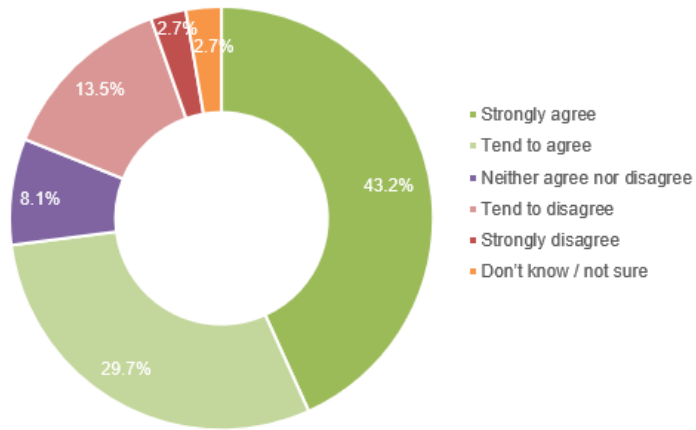
3.3 73.7% agreed with the proposed new local lettings policy that will ensure that after allocating homes to secure tenants living on a regeneration estate, at the point of decanting a non-secure tenant of at least five years who is owed a main homeless duty, the council will look to provide a new home for them on the estate if there are available properties.



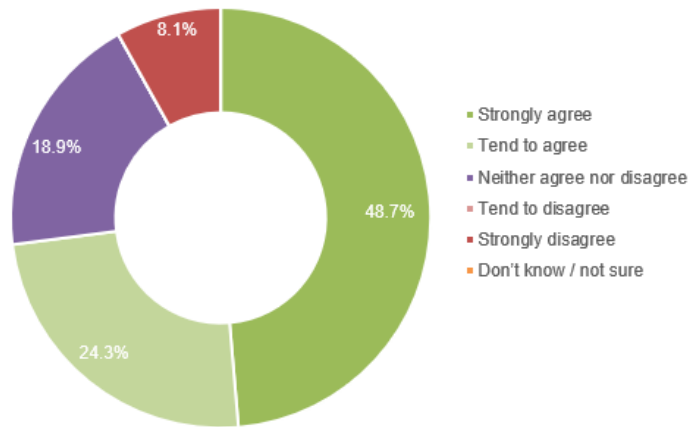
3.4 73% agreed with the proposed new local lettings policy that will additionally give priority to local people living on a regeneration estate to be allocated a new home on that estate ahead of those who are otherwise waiting for housing, even if their home is not being demolished.



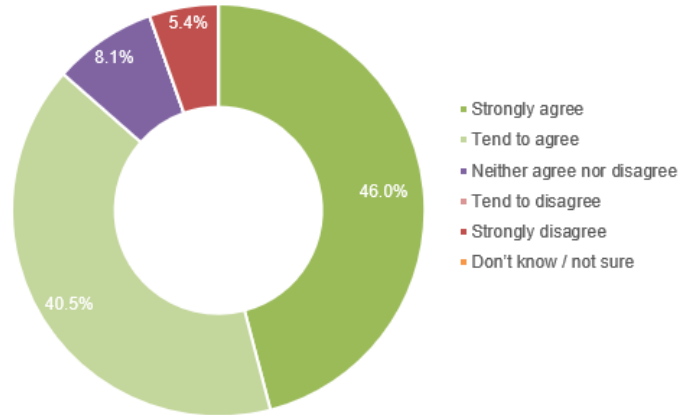
3.5 73% agreed with the proposed clarification regarding discretionary succession that makes it clear additional household members will only be considered to be part of the succession application if they lived with the tenant for at least a year before the tenant's death.



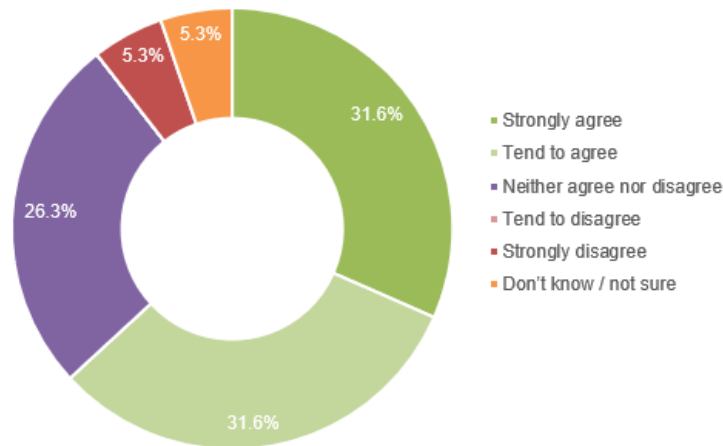
3.6 73% agreed with the proposed change to allow any other household member, such as adult children, to be included in the application if they have been part of the household for at least 12 months prior to the application, and they reside with the applicant as part of their household.



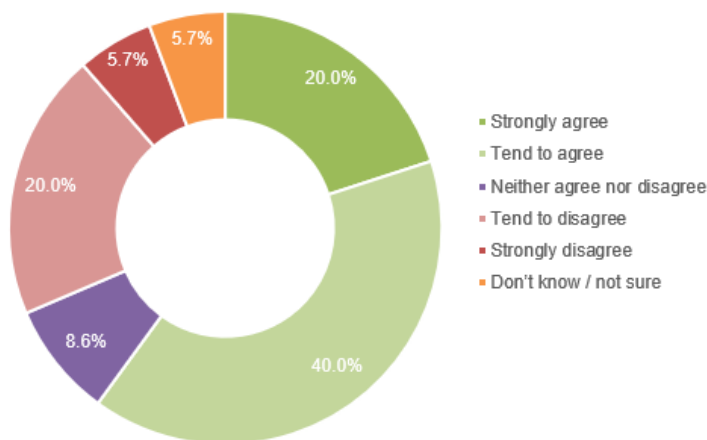
3.7 86.5% agreed with the proposed inclusion of young people / residents within the applicant's household if they leave the family home solely to attend university outside the borough and return to the same family home.



3.8 63.2% agreed with the proposed change to allow an applicant and their partner to jointly contribute for the required 64 hours' work per month for 6 out of the last 12 months if their working arrangements are to facilitate child care arrangements.



3.9 60% agreed with the proposed change to reduce the age from 1 year to 6 months as the limit for a household with a baby who will be considered to need a 1-bedroom property. [note: this part of the policy has subsequently been updated to allow a household with a baby of any age to be considered to need a 2-bedroom property]



3.10 A question was included to seek comments from respondents if they disagreed with any of the main proposed changes. There were four comments about the proposed change to identified bedroom need for households with a baby, stating that babies should not need their own bedroom or that babies should be able to share with their mother until they are at least one year old. There was one comment suggesting that live-in guardians should be considered as a priority for rehousing by the council. There was one comment that three offers of social housing should be made. There was one comment that people in permanent homes that are not due to be demolished should not be placed above those on the housing needs register.

3.11 A question was also included to seek any other comments on the draft Housing Allocation Scheme. These included:

- comments about lack of available housing
- support for moving to two offers (and a perception of unfairness for those who have been housed under the outgoing policy)
- a suggestion that applicants who are homeless due to being evicted by a friend or family member should have additional priority if they do not access temporary accommodation
- a comment about excluding people through the local area connection policy
- a suggestion that the council should adopt a Choice Based Lettings approach.
- a request from a private registered provider for the council to review its allocation procedures to minimise the risk of longer void (empty home) periods due to the move to two offers

- a suggestion that community contribution should give discretion to single mothers regarding ability to work 64 hours per month (*note: this discretion is already provided within the scheme*)
- a suggestion that only one offer should be made, and that any resident who has lived in the borough for their whole life should be able to apply for housing.

3.12 The focus groups provided opportunity for discussion about the Housing Allocation Scheme and the other key housing-related strategies and policies that Barnet Council is currently reviewing. These enabled quality discussions about residents' aspirations and areas of concern, in addition to being an opportunity to explain the documents in more detail. The focus groups indicated good support for the changes to the Housing Allocation Scheme. Attendees stated concerns about the following matters that are pertinent to the policy:

- The move to two offers was welcomed, although there was some discussion about whether three offers could be made.
- Request that the review / appeal process regarding offers is made clear to residents.
- The local lettings policies were welcomed.
- The additional clarity on household members and discretionary succession was welcomed.
- There was support for the other proposed main changes, particularly those regarding child-care responsibilities and bedroom allocation for households with a baby.

3.13 Discussions were also held with key council services that are affected by the Housing Allocation Scheme, including a detailed review with the Housing Options service that led to the identification of further minor changes to improve clarity.

3.10 All of the comments received have been reviewed and fed back into the strategy. Additional changes for clarity include:

- Section 1.8 - Clarification of the role that will take decisions to allocate properties outside of band and date order.
- Section 2.6 - Correction of the residential connection requirement for the "applicant or their partner" (rather than "and their partner")
- Section 2.7 - Clarification that housing-related debt of under £100 will not be considered.
- Section 2.8 - Clarification added regarding former social housing tenancy rent arrears for former Barnet Council tenancies and other former social housing tenancies.
- Section 2.8 - Clarification added that the council will not monitor whether the applicant has set up or adhered to a payment plan once a decision has been taken that they do not qualify for this rule.
- Section 2.9 - Additional information about how and when applicants can request discretion
- Section 3.2 - Correction of (non-related) live-in carers being added as household members in the first draft; this has been moved instead to bedroom need considerations; this would allow for carers to change, and does not bestow succession rights to carers.
- Section 3.8 - Additional detail added regarding the level of authorisation needed regarding applicants with connections to the council or The Barnet Group.
- Section 3.9 - Clarification regarding applications being cancelled if the applicant has had their homelessness resolved through Let2Barnet, an offer of accommodation, or finding their own private rented sector accommodation.
- Section 3.10 - Clarification regarding instances where the council does not accept justification for household members moving in added to worsening circumstances rules.

- Section 3.12 - Clarification added that the 21 days to request formal review of a decision comes from the date of being informed of the outcome of the informal review.
- Section 3.16 - Additional information added regarding size of accommodation to allow for households with a child under 5 with a need for two bedrooms to be considered for a 1-bedroom property if they choose.
- Section 3.16 - Additional information added regarding size of accommodation to allow for transferring households with a 1-bedroom need to be allocated a 2-bedroom property where there is availability and if they agree.
- Section 3.16 - Clarification added regarding how additional communal living rooms will be treated as a bedroom for the measurement of overcrowding and assessment of size of accommodation.
- Section 4.2 - Clarification added to summarise the requirements of applicants in order to be banded.
- Annex 1 - Clarification added to summarise the requirements of applicants in order to be banded.
- Annex 2 – Addition of live-in carer (where evidenced) resulting in a requirement for an additional bedroom
- Annex 2 – Addition of detail from section 3.16 regarding consideration for a property that is one bedroom size less than their assessed need
- Annex 2 – Addition of detail from section 3.16 regarding potential discretion for a 2-bedroom property for transferring households that are not considered to be statutorily overcrowded.
- Annex 3 - Correction to Community Contribution to remove “all household members” as needing to meet the qualification rules.
- Annex 3 – “Education” added to section title on evidence of training
- Annex 6 – “Personal Independence Payment” added.

4. Consultation questionnaire demographic characteristics

- 4.1 Most of the 40 questionnaire respondents were residents of Barnet (79%), while others responded as representatives of a private registered provider (e.g., a housing association) (15.8%), or a person who works in the borough (5.3%). 2 respondents chose to skip this question.
- 4.2 33.3% of respondents rented from a private landlord, 23.3% rented from the council, 16.7% owned their home outright, 13.3% rented from a registered social landlord, 3.3% were shared owners, 3.3% didn't know their housing tenure, and 6.7% preferred not to say.
- 4.3 The council is required by law, under the Equality Act 2010, to monitor respondents against the protected characteristics. These questions were only asked of respondents who indicated they were residents of the borough (30 respondents in total). Due to the low number of questionnaire respondents, a summary is provided in this report; however, the results are not considered to be statistically relevant. The diversity of respondents was improved through the targeted focus groups, which included people from a range of backgrounds and ages. Groups that the council typically finds hard to reach, including those experiencing homelessness and rough sleeping, were considered through the focus group with key partner agencies who were asked to consider the needs of their clients in their engagement with the council.
- There was a mix of responses across the age bands, with most respondents aged 35-44 (34.6%), and 65-74 (23.1%).
 - 80% were female and 16% were male.
 - 92.3% of respondents said that their sex was the same as the sex they were assigned at birth, and 7.7% preferred not to say.

- 42.3% of respondents were White British, with 7.7% each from a Black African, Mixed White and Asian, Mixed White and Black African, and White Other background, and 3.9% each from an Asian Indian, Other Asian, Black Caribbean, Mixed White and Black Caribbean, and Mixed Other background.
- 32% of respondents said they considered themselves to have a disability.
- 45.8% of respondents were Christian, 20.8% had no religion or belief, 4.2% were Buddhist, 4.2% were Hindu, and 25% preferred not to give their religion or belief.
- 75% of respondents were heterosexual, 4.2% were bisexual, and 16.7% preferred not to give their sexual orientation.

5. Conclusion

5.1 The findings from the consultation overall show strong support for the revised Housing Allocation Scheme.

5.2 We thank all those who took the time to respond to the Housing Allocation Scheme consultation.

This page is intentionally left blank

Equalities Impact Assessment (EqIA)

EqIAs make services better for everyone and support value for money by getting services right first time.

EqIAs enable us to consider all the information about a service, policy or strategy from an equalities perspective and then create an action plan to get the best outcomes for service users and staff¹. They analyse how all our work as a council might impact differently on different groups protected from discrimination by the Equality Act 2010². They help us make good decisions and evidence how we have reached them.³

An EqIA needs to be started as a project starts to identify and consider possible differential impacts on people and their lives, inform project planning and, where appropriate, identify mitigating actions. A full EqIA must be completed before any decisions are made or policy agreed so that the EqIA informs that decision or policy. It is also a live document; you should review and update it along with your project plan throughout.

You should first consider whether you need to complete this full EqIA⁴.

Other key points to note:

- Full guidance notes to help you are embedded in this form – see the End Notes or hover the mouse over the numbered notes.
- Please share your EqIA with your Equalities Champion and the final/updated version at the end of the project.
- Major EqIAs should be reviewed by the relevant Head of Service.
- Examples of completed EqIAs can be found on the Equalities Hub

1. Responsibility for the EqIA

Title of proposal ⁵	Housing Strategy Review
Name and job title of completing officer	Laura Giles, Head of Strategy and Compliance (The Barnet Group)
Head of service area responsible	Susan Curran, Head of Housing and Regeneration
Equalities Champion supporting the EqIA	Rosie Evangelou, Consultation and Engagement Manager
Performance Management rep	n/a
HR rep (for employment related issues)	n/a
Representative (s) from external stakeholders	n/a

2. Description of proposal

Is this a: (Please tick all that apply)	
New policy /strategy / function / procedure / service <input type="checkbox"/>	Review of Policy /strategy / function / procedure / service <input checked="" type="checkbox"/>
Budget Saving <input type="checkbox"/>	Other <input type="checkbox"/>
If budget saving please specify value below:	If other please specify below:
<p>The proposal being assessed is the review of the council's Housing Strategy</p> <p>The Housing Strategy has been revised to focus on the priorities for the administration that were established in the Labour Group's local election manifesto in 2022, and to address the challenges and opportunities identified in the review of the current context, performance, and resident aspirations. It focuses on five main themes and is principally supported by the Homelessness and Rough Sleeping Strategy:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Prevent homelessness and support rough sleepers off the streets. 	

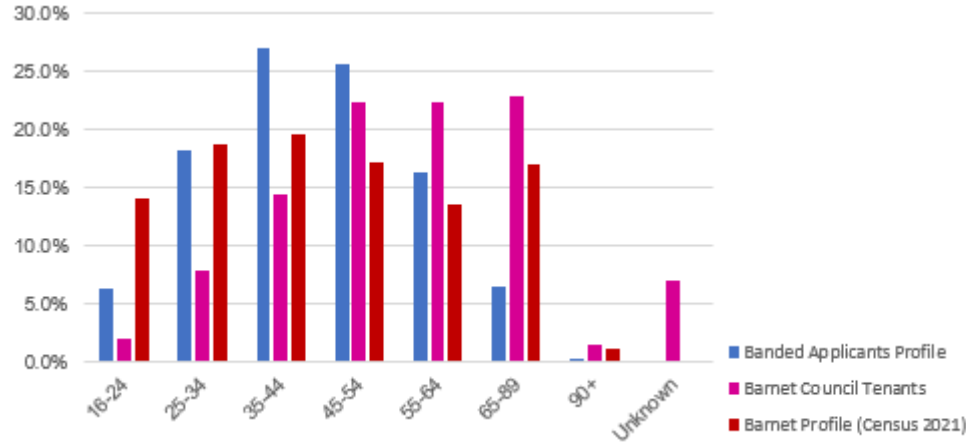
- Deliver the right homes in the right places.
- Ensure safe, sustainable council housing.
- Raise quality and standards in the private rented sector.
- Support living well by promoting healthy homes and wellbeing.

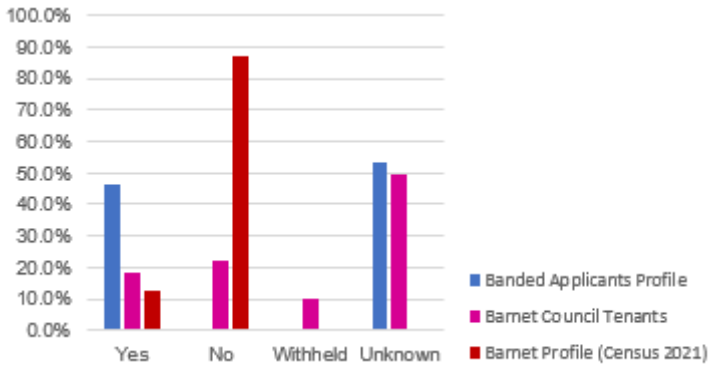
3. Supporting evidence

What existing data informs your assessment of the impact of the proposal on protected groups of service users and/or staff?

Identify the main sources of evidence, both quantitative and qualitative, that supports your analysis

Protected group	What does the data tell you⁶? <i>Provide a summary of any relevant demographic data about the borough's population from the <u>Joint Strategic Needs Assessment</u>, or data about the council's workforce</i>	What do people tell you ⁷? <i>Provide a summary of relevant consultation and engagement including surveys and other research with stakeholders, newspaper articles correspondence etc.</i>
------------------------	---	---

<p>Age⁸</p>	<p>Key profiles:</p>  <p>According to the 2021 Census, Barnet has a growing population of older people aged 75 or over, and a higher proportion of those aged 40 and over living in the borough.</p> <p>Compared to the overall borough profile:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Within council-owned social housing, there is higher representation of those who are older (aged 45+); this group is therefore likely to be more impacted by relevant outcomes due to prevalence in the population. • Within council-owned social housing, there is lower representation of those who are younger (aged 16-44); this group is therefore likely to be less impacted by relevant outcomes due to prevalence in the population. • Within the group of those on the Housing Needs Register, there is higher representation of those who are aged 35-54; this group is therefore likely to be more impacted by relevant outcomes due to prevalence in the population. • Within the group of those on the Housing Needs Register, there is lower representation of those who are younger (aged 16-24); this group is therefore likely to be less impacted by relevant outcomes due to prevalence in the population. 	<p>The outcomes of the consultation are included in the Housing Strategy consultation summary; the profile of respondents was broadly comparable with that of the borough, and the consultation showed support for the proposals. There was lesser representation of those who are younger (aged 16-34) in the survey responses; however, these groups were more highly represented in the focus groups.</p>
<p>Disability⁹</p>	<p>Key profiles:</p>	<p>The outcomes of the consultation are included in the Housing Strategy</p>

	 <p>Compared to the overall borough profile:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Within the populations of those on the Housing Needs Register and to a lesser extent those living in rented council social housing, there is higher representation of those who are disabled; this group is therefore likely to be more impacted by relevant outcomes due to prevalence in the population. 	<p>consultation summary; the profile of respondents was broadly comparable with that of the borough, and the consultation showed support for the proposals.</p>
<p>Gender reassignment¹⁰</p>	<p>Information currently not captured</p>	<p>The outcomes of the consultation are included in the Housing Strategy consultation summary; the profile of respondents from the survey showed no responses from individuals whose sex is different to the sex they were assigned at birth.</p>
<p>Marriage and Civil Partnership¹¹</p>	<p>Protected characteristic only relevant regarding employment matters</p>	
<p>Pregnancy and Maternity¹²</p>	<p>Information currently not captured</p>	
<p>Race/ Ethnicity¹³</p>	<p>Key profiles:</p>	<p>The outcomes of the consultation are included in</p>

	<p>High proportion of data not held regarding council social housing tenants and those on the Housing Needs Register; however, there is higher representation in both populations of those from a Black or Black British background.</p>	<p>the Housing Strategy consultation summary; the profile of respondents was broadly comparable with that of the borough, and the consultation showed support for the proposals.</p>
<p>Religion or belief¹⁴</p>	<p>Key profiles:</p>	<p>The outcomes of the consultation are included in the Housing Strategy consultation summary; the profile of respondents was broadly comparable with that of the borough, and the consultation showed support for the proposals.</p>
<p>Sex¹⁵</p>	<p>Key profiles:</p>	<p>The outcomes of the consultation are included in the Housing Strategy consultation summary; the</p>

	<p>Compared to the overall borough profile:</p> <p>Within the populations of those on the Housing Needs Register and those living in rented council social housing, there is higher representation of those who are female; this group is therefore likely to be more impacted by relevant outcomes due to prevalence in the population.</p>	<p>profile of respondents was broadly comparable with that of the borough, and the consultation showed support for the proposals. There was lesser representation of those who are female in the survey responses, however there was a fairly high proportion of respondents who chose to withhold this information, and this groups was well-represented in the focus groups.</p>
<p>Sexual Orientation¹⁶</p>	<p>Key profiles:</p>	<p>The outcomes of the consultation are included in the Housing Strategy consultation summary; the profile of respondents showed no representation of those who are gay, lesbian, or bisexual or have another sexual orientation; however, there was a high proportion of respondents who chose not to disclose this information.</p>
<p>Other relevant groups¹⁷</p>		

4. Assessing impact

What does the evidence tell you about the impact your proposal may have on groups with protected characteristics ¹⁸?

Protected characteristic	For each protected characteristic, explain in detail what the evidence is suggesting and the impact of your proposal (if any). Is there an impact on service deliver? Is there an impact on customer satisfaction? Click the appropriate box on the right to indicate the outcome of your analysis.	Positive impact	Negative impact		No impact
			Minor	Major	
Age	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Due to affordability challenges and social trends, home ownership tends to be skewed towards older groups and away from younger ones, who tend to rely on rented accommodation and in particular the private rented sector. Poor standards in the private rented sector may therefore be more likely to affect younger people. • The council has corporate parenting duties to young people leaving care. • Due to higher or lower representation in the council social housing and/or Housing Needs Register populations, some groups will be more / less commonly affected by both the risk of homelessness and/or higher levels of housing need, and the outcomes of the strategy. Those who are not of working age may be more reliant on benefits. • Population increases shown in the 2021 Census show increases in people aged 70 and over and school age children; this has implications for the Housing Strategy in terms of the type of homes that are built and potential housing-related support that is needed. <p>Positive impact expected as a result of the strategy, with a focus on:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Improving access to and options regarding affordable housing, whether social, private rented, or home ownership, including ensuring specific housing and housing-related support needs are met through Adult Social Care housing provision. • Improving understanding of housing needs in the borough in respect of property sizes. • Delivering homes that meet higher standards of accessibility. • Improving renting conditions in both council social housing and private rented accommodation. 	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
Disability	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • People who are disabled often require accessible housing and, in some cases, additional support. 	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>

	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Due to higher representation in the council social housing and/or Housing Needs Register populations, those who are disabled are likely to be more commonly affected by both the risk of homelessness and/or higher levels of housing need, and the outcomes of the strategy. • Those in receipt of adult social care services are more likely to be disabled, which could result in higher needs for adapted or accessible properties. • As the number of older people increases there could be increasing age related disability in the population as a whole in the future. <p>Positive impact expected as a result of the strategy, with a focus on:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Improving access to and options regarding affordable housing, whether social, private rented, or home ownership. • Improving renting conditions in both council social housing and private rented accommodation. • Delivering homes that meet higher standards of accessibility. • Working towards healthy homes across the borough. • Working to create vibrant, cohesive, viable communities. • Providing housing-related support services to support and enable residents to live well and achieve improved financial, employment, educational, and social outcomes. • Using the council's voice to advocate for residents locally and nationally on housing-related issues. • Supporting people to stay in their homes for longer by exploring ways to make it easier for homes to be adapted to ensure independent and safe living. 				
<p>Gender reassignment</p>	<p>No impact identified as information not captured.</p> <p>We may reasonably expect a broad positive impact on this group in line with the overall positive impact on all protected characteristics.</p>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>
<p>Marriage and Civil Partnership</p>	<p>No impact identified as information not captured as the protected characteristic is only relevant regarding employment matters; however, we may reasonably expect single people to be more likely to live in a House of Multiple Occupancy in the private rented sector than those who are married.</p> <p>We may reasonably expect a broad positive impact on this group in line with the overall positive impact on all protected characteristics, and for a positive impact</p>	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>

	expected due to priorities within the private rented sector theme, including improving renting conditions.				
Pregnancy and Maternity	<p>No impact identified as information not captured, however affected individuals may be more likely to require family-sized / larger homes rather than single bedroom homes.</p> <p>We may reasonably expect a broad positive impact on this group in line with the overall positive impact on all protected characteristics, and for a positive impact expected as a result of the strategy due to focus on providing more larger properties for social housing.</p>	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
Race/ Ethnicity	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Overall, the Census shows that Barnet is becoming more diverse. • Due to higher representation in the council social housing and/or Housing Needs Register populations, those from a Black or Black British background will be more commonly affected by both the risk of homelessness and/or higher levels of housing need, and the outcomes of the strategy. <p>Positive impact expected as a result of the strategy, with a focus on:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Improving access to and options regarding affordable housing, whether social, private rented, or home ownership. • Improving renting conditions in both council social housing and private rented accommodation. • Working towards healthy homes across the borough. • Working to create vibrant, cohesive, viable communities. • Providing housing-related support services to support and enable residents to live well and achieve improved financial, employment, educational, and social outcomes. • Using the council's voice to advocate for residents locally and nationally on housing-related issues. 	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
Religion or belief	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • The Housing Needs Register and council social housing tenants populations tend to see larger family sizes for those from a Muslim background, resulting in more need for larger properties. <p>Positive impact expected as a result of the strategy, with a focus on:</p>	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>

	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Improving access to and options regarding affordable housing, whether social, private rented, or home ownership. • Improving renting conditions in both council social housing and private rented accommodation. • Focus on providing more larger properties for social housing. • Working towards healthy homes across the borough. • Working to create vibrant, cohesive, viable communities. • Providing housing-related support services to support and enable residents to live well and achieve improved financial, employment, educational, and social outcomes. • Using the council's voice to advocate for residents locally and nationally on housing-related issues. 				
<p>Sex</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • No particular housing impact anticipated, however we may reasonably expect a general positive impact on this group in line with the overall positive impact on all protected characteristics. <p>Positive impact expected as a result of the strategy, with a focus on:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Improving access to and options regarding affordable housing, whether social, private rented, or home ownership. • Improving renting conditions in both council social housing and private rented accommodation. • Working towards healthy homes across the borough. • Working to create vibrant, cohesive, viable communities. • Providing housing-related support services to support and enable residents to live well and achieve improved financial, employment, educational, and social outcomes. • Using the council's voice to advocate for residents locally and nationally on housing-related issues. 	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
<p>Sexual Orientation</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • No particular housing impact anticipated, however we may reasonably expect a general positive impact on this group in line with the overall positive impact on all protected characteristics. <p>Positive impact expected as a result of the strategy, with a focus on:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Improving access to and options regarding affordable housing, whether social, private rented, or home ownership. 	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>

	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Improving renting conditions in both council social housing and private rented accommodation. • Working towards healthy homes across the borough. • Working to create vibrant, cohesive, viable communities. • Providing housing-related support services to support and enable residents to live well and achieve improved financial, employment, educational, and social outcomes. • Using the council's voice to advocate for residents locally and nationally on housing-related issues. 				
--	--	--	--	--	--

5. Other key groups Are there any other vulnerable groups that might be affected by the proposal? <i>These could include carers, people in receipt of care, lone parents, people with low incomes or unemployed</i>	Positive impact	Negative impact		No impact
		Minor	Major	

<p>Key groups</p>	<p>Families and lone parents, people with a low income, people not in employment, education, or training, carers.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • All of these groups may come into contact with housing services in Barnet. • Due to affordability challenges and social trends, home ownership tends to be skewed towards older groups and away from younger ones, who tend to rely on rented accommodation and in particular the private rented sector. • Due to higher or lower representation in the council social housing and/or Housing Needs Register populations, some groups will be more / less commonly affected by both the risk of homelessness and/or higher levels of housing need, and the outcomes of the strategy. • Affordability challenges, with average property prices 15 times the average income, and median monthly rents £1,365; compared to Outer London's median of £1,300 • In 2022, Barnet's unemployment rate was 5.3%; unemployment can increase the risk of homelessness. • Young people who are not in employment, education, or training are at more risk of becoming homeless. <p>Positive impact expected as a result of the strategy, with a focus on:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Improving access to and options regarding affordable housing, whether social, private rented, or home ownership. • Improving renting conditions in both council social housing and private rented accommodation. • Working towards healthy homes across the borough. • Working to create vibrant, cohesive, viable communities. • Providing housing-related support services to support and enable residents to live well and achieve improved financial, employment, educational, and social outcomes. • Using the council's voice to advocate for residents locally and nationally on housing-related issues. 	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
--------------------------	---	-------------------------------------	--------------------------	--------------------------	--------------------------

6. Cumulative impact¹⁹

Considering what else is happening within the council and Barnet could your proposal contribute to a cumulative impact on groups with protected characteristics?

Yes No

If you clicked the Yes box, which groups with protected characteristics could be affected and what is the potential impact? Include details in the space below

7. Actions to mitigate or remove negative impact

Only complete this section if your proposals may have a negative impact on groups with protected characteristics. These need to be included in the relevant service plan for mainstreaming and performance management purposes.

Group affected	Potential negative impact	Mitigation measures ²⁰ <i>If you are unable to identify measures to mitigate impact, please state so and provide a brief explanation.</i>	Monitoring ²¹ <i>How will you assess whether these measures are successfully mitigating the impact?</i>	Deadline date	Lead Officer

8. Outcome of the Equalities Impact Assessment (EqIA)²²

Please select one of the following four outcomes

Proceed with no changes

The EqIA has not identified any potential for a disproportionate impact and all opportunities to advance equality of opportunity are being addressed

Proceed with adjustments

Adjustments are required to remove/mitigate negative impacts identified by the assessment

Negative impact but proceed anyway

This EqIA has identified negative impacts that are not possible to mitigate. However, it is still reasonable to continue with the activity. Outline the reasons for this and the information used to reach this decision in the space below

Do not proceed

This EqIA has identified negative impacts that cannot be mitigated and it is not possible to continue. Outline the reasons for this and the information used to reach this decision in the space below

Reasons for decision

The Housing Strategy has been revised to focus on the priorities for the administration that were established in the Labour Group's local election manifesto in 2022, and to address the challenges and opportunities identified in the review of the current context, performance, and resident aspirations. It focuses on five main themes and is principally supported by the Homelessness and Rough Sleeping Strategy:

- Prevent homelessness and support rough sleepers off the streets.
- Deliver the right homes in the right places.

- Ensure safe, sustainable council housing.
- Raise quality and standards in the private rented sector.
- Support living well by promoting healthy homes and wellbeing.

Consideration has been given to the overall profile of residents in the borough; tenants living in Barnet Council’s social housing stock and those who are registered on the Housing Needs Register are also expected to be significantly affected, and the profiles of these groups are included for comparison purposes. Those who rent in the private rented sector are also expected to be significantly affected by the outcomes of the Housing Strategy, although the profile of this group is not known.

The overall impact of the Housing Strategy on the protected groups under the Equality Act 2010 is expected to be positive. This is based on the evidence above and the supporting evidence base for the strategy.

There are a number of significant challenges relating to housing in Barnet, some of which disproportionately affect the protected groups due to their tendency to live in the social housing sector. The strategy is expected to improve this, which gives it a positive impact as a result. The impact is expected to be minimal as the strategy will benefit all residents, rather than being targeted at the protected groups unless otherwise stated.

Sign-off

9. Sign off and approval by Head of Service / Strategic lead²³

Name Susan Curran	Job title Head of Housing and Regeneration
<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Tick this box to indicate that you have approved this EqIA	Date of approval: 03/07/23
<input type="checkbox"/> Tick this box to indicate if EqIA has been published Date EqIA was published: Embed link to published EqIA:	Date of next review:

Footnotes: guidance for completing the EqIA template

¹ The following principles explain what we must do to fulfil our duties under the Equality Act when considering any new policy or change to services. They must all be met or the EqIA (and any decision based on it) may be open to challenge:

- **Knowledge:** everyone working for the council must be aware of our equality duties and apply them appropriately
- **Timeliness:** the duty applies at the time of considering proposals and before a final decision is taken
- **Real Consideration:** the duty must be an integral and rigorous part of your decision-making and must influence the process.
- **Sufficient Information:** you must assess what information you have and what is needed to give proper consideration.
- **No delegation:** the council is responsible for ensuring that anyone who provides services on our behalf complies with the equality duty.
- **Review:** the equality duty is a continuing duty – it continues after proposals are implemented/reviewed.
- **Proper Record Keeping:** we must keep records of the process and the impacts identified.

² Our duties under the Equality Act 2010

The council has a legal duty under this Act to show that we have identified and considered the impact and potential impact of our activities on all people with ‘protected characteristics’ (see end notes 9-19 for details of the nine protected characteristics). This applies to policies, services (including commissioned services), and our employees.

We use this template to do this and evidence our consideration. You must give ‘due regard’ (pay conscious attention) to the need to:

- **Avoid, reduce or minimise negative impact:** if you identify unlawful discrimination, including victimisation and harassment, you must stop the action and take advice immediately.
- **Promote equality of opportunity:** by
 - Removing or minimising disadvantages suffered by people with a protected characteristic
 - Taking steps to meet the needs of these groups
 - Encouraging people with protected characteristics to participate in public life or any other activity where participation is disproportionately low
 - Consider if there is a need to treat disabled people differently, including more favourable treatment where necessary
- **Foster good relations between people who share a protected characteristic and those who don’t:** e.g. by promoting understanding.

³ EqIAs should always be proportionate to:

- The size of the service or scope of the policy/strategy
- The resources involved
- The size of the likely impact – e.g. the numbers of people affected and their vulnerability

The greater the potential adverse impact of the proposal on a protected group (e.g. disabled people) and the more vulnerable the group is, the more thorough and demanding the process required by the Act will be. Unless they contain sensitive data – EqIAs are public documents. They are published with Cabinet papers, Panel papers and public consultations. They are available on request.

⁴ When to complete an EqIA:

- When developing a new policy, strategy, or service
- When reviewing an existing service, policy or strategy

-
- When making changes that will affect front-line services
 - When amending budgets which may affect front-line services
 - When changing the way services are funded and this may impact the quality of the service and who can access it
 - When making a decision that could have a different impact on different groups of people
 - When making staff redundant or changing their roles

Wherever possible, build the EqIA into your usual planning and review processes.

Also consider:

- Is the policy, decision or service likely to be relevant to any people because of their protected characteristics?
- How many people is it likely to affect?
- How significant are its impacts?
- Does it relate to an area where there are known inequalities?
- How vulnerable are the people who will be affected?

If there are potential impacts on people but you decide not to complete an EqIA you should document your reasons why.

⁵ **Title of EqIA:** This should clearly explain what service / policy / strategy / change you are assessing.

⁶ **Data & Information:** Your EqIA needs to be informed by data. You should consider the following:

- What data is relevant to the impact on protected groups is available? (is there an existing EqIA?, local service data, national data, community data, similar proposal in another local authority).
- What further evidence is needed and how can you get it? (e.g. further research or engagement with the affected groups).
- What do you know from service/local data about needs, access and outcomes? Focus on each characteristic in turn.
- What might any local demographic changes or trends mean for the service or function? Also consider national data if appropriate.
- Does data/monitoring show that any policies or practices create particular problems or difficulties for any group(s)?
- Is the service having a positive or negative effect on particular people or groups in the community?

⁷ **What have people told you about the service, function, area?**

- Use service user feedback, complaints, audits
- Conduct specific consultation or engagement and use the results
- Are there patterns or differences in what people from different groups tell you?
- Remember, you must consult appropriately and in an inclusive way with those likely to be affected to fulfil the equality duty.
- You can read LBB [Consultation and Engagement toolkit](#) for full advice or contact the Consultation and Research Manager, rosie.evangelou@barnet.gov.uk for further advice

⁸ **Age:** People of all ages, but consider in particular children and young people, older people and carers, looked after children and young people leaving care. Also consider working age people.

⁹ **Disability:** When looking at disability, consideration should be given to people with different types of impairments: physical (including mobility), learning, aural or sensory (including hearing and vision impairment), visible and non-visible impairment. Consideration should also be given to: people with HIV, people with mental health needs and people with drug and alcohol problems. People with conditions such as diabetes and cancer and some other health conditions also have protection under the Equality Act 2010.

¹⁰ **Gender Reassignment:** In the Act, a transgender person is someone who proposes to, starts or has completed a process to change their gender. A person does not need to be under medical supervision to be protected. Consider transgender people, transsexual people and transvestites.

¹¹ **Marriage and Civil Partnership:** consider married people and civil partners.

¹² **Pregnancy and Maternity:** When looking at pregnancy and maternity, give consideration to pregnant women, breastfeeding mothers, part-time workers, women with caring responsibilities, women who are lone parents and parents on low incomes, women on maternity leave and 'keeping in touch' days.

¹³ **Race/Ethnicity:** Apart from the common ethnic groups, consideration should also be given to Traveller communities, people of other nationalities outside Britain who reside here, refugees and asylum seekers and speakers of other languages.

¹⁴ **Religion and Belief:** Religion includes any religion with a clear structure and belief system. As a minimum you should consider the most common religious groups (Christian, Muslim, Hindu, Jews, Sikh, Buddhist) and people with no religion or philosophical beliefs.

¹⁵ **Sex/Gender:** Consider girls and women, boys and men, married people, civil partners, part-time workers, carers (both of children with disabilities and older cares), parents (mothers and fathers), in particular lone parents and parents on low incomes.

¹⁶ **Sexual Orientation:** The Act protects bisexual, heterosexual, gay and lesbian people.

¹⁷ **Other relevant groups:** You should consider the impact on our service users in other related areas.

¹⁸ **Impact:** Your EqlA must consider fully and properly actual and potential impacts against each protected characteristic:

- The equality duty does not stop changes, but means we must fully consider and address the anticipated impacts on people.
- Be accurate and transparent, but also realistic: don't exaggerate speculative risks and negative impacts.
- Be detailed and specific where you can so decision-makers have a concrete sense of potential effects.
- Questions to ask when assessing whether and how the proposals impact on service users, staff and the wider community:
 - Are one or more protected groups affected differently and/or disadvantaged? How, and to what extent?
 - Is there evidence of higher/lower uptake of a service among different groups? Which, and to what extent?
 - Does the project relate to an area with known inequalities (where national evidence or previous research is available)?
 - If there are likely to be different impacts on different groups, is that consistent with the overall objective?
 - If there is negative differential impact, how can you minimise that while taking into account your overall aims?
- Do the effects amount to unlawful discrimination? If so the plan **must** be modified.
- Does it relate to an area where equality objectives have been set by LBB in our [Barnet 2024 Plan](#) and our [Strategic Equality Objective](#)?

¹⁹ **Cumulative Impact**

You will need to look at whether a single decision or series of decisions might have a greater negative impact on a specific group and at ways in which negative impacts across the council might be minimised or avoided.

²⁰ **Mitigating actions**

-
- Consider mitigating actions that specifically address the impacts you've identified and show how they will remove, reduce or avoid any negative impacts
 - Explain clearly what any mitigating measures are, and the extent to which you think they will reduce or remove the adverse effect
 - Will you need to communicate or provide services in different ways for different groups in order to create a 'level playing field'?
 - State how you can maximise any positive impacts or advance equality of opportunity.
 - If you do not have sufficient equality information, state how you can fill the gaps.

²¹ **Monitoring:** The Equality Duty is an ongoing duty: policies must be kept under review, continuing to give 'due regard' to the duty. If an assessment of a broad proposal leads to more specific proposals, then further monitoring, equality assessment, and consultation are needed.

²² **Outcome:**

- Make a frank and realistic assessment of the overall extent to which the negative impacts can be reduced or avoided by the mitigating measures. Also explain what positive impacts will result from the actions and how you can make the most of these.
- Make it clear if a change is needed to the proposal itself. Is further engagement, research or monitoring needed?
- Make it clear if, as a result of the analysis, the policy/proposal should be stopped.

²³ **Sign off:** Your will need to ensure the EqIA is signed off by your Head of Service, agree whether the EqIA will be published, and agree when the next review date for the EqIA will be.

This page is intentionally left blank

Equalities Impact Assessment (EqIA)

EqIAs make services better for everyone and support value for money by getting services right first time.

EqIAs enable us to consider all the information about a service, policy or strategy from an equalities perspective and then create an action plan to get the best outcomes for service users and staff¹. They analyse how all our work as a council might impact differently on different groups protected from discrimination by the Equality Act 2010². They help us make good decisions and evidence how we have reached them.³

An EqIA needs to be started as a project starts to identify and consider possible differential impacts on people and their lives, inform project planning and, where appropriate, identify mitigating actions. A full EqIA must be completed before any decisions are made or policy agreed so that the EqIA informs that decision or policy. It is also a live document; you should review and update it along with your project plan throughout.

You should first consider whether you need to complete this full EqIA⁴.

Other key points to note:

- Full guidance notes to help you are embedded in this form – see the End Notes or hover the mouse over the numbered notes.
- Please share your EqIA with your Equalities Champion and the final/updated version at the end of the project.
- Major EqIAs should be reviewed by the relevant Head of Service.
- Examples of completed EqIAs can be found on the Equalities Hub

1. Responsibility for the EqIA

Title of proposal ⁵	Homelessness and Rough Sleeping Strategy Review
Name and job title of completing officer	Laura Giles, Head of Strategy and Compliance (The Barnet Group)
Head of service area responsible	Susan Curran, Head of Housing and Regeneration
Equalities Champion supporting the EqIA	Rosie Evangelou, Consultation and Engagement Manager
Performance Management rep	n/a
HR rep (for employment related issues)	n/a
Representative (s) from external stakeholders	n/a

2. Description of proposal

Is this a: (Please tick all that apply)	
New policy /strategy / function / procedure / service <input type="checkbox"/>	Review of Policy /strategy / function / procedure / service <input checked="" type="checkbox"/>
Budget Saving <input type="checkbox"/>	Other <input type="checkbox"/>
If budget saving please specify value below:	If other please specify below:
<p>The proposal being assessed is the review of the council's Homelessness and Rough Sleeping Strategy</p> <p>The Homelessness and Rough Sleeping Strategy has been revised to address the challenges and opportunities identified in the review of the current context and performance. It focuses on three main themes in line with the national code of guidance on homelessness:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Prevent homelessness. 	

- Ensure a sufficient supply of accommodation (also supported by the Housing Strategy).
- Provide support for people who are or have been homeless.

3. Supporting evidence

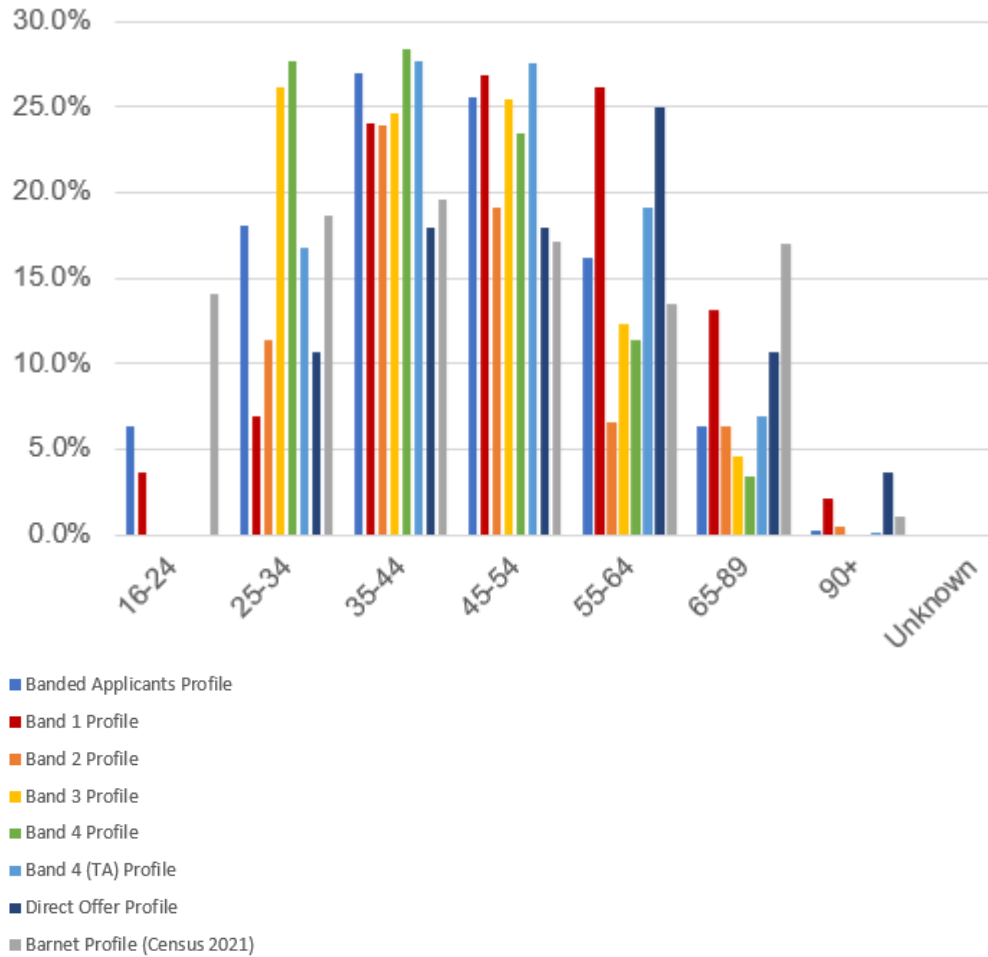
What existing data informs your assessment of the impact of the proposal on protected groups of service users and/or staff?

Identify the main sources of evidence, both quantitative and qualitative, that supports your analysis

Protected group	What does the data tell you⁶? <i>Provide a summary of any relevant demographic data about the borough's population from the <u>Joint Strategic Needs Assessment</u>, or data about the council's workforce</i>	What do people tell you⁷? <i>Provide a summary of relevant consultation and engagement including surveys and other research with stakeholders, newspaper articles, correspondence etc.</i>
------------------------	---	---

Age⁸

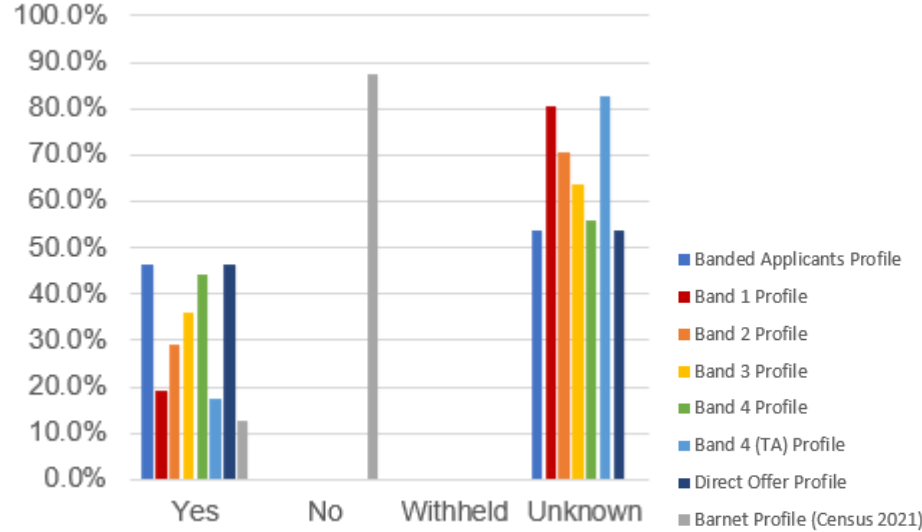
Key profiles:



Compared to the overall borough profile:

- Within the group of those on the Housing Needs Register, there is higher representation of those who are aged 35-54; this group is therefore likely to be more impacted by relevant outcomes due to prevalence in the population.

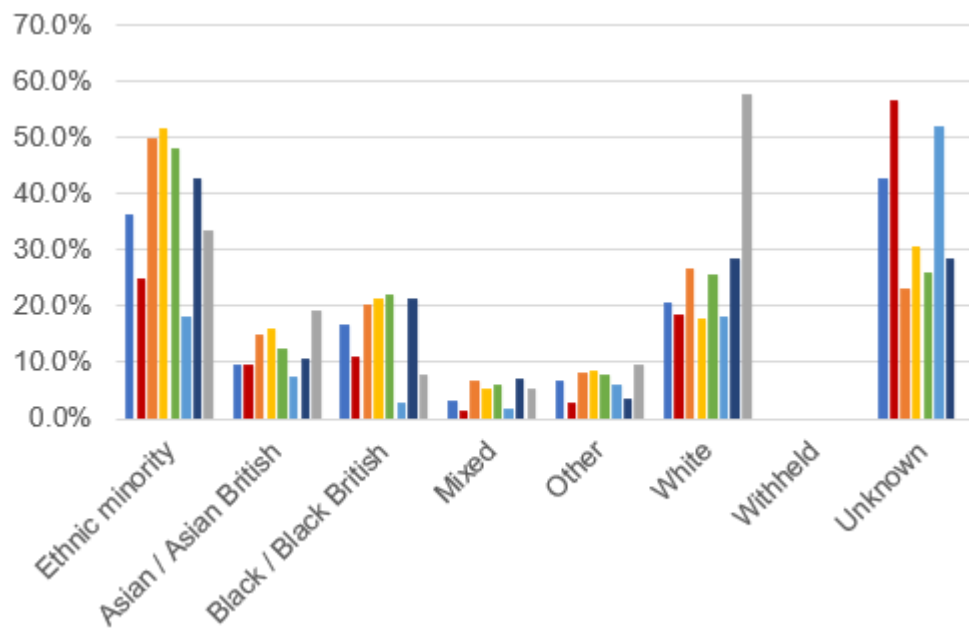
The outcomes of the consultation are included in the Homelessness and Rough Sleeping Strategy consultation summary; due to the number of respondents, analysis by protected characteristic is not considered to be statistically valid and has not been completed. There was strong support for the proposed changes from all respondents.

	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Within the group of those on the Housing Needs Register, there is lower representation of those who are younger (aged 16-24) and older (aged 65+); this group is therefore likely to be less impacted by relevant outcomes due to prevalence in the population. 																																														
<p>Disability⁹</p>	<p>Key profiles:</p>  <table border="1"> <caption>Estimated data from the Disability bar chart</caption> <thead> <tr> <th>Category</th> <th>Banded Applicants Profile</th> <th>Band 1 Profile</th> <th>Band 2 Profile</th> <th>Band 3 Profile</th> <th>Band 4 Profile</th> <th>Band 4 (TA) Profile</th> <th>Direct Offer Profile</th> <th>Barnet Profile (Census 2021)</th> </tr> </thead> <tbody> <tr> <td>Yes</td> <td>45%</td> <td>18%</td> <td>28%</td> <td>35%</td> <td>42%</td> <td>15%</td> <td>45%</td> <td>12%</td> </tr> <tr> <td>No</td> <td>0%</td> <td>0%</td> <td>0%</td> <td>0%</td> <td>0%</td> <td>0%</td> <td>0%</td> <td>85%</td> </tr> <tr> <td>Withheld</td> <td>0%</td> <td>0%</td> <td>0%</td> <td>0%</td> <td>0%</td> <td>0%</td> <td>0%</td> <td>0%</td> </tr> <tr> <td>Unknown</td> <td>52%</td> <td>78%</td> <td>68%</td> <td>62%</td> <td>55%</td> <td>82%</td> <td>52%</td> <td>0%</td> </tr> </tbody> </table> <p>Compared to the overall borough profile:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Within the populations of those on the Housing Needs Register there is higher representation of those who are disabled; this group is therefore likely to be more impacted by relevant outcomes due to prevalence in the population. 	Category	Banded Applicants Profile	Band 1 Profile	Band 2 Profile	Band 3 Profile	Band 4 Profile	Band 4 (TA) Profile	Direct Offer Profile	Barnet Profile (Census 2021)	Yes	45%	18%	28%	35%	42%	15%	45%	12%	No	0%	0%	0%	0%	0%	0%	0%	85%	Withheld	0%	0%	0%	0%	0%	0%	0%	0%	Unknown	52%	78%	68%	62%	55%	82%	52%	0%	<p>The outcomes of the consultation are included in the Homelessness and Rough Sleeping Strategy consultation summary; due to the number of respondents, analysis by protected characteristic is not considered to be statistically valid and has not been completed. There was strong support for the proposed changes from all respondents.</p>
Category	Banded Applicants Profile	Band 1 Profile	Band 2 Profile	Band 3 Profile	Band 4 Profile	Band 4 (TA) Profile	Direct Offer Profile	Barnet Profile (Census 2021)																																							
Yes	45%	18%	28%	35%	42%	15%	45%	12%																																							
No	0%	0%	0%	0%	0%	0%	0%	85%																																							
Withheld	0%	0%	0%	0%	0%	0%	0%	0%																																							
Unknown	52%	78%	68%	62%	55%	82%	52%	0%																																							
<p>Gender reassignment¹⁰</p>	<p>Information currently not captured</p>	<p>The outcomes of the consultation are included in the Homelessness and Rough Sleeping Strategy consultation summary; due to the number of respondents, analysis by protected characteristic is</p>																																													

		not considered to be statistically valid and has not been completed. There was strong support for the proposed changes from all respondents.
Marriage and Civil Partnership ¹¹	Protected characteristic only relevant regarding employment matters	The outcomes of the consultation are included in the Homelessness and Rough Sleeping Strategy consultation summary; due to the number of respondents, analysis by protected characteristic is not considered to be statistically valid and has not been completed. There was strong support for the proposed changes from all respondents.
Pregnancy and Maternity ¹²	Information currently not captured	The outcomes of the consultation are included in the Homelessness and Rough Sleeping Strategy consultation summary; due to the number of respondents, analysis by protected characteristic is not considered to be statistically valid and has not been completed. There was strong support for the

Race/
Ethnicity¹³

Key profiles:



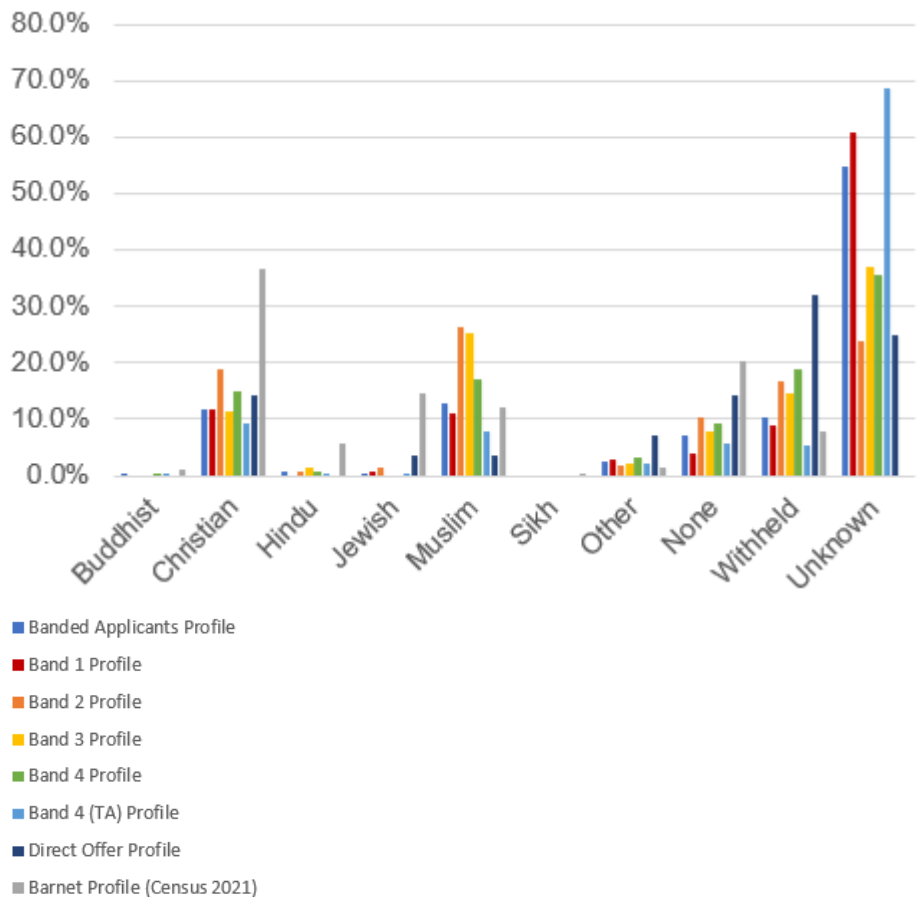
High proportion of data not held regarding those on the Housing Needs Register; however, there is higher representation in this population of those from a Black or Black British background compared to the overall borough.

proposed changes from all respondents.

The outcomes of the consultation are included in the Homelessness and Rough Sleeping Strategy consultation summary; due to the number of respondents, analysis by protected characteristic is not considered to be statistically valid and has not been completed. There was strong support for the proposed changes from all respondents.

Religion or belief¹⁴

Key profiles:



High proportion of data not held regarding those on the Housing Needs Register; however, there is higher representation in this population of those who are Muslim compared to the overall borough, particularly in Bands 2-4.

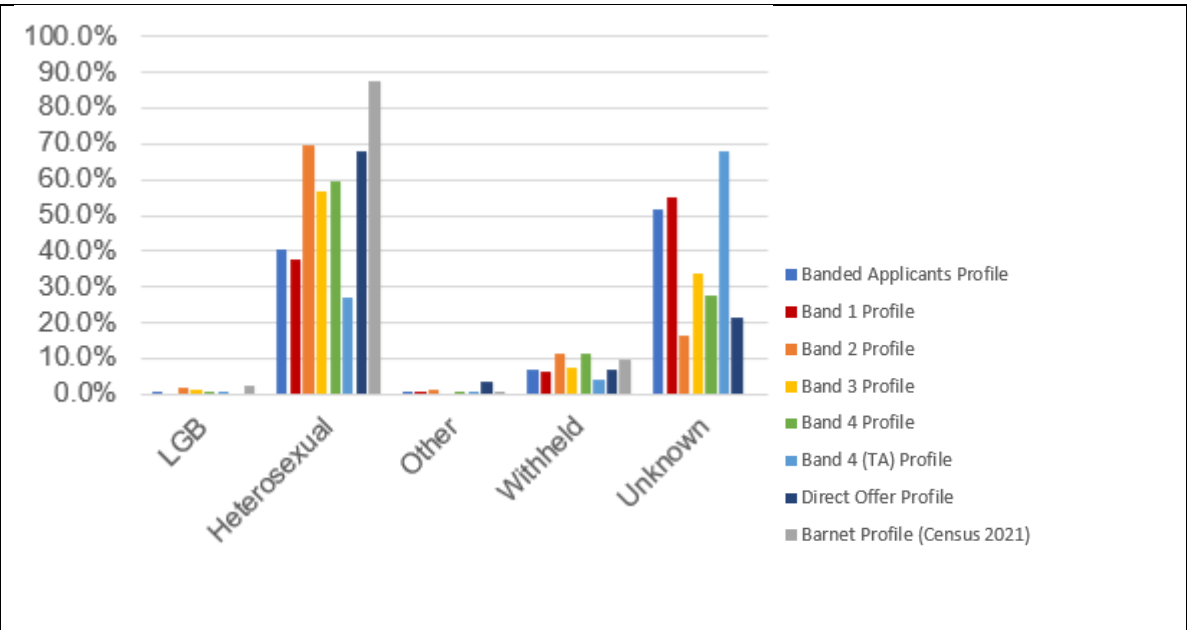
The outcomes of the consultation are included in the Homelessness and Rough Sleeping Strategy consultation summary; due to the number of respondents, analysis by protected characteristic is not considered to be statistically valid and has not been completed. There was strong support for the proposed changes from all respondents.

Sex¹⁵

Key profiles:

The outcomes of the consultation are included in the Homelessness and Rough Sleeping Strategy

	<p>Compared to the overall borough profile, within the population of those on the Housing Needs Register, there is higher representation of those who are female; this group is therefore likely to be more impacted by relevant outcomes due to prevalence in the population.</p>	<p>consultation summary; due to the number of respondents, analysis by protected characteristic is not considered to be statistically valid and has not been completed. There was strong support for the proposed changes from all respondents.</p>
<p>Sexual Orientation¹⁶</p>	<p>Key profiles:</p>	<p>The outcomes of the consultation are included in the Homelessness and Rough Sleeping Strategy consultation summary; due to the number of respondents, analysis by protected characteristic is not considered to be statistically valid and has not been completed. There was strong support for the</p>

	 <p>proposed changes from all respondents.</p>	
Other relevant groups ¹⁷		

4. Assessing impact

What does the evidence tell you about the impact your proposal may have on groups with protected characteristics ¹⁸?

Protected characteristic	For each protected characteristic, explain in detail what the evidence is suggesting and the impact of your proposal (if any). Is there an impact on service deliver? Is there an impact on customer satisfaction? Click the appropriate box on the right to indicate the outcome of your analysis.	Positive impact	Negative impact		No impact
			Minor	Major	

<p>Age</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • The council has corporate parenting duties to young people leaving care. • Due to higher or lower representation in the Housing Needs Register population, some groups will be more / less commonly affected by both the risk of homelessness and/or higher levels of housing need, and the outcomes of the strategy. People aged 35-64 are generally more likely to have registered a housing need. <p>Positive impact expected as a result of the strategy, with a focus on:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Delivering earlier intervention and homelessness prevention with partner agencies. • Improving provision of advice and information to help residents prevent homelessness. • Improved use of data to understand how homelessness is affecting particular groups, including care leavers. • Delivering new council housing and working to provide a range of suitable accommodation for different needs, including care leavers, veterans, and those leaving hospital. • Working in partnership to provide support to people who are, or may be at risk of becoming homeless and those who have been homeless and need support to prevent them becoming homeless. • Providing appropriate housing-related support and personal support to prevent or reduce homelessness, including for rough sleepers and those who are at particular risk such as care leavers, veterans, and people leaving hospital. 	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
<p>Disability</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • People who are disabled often require accessible housing and, in some cases, additional support. • Due to higher representation in the Housing Needs Register population, those who are disabled are likely to be more commonly affected by both the risk of homelessness and/or higher levels of housing need, and the outcomes of the strategy. • As the number of older people increases there could be increasing age related disability in the population as a whole in the future. <p>Positive impact expected as a result of the strategy, with a focus on:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Delivering earlier intervention and homelessness prevention with partner agencies. • Improving provision of advice and information to help residents prevent homelessness. 	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>

	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Improved use of data to understand how homelessness is affecting particular groups, including those with mental ill health, those with disabilities, and those leaving hospital. Delivering new council housing and working to provide a range of suitable accommodation for different needs, including people with social care support needs. Seeking funding to meet diverse housing needs within the borough. Working in partnership to provide support to people who are, or may be at risk of becoming homeless and those who have been homeless and need support to prevent them becoming homeless. Providing appropriate housing-related support and personal support to prevent or reduce homelessness, including for rough sleepers and those who are at particular risk such as people with mental ill health, and people leaving hospital. 				
Gender reassignment	<p>No impact identified as information not captured.</p> <p>We may reasonably expect a positive impact on this group in line with the overall positive impact on all protected characteristics.</p>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>
Marriage and Civil Partnership	<p>No impact identified as information not captured as the protected characteristic is only relevant regarding employment matters; however, we may reasonably expect a positive impact on this group in line with the overall positive impact on all protected characteristics.</p> <p>We may reasonably expect single people to be more likely to live in a House of Multiple Occupancy in the private rented sector than those who are married.</p> <p>Positive impact expected due to priorities within the private rented sector theme, including improving renting conditions.</p>	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
Pregnancy and Maternity	<p>No impact identified as information not captured, however affected individuals may be more likely to require family-sized / larger homes rather than single bedroom homes.</p> <p>We may reasonably expect a positive impact on this group in line with the overall positive impact on all protected characteristics.</p>	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>

<p>Race/ Ethnicity</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Overall, the Census shows that Barnet is becoming more diverse. • Due to higher representation in the Housing Needs Register population, those from a Black or Black British background will be more commonly affected by both the risk of homelessness and/or higher levels of housing need, and the outcomes of the strategy. <p>Positive impact expected as a result of the strategy, with a focus on:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Delivering earlier intervention and homelessness prevention with partner agencies. • Improving provision of advice and information to help residents prevent homelessness. • Improved use of data to understand how homelessness is affecting particular groups, including groups disproportionately affected such as those from ethnic minority backgrounds. • Delivering new council housing and working to provide a range of suitable accommodation for different needs. • Working in partnership to provide support to people who are, or may be at risk of becoming homeless and those who have been homeless and need support to prevent them becoming homeless. • Providing appropriate housing-related support and personal support to prevent or reduce homelessness. 	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
<p>Religion or belief</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • The Housing Needs Register population tends to see larger family sizes for those from a Muslim background, resulting in more need for larger properties. <p>Positive impact expected as a result of the strategy, with a focus on:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Delivering earlier intervention and homelessness prevention with partner agencies. • Improving provision of advice and information to help residents prevent homelessness. • Improved use of data to understand how homelessness is affecting particular groups. • Delivering new council housing, including larger properties, and working to provide a range of suitable accommodation for different needs. • Working in partnership to provide support to people who are, or may be at risk of becoming homeless and those who have been homeless and need support to prevent them becoming homeless. 	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>

	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Providing appropriate housing-related support and personal support to prevent or reduce homelessness. 				
Sex	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Women are more likely to be affected by homelessness as the survivors of domestic abuse. • Women also tend to have higher housing needs due to circumstances including higher likelihood of being in a single parent household. <p>Positive impact expected as a result of the strategy, with a focus on:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Delivering earlier intervention and homelessness prevention with partner agencies. • Improving provision of advice and information to help residents prevent homelessness. • Improved use of data to understand how homelessness is affecting particular groups. • Delivering new council housing and working to provide a range of suitable accommodation for different needs, including survivors of domestic abuse. • Working in partnership to provide support to people who are, or may be at risk of becoming homeless and those who have been homeless and need support to prevent them becoming homeless. • Providing appropriate housing-related support and personal support to prevent or reduce homelessness, including for rough sleepers and those who are at particular risk such as survivors of domestic abuse. 	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
Sexual Orientation	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • No particular housing impact anticipated, however we may reasonably expect a general positive impact on this group in line with the overall positive impact on all protected characteristics. <p>Positive impact expected as a result of the strategy, with a focus on:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Delivering earlier intervention and homelessness prevention with partner agencies. • Improving provision of advice and information to help residents prevent homelessness. • Improved use of data to understand how homelessness is affecting particular groups. 	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>

	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Delivering new council housing and working to provide a range of suitable accommodation for different needs. • Working in partnership to provide support to people who are, or may be at risk of becoming homeless and those who have been homeless and need support to prevent them becoming homeless. • Providing appropriate housing-related support and personal support to prevent or reduce homelessness. 				
--	---	--	--	--	--

5. Other key groups Are there any other vulnerable groups that might be affected by the proposal? <i>These could include carers, people in receipt of care, lone parents, people with low incomes or unemployed</i>	Positive impact	Negative impact		No impact
		Minor	Major	

<p>Key groups</p>	<p>Families and lone parents, people with a low income, people not in employment, education, or training, carers.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • All of these groups may come into contact with housing and homelessness services in Barnet. • Due to higher or lower representation in the Housing Needs Register population, some groups will be more / less commonly affected by both the risk of homelessness and/or higher levels of housing need, and the outcomes of the strategy. • Affordability challenges, with average property prices 15 times the average income, and median monthly rents £1,365; compared to Outer London's median of £1,300 • In 2022, Barnet's unemployment rate was 5.3%; unemployment can increase the risk of homelessness. • Young people who are not in employment, education, or training are at more risk of becoming homeless. <p>Positive impact expected as a result of the strategy, with a focus on:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Delivering earlier intervention and homelessness prevention with partner agencies. • Improving provision of advice and information to help residents prevent homelessness. • Improved use of data to understand how homelessness is affecting particular groups. • Delivering new council housing and working to provide a range of suitable accommodation for different needs. • Working in partnership to provide support to people who are, or may be at risk of becoming homeless and those who have been homeless and need support to prevent them becoming homeless. • Providing appropriate housing-related support and personal support to prevent or reduce homelessness. 	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
--------------------------	---	-------------------------------------	--------------------------	--------------------------	--------------------------

6. Cumulative impact¹⁹
 Considering what else is happening within the council and Barnet could your proposal contribute to a cumulative impact on groups with protected characteristics?

Yes
 No

If you clicked the Yes box, which groups with protected characteristics could be affected and what is the potential impact? Include details in the space below

7. Actions to mitigate or remove negative impact Only complete this section if your proposals may have a negative impact on groups with protected characteristics. These need to be included in the relevant service plan for mainstreaming and performance management purposes.					
Group affected	Potential negative impact	Mitigation measures ²⁰	Monitoring ²¹	Deadline date	Lead Officer
		<i>If you are unable to identify measures to mitigate impact, please state so and provide a brief explanation.</i>	<i>How will you assess whether these measures are successfully mitigating the impact?</i>		

8. Outcome of the Equalities Impact Assessment (EqIA)²²

Please select one of the following four outcomes

Proceed with no changes

The EqIA has not identified any potential for a disproportionate impact and all opportunities to advance equality of opportunity are being addressed

Proceed with adjustments

Adjustments are required to remove/mitigate negative impacts identified by the assessment

Negative impact but proceed anyway

This EqIA has identified negative impacts that are not possible to mitigate. However, it is still reasonable to continue with the activity. Outline the reasons for this and the information used to reach this decision in the space below

Do not proceed

This EqIA has identified negative impacts that cannot be mitigated and it is not possible to continue. Outline the reasons for this and the information used to reach this decision in the space below

Reasons for decision

The Homelessness and Rough Sleeping Strategy has been revised to address the challenges and opportunities identified in the review of the current context and performance. It focuses on three main themes and is principally supported by the Housing Strategy:

- Prevent homelessness.
- Ensure a sufficient supply of accommodation (also supported by the Housing Strategy).
- Provide support for people who are or have been homeless.

Consideration has been given to the overall profile of residents in the borough; those who are registered on the Housing Needs Register are also expected to be significantly affected, and the profile of this group is included for comparison purposes.

The overall impact of the Homelessness and Rough Sleeping Strategy on the protected groups under the Equality Act 2010 is expected to be positive. This is based on the evidence above and the supporting evidence base for the strategy.

There are a number of significant challenges relating to housing and homelessness in Barnet, some of which disproportionately affect the protected groups due to their tendency to be homeless or at risk of homelessness. The strategy is expected to improve this, which gives it a positive impact as a result. The overall impact is expected to be minimal as the strategy will benefit all residents, rather than being targeted at the protected groups unless otherwise stated.

Sign-off

9. Sign off and approval by Head of Service / Strategic lead ²³	
Name Susan Curran	Job title Head of Housing and Regeneration
<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Tick this box to indicate that you have approved this EqIA	Date of approval: 03/07/23
<input type="checkbox"/> Tick this box to indicate if EqIA has been published Date EqIA was published: Embed link to published EqIA:	Date of next review:

Footnotes: guidance for completing the EqIA template

¹ The following principles explain what we must do to fulfil our duties under the Equality Act when considering any new policy or change to services. They must all be met or the EqIA (and any decision based on it) may be open to challenge:

- **Knowledge:** everyone working for the council must be aware of our equality duties and apply them appropriately
- **Timeliness:** the duty applies at the time of considering proposals and before a final decision is taken
- **Real Consideration:** the duty must be an integral and rigorous part of your decision-making and must influence the process.
- **Sufficient Information:** you must assess what information you have and what is needed to give proper consideration.
- **No delegation:** the council is responsible for ensuring that anyone who provides services on our behalf complies with the equality duty.
- **Review:** the equality duty is a continuing duty – it continues after proposals are implemented/reviewed.
- **Proper Record Keeping:** we must keep records of the process and the impacts identified.

² Our duties under the Equality Act 2010

The council has a legal duty under this Act to show that we have identified and considered the impact and potential impact of our activities on all people with ‘protected characteristics’ (see end notes 9-19 for details of the nine protected characteristics). This applies to policies, services (including commissioned services), and our employees.

We use this template to do this and evidence our consideration. You must give ‘due regard’ (pay conscious attention) to the need to:

- **Avoid, reduce or minimise negative impact:** if you identify unlawful discrimination, including victimisation and harassment, you must stop the action and take advice immediately.
- **Promote equality of opportunity:** by
 - Removing or minimising disadvantages suffered by people with a protected characteristic
 - Taking steps to meet the needs of these groups
 - Encouraging people with protected characteristics to participate in public life or any other activity where participation is disproportionately low
 - Consider if there is a need to treat disabled people differently, including more favourable treatment where necessary
- **Foster good relations between people who share a protected characteristic and those who don’t:** e.g. by promoting understanding.

³ EqIAs should always be proportionate to:

- The size of the service or scope of the policy/strategy
- The resources involved
- The size of the likely impact – e.g. the numbers of people affected and their vulnerability

The greater the potential adverse impact of the proposal on a protected group (e.g. disabled people) and the more vulnerable the group is, the more thorough and demanding the process required by the Act will be. Unless they contain sensitive data – EqIAs are public documents. They are published with Cabinet papers, Panel papers and public consultations. They are available on request.

⁴ When to complete an EqIA:

- When developing a new policy, strategy, or service
- When reviewing an existing service, policy or strategy

-
- When making changes that will affect front-line services
 - When amending budgets which may affect front-line services
 - When changing the way services are funded and this may impact the quality of the service and who can access it
 - When making a decision that could have a different impact on different groups of people
 - When making staff redundant or changing their roles

Wherever possible, build the EqIA into your usual planning and review processes.

Also consider:

- Is the policy, decision or service likely to be relevant to any people because of their protected characteristics?
- How many people is it likely to affect?
- How significant are its impacts?
- Does it relate to an area where there are known inequalities?
- How vulnerable are the people who will be affected?

If there are potential impacts on people but you decide not to complete an EqIA you should document your reasons why.

⁵ **Title of EqIA:** This should clearly explain what service / policy / strategy / change you are assessing.

⁶ **Data & Information:** Your EqIA needs to be informed by data. You should consider the following:

- What data is relevant to the impact on protected groups is available? (is there an existing EqIA?, local service data, national data, community data, similar proposal in another local authority).
- What further evidence is needed and how can you get it? (e.g. further research or engagement with the affected groups).
- What do you know from service/local data about needs, access and outcomes? Focus on each characteristic in turn.
- What might any local demographic changes or trends mean for the service or function? Also consider national data if appropriate.
- Does data/monitoring show that any policies or practices create particular problems or difficulties for any group(s)?
- Is the service having a positive or negative effect on particular people or groups in the community?

⁷ **What have people told you about the service, function, area?**

- Use service user feedback, complaints, audits
- Conduct specific consultation or engagement and use the results
- Are there patterns or differences in what people from different groups tell you?
- Remember, you must consult appropriately and in an inclusive way with those likely to be affected to fulfil the equality duty.
- You can read LBB [Consultation and Engagement toolkit](#) for full advice or contact the Consultation and Research Manager, rosie.evangelou@barnet.gov.uk for further advice

⁸ **Age:** People of all ages, but consider in particular children and young people, older people and carers, looked after children and young people leaving care. Also consider working age people.

⁹ **Disability:** When looking at disability, consideration should be given to people with different types of impairments: physical (including mobility), learning, aural or sensory (including hearing and vision impairment), visible and non-visible impairment. Consideration should also be given to: people with HIV, people with mental health needs and people with drug and alcohol problems. People with conditions such as diabetes and cancer and some other health conditions also have protection under the Equality Act 2010.

¹⁰ **Gender Reassignment:** In the Act, a transgender person is someone who proposes to, starts or has completed a process to change their gender. A person does not need to be under medical supervision to be protected. Consider transgender people, transsexual people and transvestites.

¹¹ **Marriage and Civil Partnership:** consider married people and civil partners.

¹² **Pregnancy and Maternity:** When looking at pregnancy and maternity, give consideration to pregnant women, breastfeeding mothers, part-time workers, women with caring responsibilities, women who are lone parents and parents on low incomes, women on maternity leave and 'keeping in touch' days.

¹³ **Race/Ethnicity:** Apart from the common ethnic groups, consideration should also be given to Traveller communities, people of other nationalities outside Britain who reside here, refugees and asylum seekers and speakers of other languages.

¹⁴ **Religion and Belief:** Religion includes any religion with a clear structure and belief system. As a minimum you should consider the most common religious groups (Christian, Muslim, Hindu, Jews, Sikh, Buddhist) and people with no religion or philosophical beliefs.

¹⁵ **Sex/Gender:** Consider girls and women, boys and men, married people, civil partners, part-time workers, carers (both of children with disabilities and older cares), parents (mothers and fathers), in particular lone parents and parents on low incomes.

¹⁶ **Sexual Orientation:** The Act protects bisexual, heterosexual, gay and lesbian people.

¹⁷ **Other relevant groups:** You should consider the impact on our service users in other related areas.

¹⁸ **Impact:** Your EqIA must consider fully and properly actual and potential impacts against each protected characteristic:

- The equality duty does not stop changes, but means we must fully consider and address the anticipated impacts on people.
- Be accurate and transparent, but also realistic: don't exaggerate speculative risks and negative impacts.
- Be detailed and specific where you can so decision-makers have a concrete sense of potential effects.
- Questions to ask when assessing whether and how the proposals impact on service users, staff and the wider community:
 - Are one or more protected groups affected differently and/or disadvantaged? How, and to what extent?
 - Is there evidence of higher/lower uptake of a service among different groups? Which, and to what extent?
 - Does the project relate to an area with known inequalities (where national evidence or previous research is available)?
 - If there are likely to be different impacts on different groups, is that consistent with the overall objective?
 - If there is negative differential impact, how can you minimise that while taking into account your overall aims?
- Do the effects amount to unlawful discrimination? If so the plan **must** be modified.
- Does it relate to an area where equality objectives have been set by LBB in our [Barnet 2024 Plan](#) and our [Strategic Equality Objective](#)?

¹⁹ **Cumulative Impact**

You will need to look at whether a single decision or series of decisions might have a greater negative impact on a specific group and at ways in which negative impacts across the council might be minimised or avoided.

²⁰ **Mitigating actions**

-
- Consider mitigating actions that specifically address the impacts you've identified and show how they will remove, reduce or avoid any negative impacts
 - Explain clearly what any mitigating measures are, and the extent to which you think they will reduce or remove the adverse effect
 - Will you need to communicate or provide services in different ways for different groups in order to create a 'level playing field'?
 - State how you can maximise any positive impacts or advance equality of opportunity.
 - If you do not have sufficient equality information, state how you can fill the gaps.

²¹ **Monitoring:** The Equality Duty is an ongoing duty: policies must be kept under review, continuing to give 'due regard' to the duty. If an assessment of a broad proposal leads to more specific proposals, then further monitoring, equality assessment, and consultation are needed.

²² **Outcome:**

- Make a frank and realistic assessment of the overall extent to which the negative impacts can be reduced or avoided by the mitigating measures. Also explain what positive impacts will result from the actions and how you can make the most of these.
- Make it clear if a change is needed to the proposal itself. Is further engagement, research or monitoring needed?
- Make it clear if, as a result of the analysis, the policy/proposal should be stopped.

²³ **Sign off:** You will need to ensure the EqIA is signed off by your Head of Service, agree whether the EqIA will be published, and agree when the next review date for the EqIA will be.

Equalities Impact Assessment (EqIA)

EqIAs make services better for everyone and support value for money by getting services right first time.

EqIAs enable us to consider all the information about a service, policy or strategy from an equalities perspective and then create an action plan to get the best outcomes for service users and staff¹. They analyse how all our work as a council might impact differently on different groups protected from discrimination by the Equality Act 2010². They help us make good decisions and evidence how we have reached them.³

An EqIA needs to be started as a project starts to identify and consider possible differential impacts on people and their lives, inform project planning and, where appropriate, identify mitigating actions. A full EqIA must be completed before any decisions are made or policy agreed so that the EqIA informs that decision or policy. It is also a live document; you should review and update it along with your project plan throughout.

You should first consider whether you need to complete this full EqIA⁴.

Other key points to note:

- Full guidance notes to help you are embedded in this form – see the End Notes or hover the mouse over the numbered notes.
- Please share your EqIA with your Equalities Champion and the final/updated version at the end of the project.
- Major EqIAs should be reviewed by the relevant Head of Service.
- Examples of completed EqIAs can be found on the Equalities Hub

1. Responsibility for the EqIA

Title of proposal ⁵	Tenancy Strategy Review
Name and job title of completing officer	Rachel Khan, Consultant, Campbell Tickell Laura Giles, Head of Strategy and Compliance (The Barnet Group)
Head of service area responsible	Susan Curran, Head of Housing and Regeneration
Equalities Champion supporting the EqIA	Rosie Evangelou, Consultation and Engagement Manager
Performance Management rep	n/a
HR rep (for employment related issues)	n/a
Representative (s) from external stakeholders	n/a

2. Description of proposal

Is this a: (Please tick all that apply)	
New policy /strategy / function / procedure / service <input type="checkbox"/>	Review of Policy /strategy / function / procedure / service <input checked="" type="checkbox"/>
Budget Saving <input type="checkbox"/>	Other <input type="checkbox"/>
If budget saving, please specify value below:	If other, please specify below:
<p>The proposal being assessed is the review of the council's Tenancy Strategy. Under the terms of the Localism Act 2011, councils in England must prepare and publish a 5-year strategy setting out the matters to which the registered providers of social housing for its district, including the local housing authority itself, are to regard in formulating policies relating to:</p>	

- the types of tenancies they will grant;
- the circumstances under which different types of tenancies will be granted;
- where they elect to grant fixed-term tenancies, the length of the fixed term; and
- the circumstances in which they will grant a further tenancy when the fixed term expires.

In deciding the types of tenancies to grant, the council must consider the:

- purpose of the accommodation;
- needs of individual households;
- legislation around the granting of tenancies;
- sustainability of the community; and
- efficient use of housing stock.

From April 2012, the council began to offer the majority of new tenants a 12-month introductory tenancy followed by a two or five-year fixed-term tenancy. The council established new priorities following the May 2022 local elections, including a commitment to move away from 2- and 5-year flexible tenancies (“flexible tenancies”) and reintroduce secure periodic tenancies for all council tenants.

The Tenancy Strategy has been revised to offer secure periodic tenancies to council tenancies. Lifetime tenancies allow for cohesive and stable neighbourhoods where households can put down roots and become part of the community without the fear of having to move on. These will be preceded by a one-year introductory tenancy for new tenants who have not previously held a social tenancy in line with current good practice.

The draft Tenancy Strategy has also been updated to include the information legally required as set out in the Localism Act 2011, including setting a clear expectation of how Private Registered Providers in the borough will manage tenancies. Through the strategy, the council encourages Private Registered Providers to offer lifetime tenancies, and to charge social rents where possible.

3. Supporting evidence

What existing data informs your assessment of the impact of the proposal on protected groups of service users and/or staff?

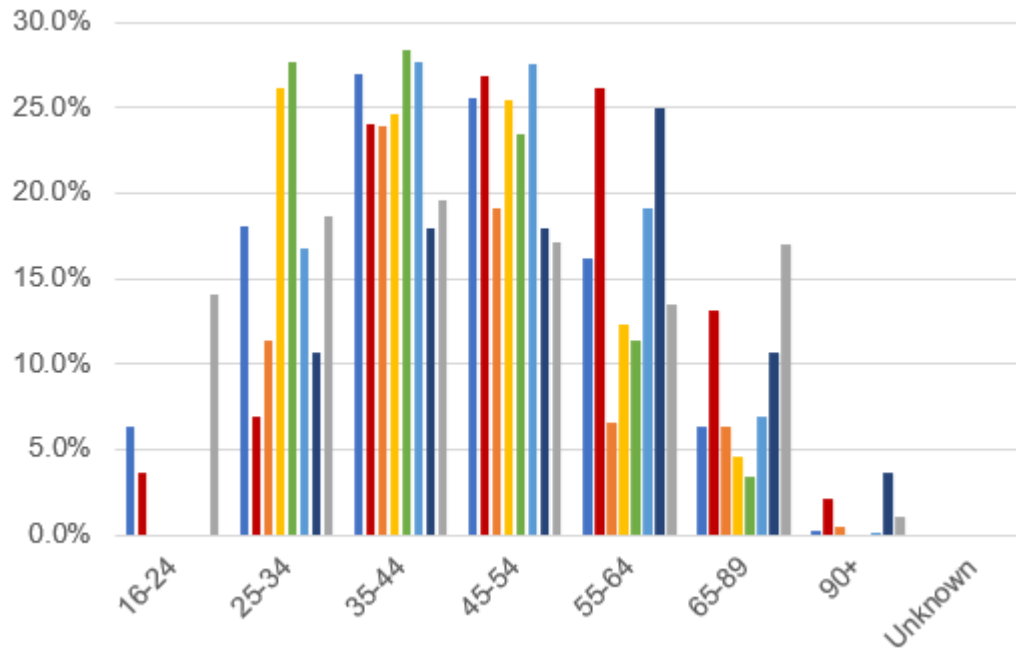
Identify the main sources of evidence, both quantitative and qualitative, that supports your analysis

Protected group	<p>What does the data tell you⁶? <i>Provide a summary of any relevant demographic data about the borough's population from the <u>Joint Strategic Needs Assessment</u>, or data about the council's workforce</i></p>	<p>What do people tell you⁷? <i>Provide a summary of relevant consultation and engagement including surveys and other research with stakeholders, newspaper articles, correspondence etc.</i></p>
	<p>Applicants on the waiting list</p>	

Age⁸

The majority of the banded applicants on the waiting list are aged 25 to 64 and this is higher representation than is in the borough’s overall population. The majority of lettings are spread fairly evenly across bands with higher representation of those aged 35-44 and lower representation of those aged over 65. In the population of current tenants with introductory to flexible tenancies or flexible tenancies, there is higher representation of those aged 35-54. There is lower representation of those aged 65+, as would be expected given the outgoing strategy’s approach to issuing secure periodic tenancies to older people in receipt of state pension.

Profile of banded applicants:

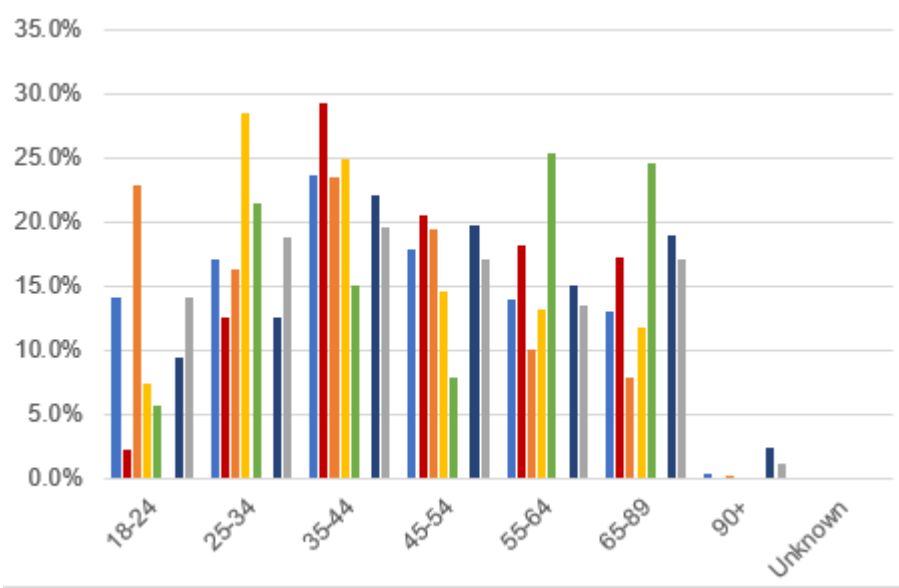


Consultation showed the majority of applicants mirrored the age demographic. Ages 18 – 34 were positive about the removal flexible tenancies and the continued used of introductory tenancies for new tenants. This was reflected in percentages of 90% and above.

Older residents were only slightly less positive, percentages of 7% or less in disagreement with the general aims of the strategy, continued use of introductory tenancies and stopping flexible tenancies.

- Banded Applicants Profile
- Band 1 Profile
- Band 2 Profile
- Band 3 Profile
- Band 4 Profile
- Band 4 (TA) Profile
- Direct Offer Profile
- Barnet Profile (Census 2021)

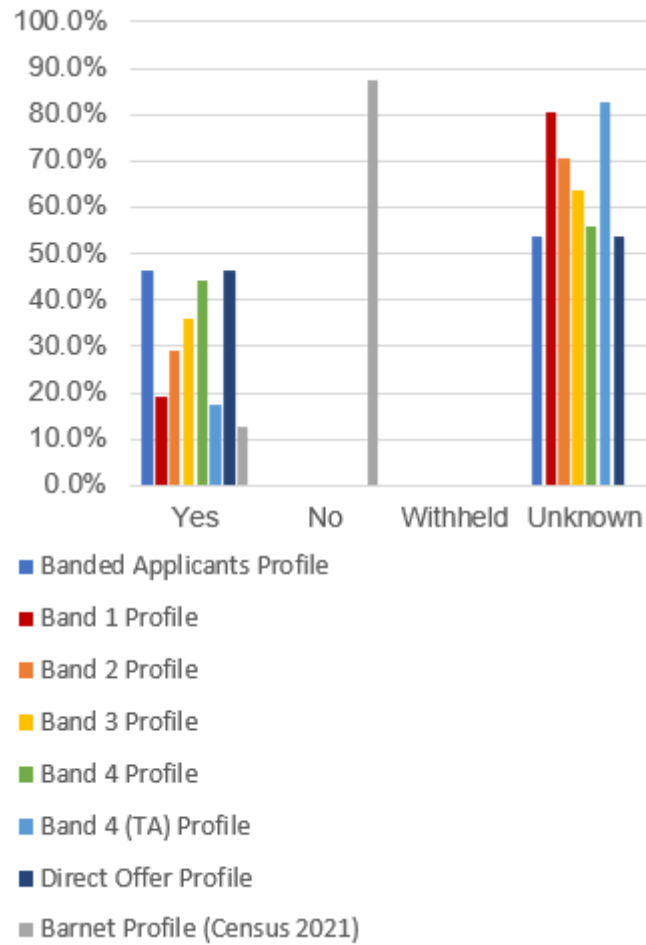
Profile of lettings (April 2021- March 2023):



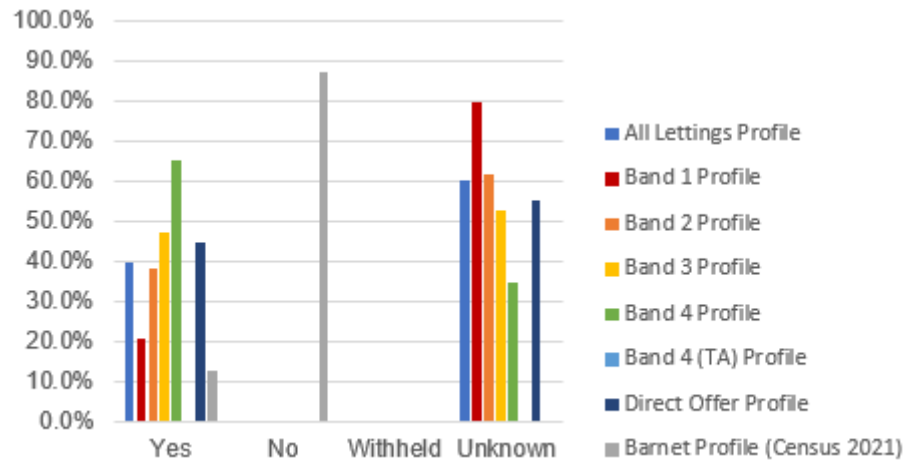
	<p> ■ All Lettings Profile ■ Band 1 Profile ■ Band 2 Profile ■ Band 3 Profile ■ Band 4 Profile ■ Band 4 (TA) Profile ■ Direct Offer Profile ■ Barnet Profile (Census 2021) </p> <p>Profile of existing council tenants with an introductory tenancy that will become a flexible/fixed term tenancy, and those with a flexible/fixed term tenancy:</p> <table border="1"> <caption>Profile of existing council tenants by age group</caption> <thead> <tr> <th>Age Group</th> <th>All Lettings Profile (%)</th> </tr> </thead> <tbody> <tr> <td>18-24</td> <td>11.5</td> </tr> <tr> <td>25-34</td> <td>16.0</td> </tr> <tr> <td>35-44</td> <td>25.5</td> </tr> <tr> <td>45-54</td> <td>27.0</td> </tr> <tr> <td>55-64</td> <td>14.0</td> </tr> <tr> <td>65-89</td> <td>4.0</td> </tr> <tr> <td>90+</td> <td>0.5</td> </tr> <tr> <td>Unknown/Anon</td> <td>0.5</td> </tr> </tbody> </table>	Age Group	All Lettings Profile (%)	18-24	11.5	25-34	16.0	35-44	25.5	45-54	27.0	55-64	14.0	65-89	4.0	90+	0.5	Unknown/Anon	0.5	
Age Group	All Lettings Profile (%)																			
18-24	11.5																			
25-34	16.0																			
35-44	25.5																			
45-54	27.0																			
55-64	14.0																			
65-89	4.0																			
90+	0.5																			
Unknown/Anon	0.5																			
<p>Disability⁹</p>	<p>There is higher representation of banded applicants on the Housing Needs Register who are disabled compared to the borough's overall population.</p> <p>There is also higher representation of those with a disability amongst recent social housing lettings.</p> <p>In the population of current tenants with introductory to flexible tenancies or flexible tenancies, there is slightly lower representation of those who are disabled. This would</p>	<p>Around 24% of respondents indicated they had a disability and of these most either had a mental illness or a mobility impairment.</p>																		

be expected given the outgoing strategy's approach to issuing secure periodic tenancies to households including someone who is disabled.

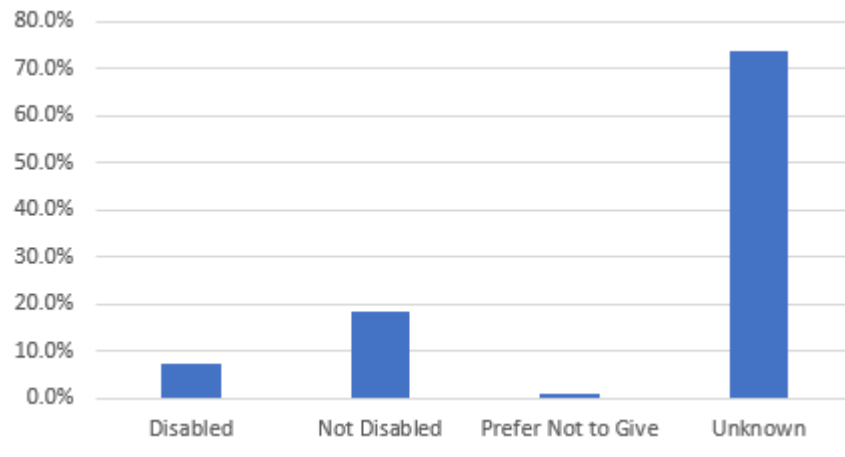
Profile of banded applicants:



Profile of lettings (April 2021- March 2023):



Profile of existing council tenants with an introductory tenancy that will become a flexible/fixed term tenancy, and those with a flexible/fixed term tenancy:

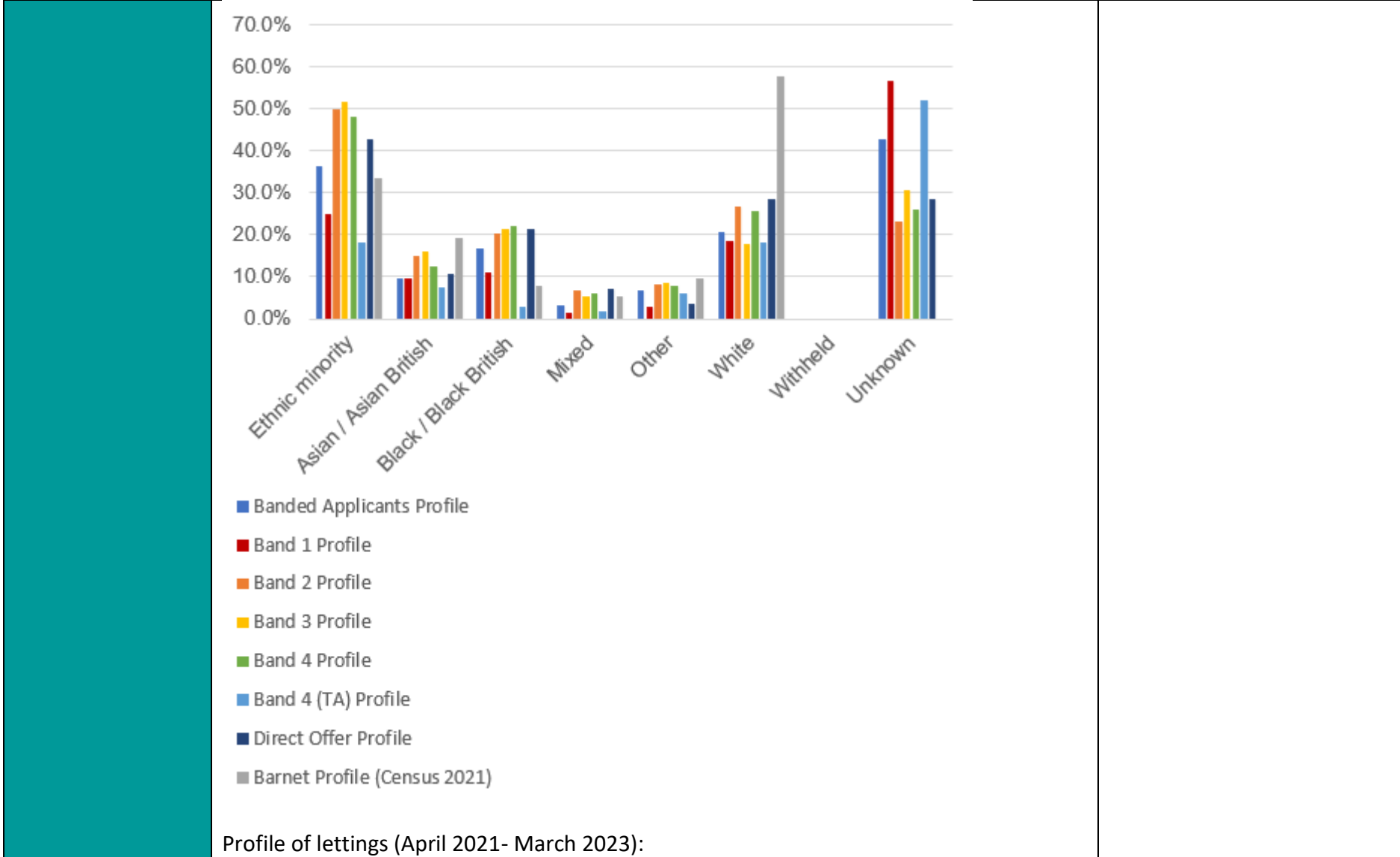


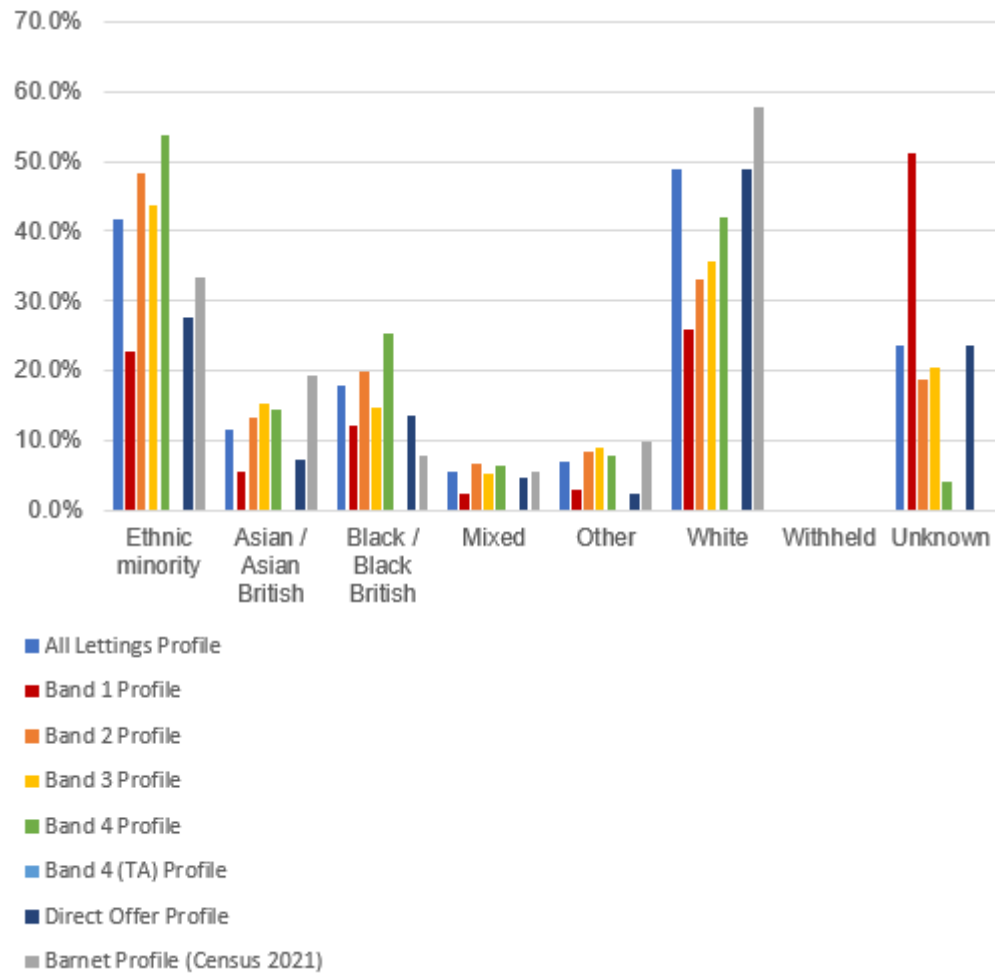
Gender reassignment¹⁰

Information currently not captured.

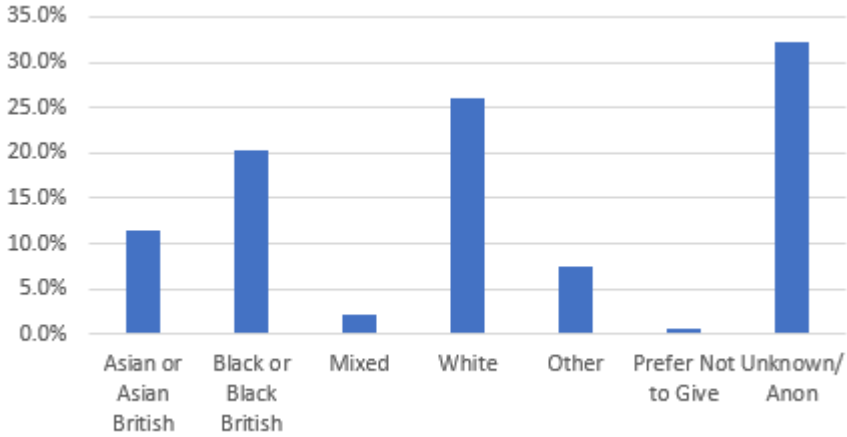
Gender reassignment was not explicitly answered by the respondents. 5.3%

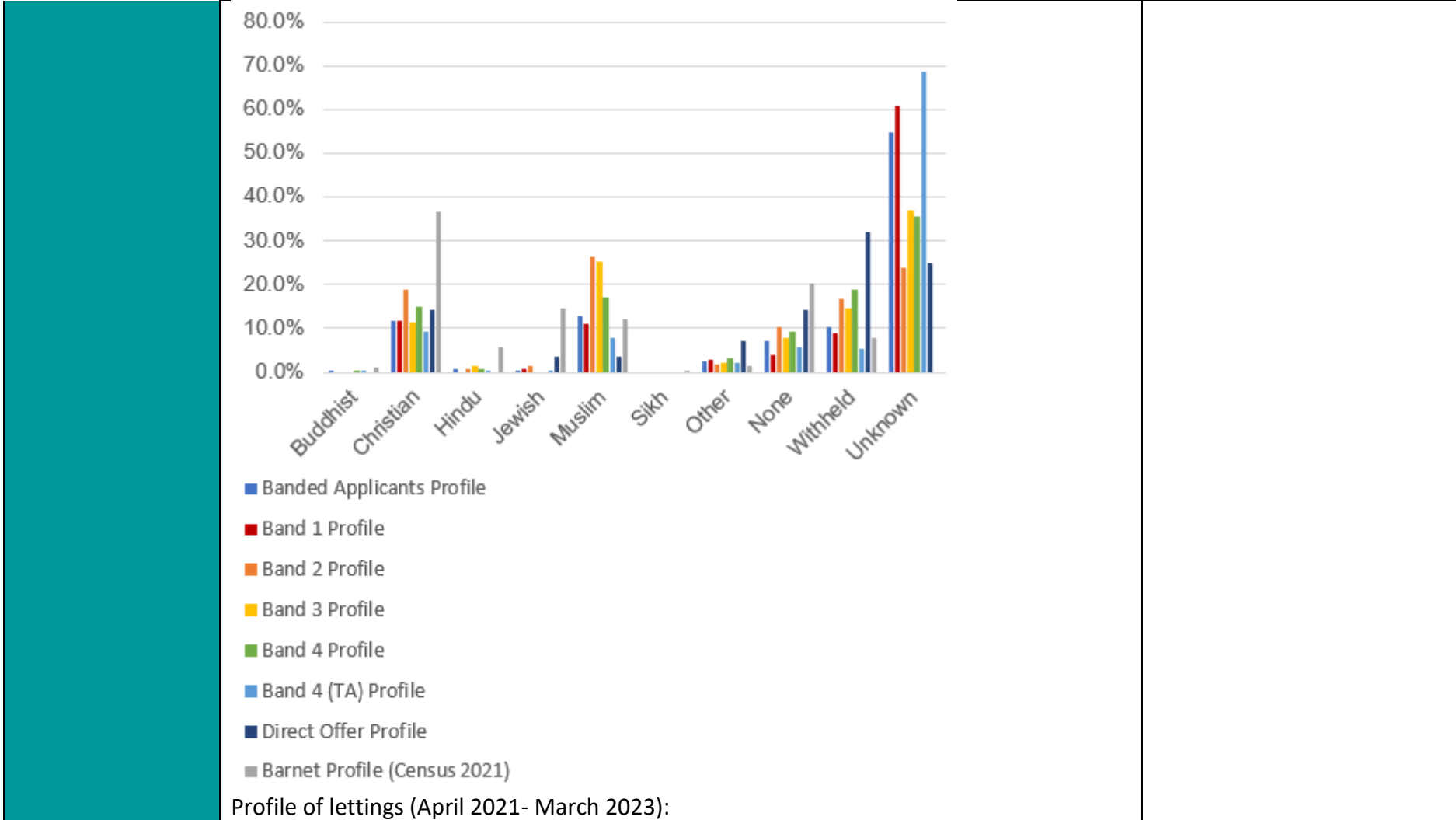
		preferred not to say and may reflect those who fall into this category. The granting of tenancies is blind to gender and without information it is difficult to understand the views of this cohort.
Marriage and Civil Partnership¹¹	Protected characteristic only relevant regarding employment matters	Information not collected during the consultation.
Pregnancy and Maternity¹²	Information currently not captured	Information not collected during the consultation.
Race/ Ethnicity¹³	<p>There is higher representation of banded applicants on the Housing Needs Register who are from a Black / Black British background compared to the borough's overall population.</p> <p>There is also higher representation of those who are from a Black / Black British background amongst recent social housing lettings.</p> <p>In the population of current tenants with introductory to flexible tenancies or flexible tenancies, there is higher representation of those who are from a Black / Black British background.</p> <p>Profile of banded applicants:</p>	<p>Just over 35 respondents to the consultation were white, then fewer for black/African, white other, prefer not to say and Asian in that order.</p> <p>There was overwhelming support of the new strategy across nearly all 10 questions, especially the ones relating to the granting of lifetime tenancies and stopping flexible tenancies.</p>

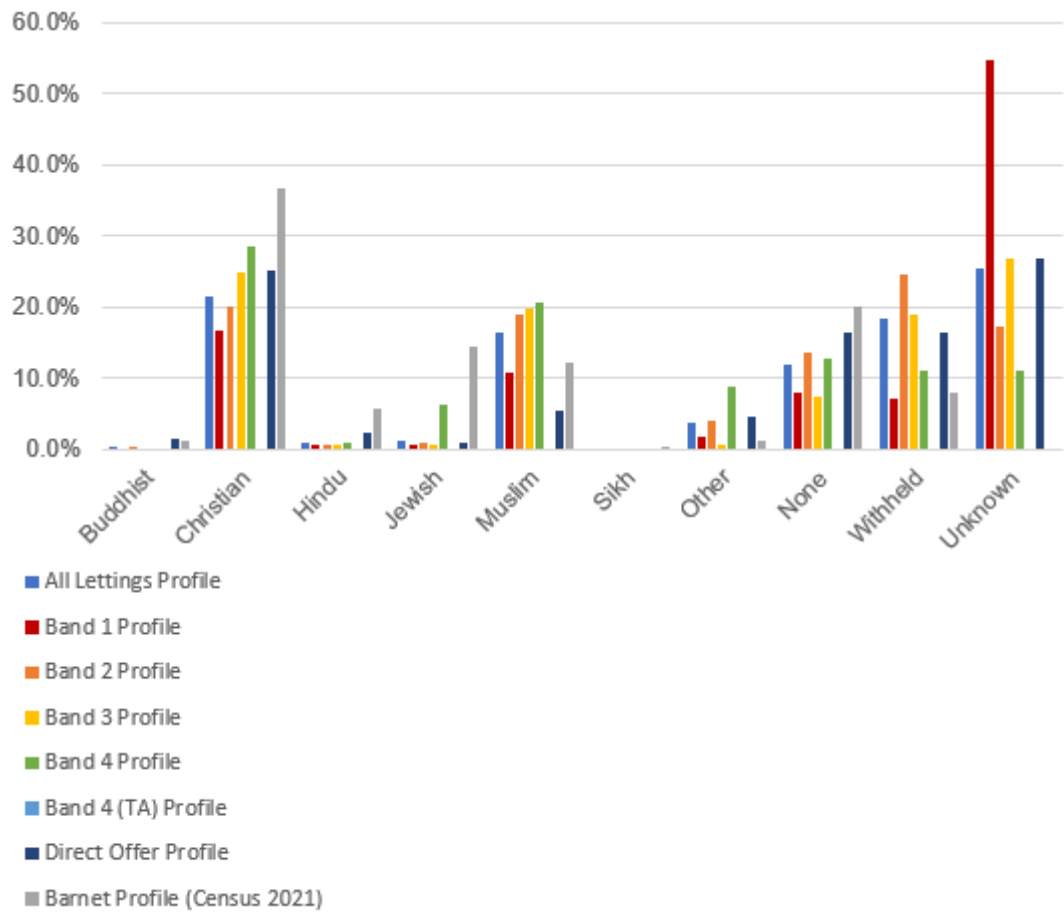




Profile of existing council tenants with an introductory tenancy that will become a flexible/fixed term tenancy, and those with a flexible/fixed term tenancy:

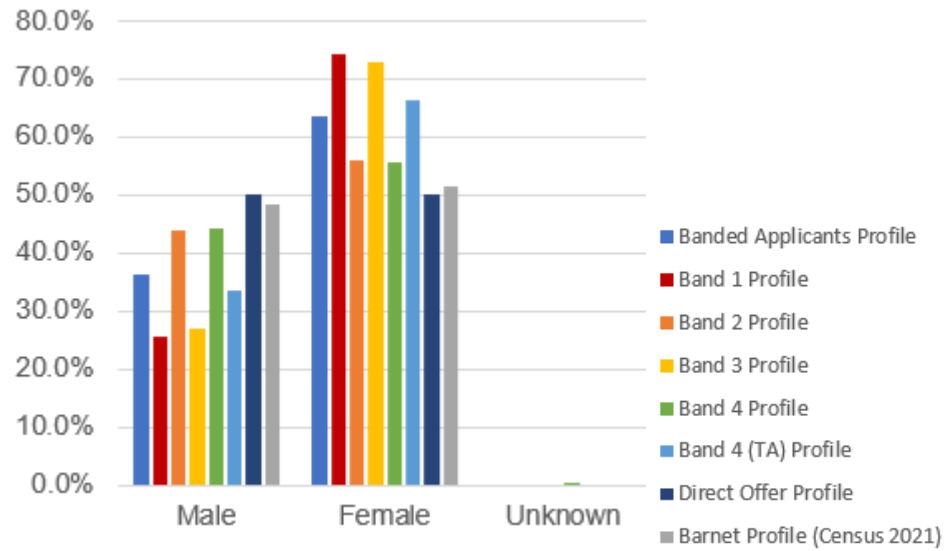
	 <table border="1"> <thead> <tr> <th>Ethnicity</th> <th>Percentage</th> </tr> </thead> <tbody> <tr> <td>Asian or Asian British</td> <td>11.5%</td> </tr> <tr> <td>Black or Black British</td> <td>20.0%</td> </tr> <tr> <td>Mixed</td> <td>2.0%</td> </tr> <tr> <td>White</td> <td>25.5%</td> </tr> <tr> <td>Other</td> <td>7.0%</td> </tr> <tr> <td>Prefer Not to Give</td> <td>0.5%</td> </tr> <tr> <td>Unknown/Anon</td> <td>31.5%</td> </tr> </tbody> </table>	Ethnicity	Percentage	Asian or Asian British	11.5%	Black or Black British	20.0%	Mixed	2.0%	White	25.5%	Other	7.0%	Prefer Not to Give	0.5%	Unknown/Anon	31.5%	
Ethnicity	Percentage																	
Asian or Asian British	11.5%																	
Black or Black British	20.0%																	
Mixed	2.0%																	
White	25.5%																	
Other	7.0%																	
Prefer Not to Give	0.5%																	
Unknown/Anon	31.5%																	
<p>Religion or belief¹⁴</p>	<p>There is slightly higher representation of those who are Muslim amongst recent social housing lettings.</p> <p>In the population of current tenants with introductory to flexible tenancies or flexible tenancies, there is slightly higher representation of those who are Muslim.</p> <p>Profile of banded applicants:</p>	<p>Around 50 respondents were Christian and nearly 30 were Muslim. The rest preferred not to say or had no religion for the most part. There was overall support for the strategy, its aims the tenancies it would allow social landlords to grant and the increased sustainment measures.</p>																



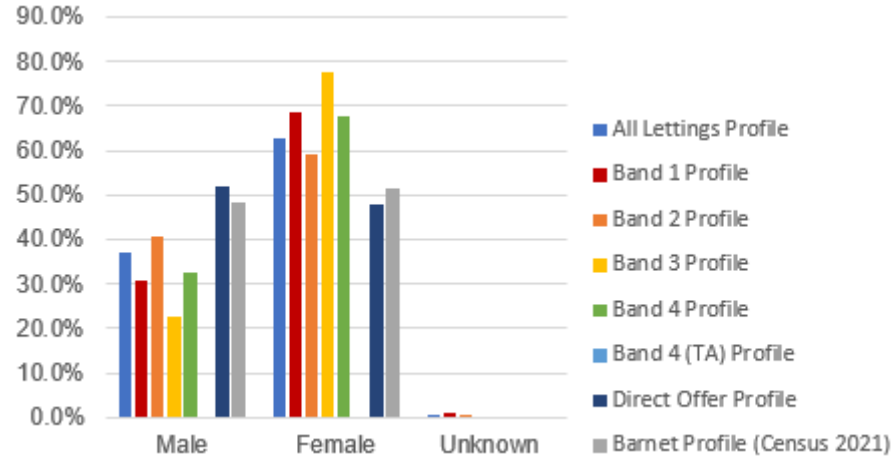


Profile of existing council tenants with an introductory tenancy that will become a flexible/fixed term tenancy, and those with a flexible/fixed term tenancy:

	<table border="1"> <caption>Religion Distribution Data</caption> <thead> <tr> <th>Religion</th> <th>Percentage</th> </tr> </thead> <tbody> <tr><td>Buddhist</td><td>0.0%</td></tr> <tr><td>Christian</td><td>20.0%</td></tr> <tr><td>Hindu</td><td>0.0%</td></tr> <tr><td>Humanist</td><td>0.0%</td></tr> <tr><td>Jain</td><td>0.0%</td></tr> <tr><td>Jewish</td><td>0.0%</td></tr> <tr><td>Muslim</td><td>15.0%</td></tr> <tr><td>Other</td><td>5.0%</td></tr> <tr><td>Sikh</td><td>0.0%</td></tr> <tr><td>No Religion</td><td>10.0%</td></tr> <tr><td>Prefer Not to Give</td><td>5.0%</td></tr> <tr><td>Unknown/ Anon</td><td>45.0%</td></tr> </tbody> </table>	Religion	Percentage	Buddhist	0.0%	Christian	20.0%	Hindu	0.0%	Humanist	0.0%	Jain	0.0%	Jewish	0.0%	Muslim	15.0%	Other	5.0%	Sikh	0.0%	No Religion	10.0%	Prefer Not to Give	5.0%	Unknown/ Anon	45.0%	
Religion	Percentage																											
Buddhist	0.0%																											
Christian	20.0%																											
Hindu	0.0%																											
Humanist	0.0%																											
Jain	0.0%																											
Jewish	0.0%																											
Muslim	15.0%																											
Other	5.0%																											
Sikh	0.0%																											
No Religion	10.0%																											
Prefer Not to Give	5.0%																											
Unknown/ Anon	45.0%																											
Sex ¹⁵	<p>There is higher representation of banded applicants on the Housing Needs Register who are female compared to the borough’s overall population.</p> <p>There is also higher representation of those who are female amongst recent social housing lettings.</p> <p>In the population of current tenants with introductory to flexible tenancies or flexible tenancies, there is higher representation of those who are female.</p> <p>Profile of banded applicants:</p>	<p>61% of respondents were female and 32% male with the rest non binary or preferring not to say.</p> <p>Support for the new tenancy strategy was in the high 80% across the majority of the 10 questions.</p>																										

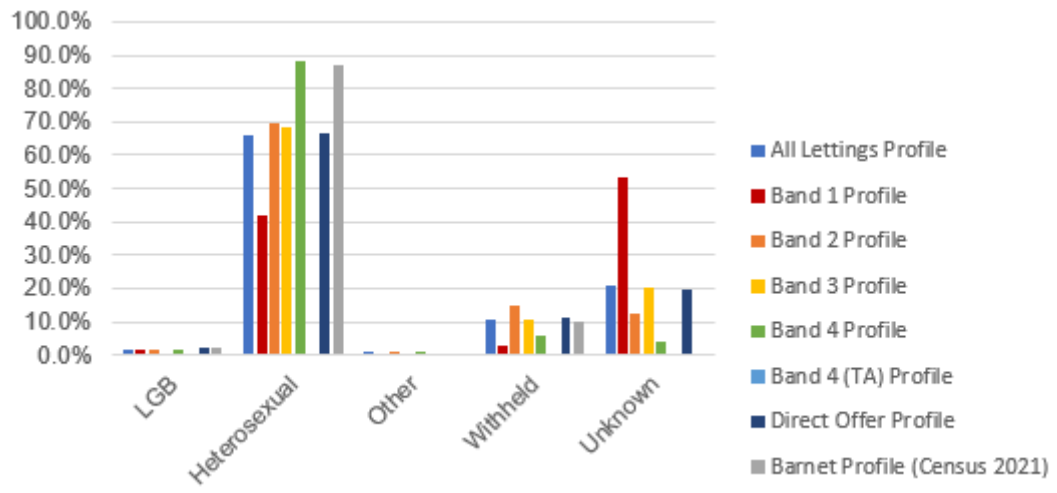


Profile of lettings (April 2021- March 2023):

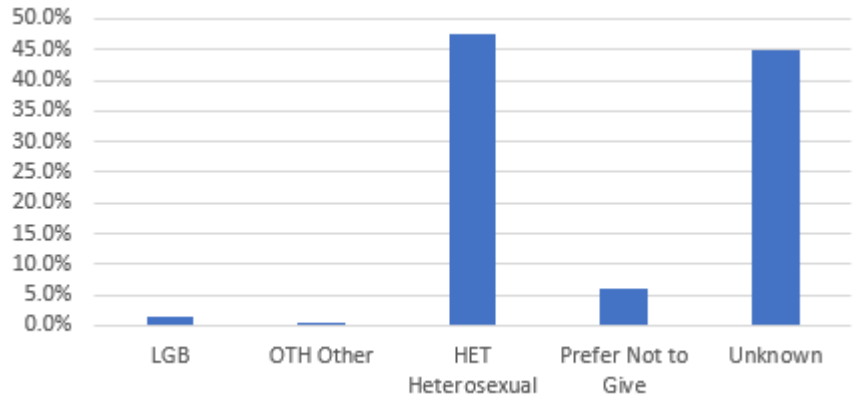


Profile of existing council tenants with an introductory tenancy that will become a flexible/fixed term tenancy, and those with a flexible/fixed term tenancy:

<p>Sexual Orientation¹⁶</p>	<p>Profile of banded applicants:</p> <p>Profile of lettings (April 2021- March 2023):</p>	<p>85% of respondents were heterosexual. With 14% LGB and the rest preferring not to say. There was huge support for the new strategy across these groups.</p>



Profile of existing council tenants with an introductory tenancy that will become a flexible/fixed term tenancy, and those with a flexible/fixed term tenancy:



Other relevant groups¹⁷

4. Assessing impact

What does the evidence tell you about the impact your proposal may have on groups with protected characteristics ¹⁸?

Protected characteristic	For each protected characteristic, explain in detail what the evidence is suggesting and the impact of your proposal (if any). Is there an impact on service deliver? Is there an impact on customer satisfaction? Click the appropriate box on the right to indicate the outcome of your analysis.	Positive impact	Negative impact		No impact
			Minor	Major	
Age	<p>The majority of applicants and flexible tenants fall within the 25 to 64 age range.</p> <p>Applicants going into older person accommodation are not granted flexible tenancies currently and with the new strategy this will not change. As the distribution of age and lettings is broad, ceasing to grant flexible tenancies will affect all age groups evenly.</p> <p>For tenancy variations following approval of the strategy, the proposal is to allow those within 9 months of the end of the flexible tenancy to migrate to secure tenancies and those who have longer to go to vary their tenancy to a secure one. This will positively impact this age range.</p> <p>Overall, the strategy is expected to have a positive impact due to the change to secure periodic tenancies for all council tenants that is expected to allow for cohesive and stable neighbourhoods where households can put down roots and become part of the community without the fear of having to move on</p>	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
Disability	<p>For those who are disabled, the impact is positive as the flexible tenancy can be hard to understand and the review can at times cause stress.</p> <p>The outgoing Tenancy Strategy commits the council to issuing secure periodic tenancies to households with a member who is disabled, so the positive impact of the proposed changes are expected to be minimal. Nonetheless, we might expect that some applicants with mental ill health could fall outside the existing provisions, and therefore the changes proposed in the strategy will greatly assist this group. Flexible tenancies require the reviews and decisions based on conduct which does not always make it easy for those suffering with a mental illness to engage. The smoother harmonised approach to tenancy management proposed by the new tenancy strategy will remove</p>	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>

	<p>this to some degree. Support for more vulnerable residents is a key aim of the new strategy with measures for tenancy sustainment outlined for all social landlords.</p> <p>Regarding tenancy migration, existing flexible tenants will be asked to vary their tenancy ahead of time to a lifetime one, regardless of disability. If they prefer not, it will remain as it is until the time lapses and they convert. There is no disadvantage. Flexible tenants will be walked through their rights and the process of variation which is not mandatory. Advocates and Support Workers will be invited in as necessary to assist the tenant through the variation process.</p> <p>The existence of a disability is not as well known as some of the other demographics in some cases and bands this rises to 80% for the higher bands. Only a small proportion of adapted units are let per year. The loss of flexible tenancies can only positively impact on people with a disability.</p> <p>Overall, the strategy is expected to have a positive impact due to the change to secure periodic tenancies for all council tenants that is expected to allow for cohesive and stable neighbourhoods where households can put down roots and become part of the community without the fear of having to move on</p>				
<p>Gender reassignment</p>	<p>There is no information held on gender reassignment, and it is not expected that there will be a specific impact in relation to the strategy.</p> <p>However, we may reasonably expect a broad positive impact on individuals who have this protected characteristic in line with the anticipated overall positive impact on all individuals affected by the strategy. This impact is not based on the protected characteristics, but the change to secure periodic tenancies for all council tenants is expected to allow for cohesive and stable neighbourhoods where households can put down roots and become part of the community without the fear of having to move on.</p>	<p><input type="checkbox"/></p>	<p><input type="checkbox"/></p>	<p><input type="checkbox"/></p>	<p><input checked="" type="checkbox"/></p>

<p>Marriage and Civil Partnership</p>	<p>There is no information held on gender reassignment, and it is not expected that there will be a specific impact in relation to the strategy.</p> <p>However, we may reasonably expect a broad positive impact on individuals who have this protected characteristic in line with the anticipated overall positive impact on all individuals affected by the strategy. This impact is not based on the protected characteristics, but the change to secure periodic tenancies for all council tenants is expected to allow for cohesive and stable neighbourhoods where households can put down roots and become part of the community without the fear of having to move on.</p>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>
<p>Pregnancy and Maternity</p>	<p>There is no information held on gender reassignment, and it is not expected that there will be a specific impact in relation to the policy.</p> <p>However, we may reasonably expect a broad positive impact on individuals who have this protected characteristic in line with the anticipated overall positive impact on all individuals affected by the strategy. This impact is not based on the protected characteristics, but the change to secure periodic tenancies for all council tenants is expected to allow for cohesive and stable neighbourhoods where households can put down roots and become part of the community without the fear of having to move on.</p>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>
<p>Race/ Ethnicity</p>	<p>Due to high representation in the relevant affected populations, we expect those from a Black / Black British background to be particularly affected by the outcomes of the strategy.</p> <p>Overall, the strategy is expected to have a positive impact due to the change to secure periodic tenancies for all council tenants that is expected to allow for cohesive and stable neighbourhoods where households can put down roots and become part of the community without the fear of having to move on</p>	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
<p>Religion or belief</p>	<p>Whilst the religious beliefs of the majority of applicants is unknown, there is high representation of those who are Muslim; this group is therefore expected to be particularly affected by the outcomes of the strategy due to prevalence in the population.</p> <p>Overall, the strategy is expected to have a positive impact due to the change to secure periodic tenancies for all council tenants that is expected to allow for cohesive and stable neighbourhoods where households can put down roots and become part of the community without the fear of having to move on</p>	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>

<p>Sex</p>	<p>Females are highly represented within the affected groups, and therefore are expected to be particularly affected by the outcomes of the strategy due to prevalence in the population. Women are generally more likely to have a higher housing need due to the increased likelihood that they will be within a single parent household.</p> <p>Overall, the strategy is expected to have a positive impact due to the change to secure periodic tenancies for all council tenants that is expected to allow for cohesive and stable neighbourhoods where households can put down roots and become part of the community without the fear of having to move on</p>	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
<p>Sexual Orientation</p>	<p>There is limited information held on sexual orientation, and it is not expected that there will be a specific impact in relation to the policy.</p> <p>However, we may reasonably expect a broad positive impact on individuals who have this protected characteristic in line with the anticipated overall positive impact on all individuals affected by the strategy. This impact is not based on the protected characteristics, but the change to secure periodic tenancies for all council tenants is expected to allow for cohesive and stable neighbourhoods where households can put down roots and become part of the community without the fear of having to move on.</p>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>

<p>5. Other key groups</p> <p>Are there any other vulnerable groups that might be affected by the proposal? <i>These could include carers, people in receipt of care, lone parents, people with low incomes or unemployed</i></p>	<p>Positive impact</p>	<p>Negative impact</p>		<p>No impact</p>
		<p>Minor</p>	<p>Major</p>	

Key groups	Families and lone parents, people with a low income, people not in employment, education, or training, carers, all may come into contact with housing services in Barnet and due to the nature of social housing are more likely to be highly represented within the affected populations.				
	We may reasonably expect a broad positive impact on these group in line with the overall positive impact on all protected characteristics.	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
	Overall, the strategy is expected to have a positive impact due to the change to secure periodic tenancies for all council tenants that is expected to allow for cohesive and stable neighbourhoods where households can put down roots and become part of the community without the fear of having to move on				

6. Cumulative impact¹⁹

Considering what else is happening within the council and Barnet could your proposal contribute to a cumulative impact on groups with protected characteristics?

Yes No

If you clicked the Yes box, which groups with protected characteristics could be affected and what is the potential impact? Include details in the space below

7. Actions to mitigate or remove negative impact

Only complete this section if your proposals may have a negative impact on groups with protected characteristics. These need to be included in the relevant service plan for mainstreaming and performance management purposes.

Group affected	Potential negative impact	Mitigation measures ²⁰ <i>If you are unable to identify measures to mitigate impact, please state so and provide a brief explanation.</i>	Monitoring ²¹ <i>How will you assess whether these measures are successfully mitigating the impact?</i>	Deadline date	Lead Officer

8. Outcome of the Equalities Impact Assessment (EqIA)²²

Please select one of the following four outcomes

Proceed with no changes

The EqIA has not identified any potential for a disproportionate impact and all opportunities to advance equality of opportunity are being addressed

Proceed with adjustments

Adjustments are required to remove/mitigate negative impacts identified by the assessment

Negative impact but proceed anyway

This EqIA has identified negative impacts that are not possible to mitigate. However, it is still reasonable to continue with the activity. Outline the reasons for this and the information used to reach this decision in the space below

Do not proceed

This EqIA has identified negative impacts that cannot be mitigated, and it is not possible to continue. Outline the reasons for this and the information used to reach this decision in the space below

Reasons for decision

The Tenancy Strategy has been revised to focus on the priorities for the administration that were established in the Labour Group's local election manifesto in 2022. The significant change being implemented is for the council to cease to issue flexible / fixed term tenancies, and instead to issue secure periodic ("lifetime") tenancies to all those being housed in council-owned social housing. This will remain subject to a one-year introductory tenancy for the majority of applicants.

The overall impact of the Housing Strategy on the protected groups under the Equality Act 2010 is expected to be positive. The new strategy proposes lifetime tenancies after 12 months if all goes well and this will benefit all tenants as it is expected to allow for cohesive and stable neighbourhoods where households can put down roots and become part of the community without the fear of having to move on.

A wider positive impact is expected as the Tenancy Strategy also encourages registered providers operating within the borough to adopt a similar approach to issuing tenancies, in addition to encouraging tenancy sustainment activities to minimise tenancy loss.

Whilst the strategies are not targeted at the protected groups, some groups will be more likely to be affected due to their tendency to be eligible for and/or live in the social housing sector.

Sign-off

9. Sign off and approval by Head of Service / Strategic lead²³

Name Susan Curran	Job title Head of Housing and Regeneration
<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Tick this box to indicate that you have approved this EqIA	Date of approval: 03/07//23
<input type="checkbox"/> Tick this box to indicate if EqIA has been published Date EqIA was published: Embed link to published EqIA:	Date of next review:

Footnotes: guidance for completing the EqIA template

¹ The following principles explain what we must do to fulfil our duties under the Equality Act when considering any new policy or change to services. They must all be met or the EqIA (and any decision based on it) may be open to challenge:

- **Knowledge:** everyone working for the council must be aware of our equality duties and apply them appropriately
- **Timeliness:** the duty applies at the time of considering proposals and before a final decision is taken
- **Real Consideration:** the duty must be an integral and rigorous part of your decision-making and must influence the process.
- **Sufficient Information:** you must assess what information you have and what is needed to give proper consideration.
- **No delegation:** the council is responsible for ensuring that anyone who provides services on our behalf complies with the equality duty.
- **Review:** the equality duty is a continuing duty – it continues after proposals are implemented/reviewed.
- **Proper Record Keeping:** we must keep records of the process and the impacts identified.

² Our duties under the Equality Act 2010

The council has a legal duty under this Act to show that we have identified and considered the impact and potential impact of our activities on all people with ‘protected characteristics’ (see end notes 9-19 for details of the nine protected characteristics). This applies to policies, services (including commissioned services), and our employees.

We use this template to do this and evidence our consideration. You must give ‘due regard’ (pay conscious attention) to the need to:

- **Avoid, reduce or minimise negative impact:** if you identify unlawful discrimination, including victimisation and harassment, you must stop the action and take advice immediately.
- **Promote equality of opportunity:** by
 - Removing or minimising disadvantages suffered by people with a protected characteristic
 - Taking steps to meet the needs of these groups
 - Encouraging people with protected characteristics to participate in public life or any other activity where participation is disproportionately low
 - Consider if there is a need to treat disabled people differently, including more favourable treatment where necessary
- **Foster good relations between people who share a protected characteristic and those who don’t:** e.g. by promoting understanding.

³ EqIAs should always be proportionate to:

- The size of the service or scope of the policy/strategy
- The resources involved
- The size of the likely impact – e.g. the numbers of people affected and their vulnerability

The greater the potential adverse impact of the proposal on a protected group (e.g. disabled people) and the more vulnerable the group is, the more thorough and demanding the process required by the Act will be. Unless they contain sensitive data – EqIAs are public documents. They are published with Cabinet papers, Panel papers and public consultations. They are available on request.

⁴ When to complete an EqIA:

- When developing a new policy, strategy, or service
- When reviewing an existing service, policy or strategy

-
- When making changes that will affect front-line services
 - When amending budgets which may affect front-line services
 - When changing the way services are funded and this may impact the quality of the service and who can access it
 - When making a decision that could have a different impact on different groups of people
 - When making staff redundant or changing their roles

Wherever possible, build the EqIA into your usual planning and review processes.

Also consider:

- Is the policy, decision or service likely to be relevant to any people because of their protected characteristics?
- How many people is it likely to affect?
- How significant are its impacts?
- Does it relate to an area where there are known inequalities?
- How vulnerable are the people who will be affected?

If there are potential impacts on people but you decide not to complete an EqIA you should document your reasons why.

⁵ **Title of EqIA:** This should clearly explain what service / policy / strategy / change you are assessing.

⁶ **Data & Information:** Your EqIA needs to be informed by data. You should consider the following:

- What data is relevant to the impact on protected groups is available? (is there an existing EqIA?, local service data, national data, community data, similar proposal in another local authority).
- What further evidence is needed and how can you get it? (e.g. further research or engagement with the affected groups).
- What do you know from service/local data about needs, access and outcomes? Focus on each characteristic in turn.
- What might any local demographic changes or trends mean for the service or function? Also consider national data if appropriate.
- Does data/monitoring show that any policies or practices create particular problems or difficulties for any group(s)?
- Is the service having a positive or negative effect on particular people or groups in the community?

⁷ **What have people told you about the service, function, area?**

- Use service user feedback, complaints, audits
- Conduct specific consultation or engagement and use the results
- Are there patterns or differences in what people from different groups tell you?
- Remember, you must consult appropriately and in an inclusive way with those likely to be affected to fulfil the equality duty.
- You can read LBB [Consultation and Engagement toolkit](#) for full advice or contact the Consultation and Research Manager, rosie.evangelou@barnet.gov.uk for further advice

⁸ **Age:** People of all ages, but consider in particular children and young people, older people and carers, looked after children and young people leaving care. Also consider working age people.

⁹ **Disability:** When looking at disability, consideration should be given to people with different types of impairments: physical (including mobility), learning, aural or sensory (including hearing and vision impairment), visible and non-visible impairment. Consideration should also be given to: people with HIV, people with mental health needs and people with drug and alcohol problems. People with conditions such as diabetes and cancer and some other health conditions also have protection under the Equality Act 2010.

¹⁰ **Gender Reassignment:** In the Act, a transgender person is someone who proposes to, starts or has completed a process to change their gender. A person does not need to be under medical supervision to be protected. Consider transgender people, transsexual people and transvestites.

¹¹ **Marriage and Civil Partnership:** consider married people and civil partners.

¹² **Pregnancy and Maternity:** When looking at pregnancy and maternity, give consideration to pregnant women, breastfeeding mothers, part-time workers, women with caring responsibilities, women who are lone parents and parents on low incomes, women on maternity leave and 'keeping in touch' days.

¹³ **Race/Ethnicity:** Apart from the common ethnic groups, consideration should also be given to Traveller communities, people of other nationalities outside Britain who reside here, refugees and asylum seekers and speakers of other languages.

¹⁴ **Religion and Belief:** Religion includes any religion with a clear structure and belief system. As a minimum you should consider the most common religious groups (Christian, Muslim, Hindu, Jews, Sikh, Buddhist) and people with no religion or philosophical beliefs.

¹⁵ **Sex/Gender:** Consider girls and women, boys and men, married people, civil partners, part-time workers, carers (both of children with disabilities and older cares), parents (mothers and fathers), in particular lone parents and parents on low incomes.

¹⁶ **Sexual Orientation:** The Act protects bisexual, heterosexual, gay and lesbian people.

¹⁷ **Other relevant groups:** You should consider the impact on our service users in other related areas.

¹⁸ **Impact:** Your EqIA must consider fully and properly actual and potential impacts against each protected characteristic:

- The equality duty does not stop changes, but means we must fully consider and address the anticipated impacts on people.
- Be accurate and transparent, but also realistic: don't exaggerate speculative risks and negative impacts.
- Be detailed and specific where you can so decision-makers have a concrete sense of potential effects.
- Questions to ask when assessing whether and how the proposals impact on service users, staff and the wider community:
 - Are one or more protected groups affected differently and/or disadvantaged? How, and to what extent?
 - Is there evidence of higher/lower uptake of a service among different groups? Which, and to what extent?
 - Does the project relate to an area with known inequalities (where national evidence or previous research is available)?
 - If there are likely to be different impacts on different groups, is that consistent with the overall objective?
 - If there is negative differential impact, how can you minimise that while taking into account your overall aims?
- Do the effects amount to unlawful discrimination? If so the plan **must** be modified.
- Does it relate to an area where equality objectives have been set by LBB in our [Barnet 2024 Plan](#) and our [Strategic Equality Objective](#)?

¹⁹ **Cumulative Impact**

You will need to look at whether a single decision or series of decisions might have a greater negative impact on a specific group and at ways in which negative impacts across the council might be minimised or avoided.

²⁰ **Mitigating actions**

-
- Consider mitigating actions that specifically address the impacts you've identified and show how they will remove, reduce or avoid any negative impacts
 - Explain clearly what any mitigating measures are, and the extent to which you think they will reduce or remove the adverse effect
 - Will you need to communicate or provide services in different ways for different groups in order to create a 'level playing field'?
 - State how you can maximise any positive impacts or advance equality of opportunity.
 - If you do not have sufficient equality information, state how you can fill the gaps.

²¹ **Monitoring:** The Equality Duty is an ongoing duty: policies must be kept under review, continuing to give 'due regard' to the duty. If an assessment of a broad proposal leads to more specific proposals, then further monitoring, equality assessment, and consultation are needed.

²² **Outcome:**

- Make a frank and realistic assessment of the overall extent to which the negative impacts can be reduced or avoided by the mitigating measures. Also explain what positive impacts will result from the actions and how you can make the most of these.
- Make it clear if a change is needed to the proposal itself. Is further engagement, research or monitoring needed?
- Make it clear if, as a result of the analysis, the policy/proposal should be stopped.

²³ **Sign off:** You will need to ensure the EqIA is signed off by your Head of Service, agree whether the EqIA will be published, and agree when the next review date for the EqIA will be.

This page is intentionally left blank

Equalities Impact Assessment (EqIA)

EqIAs make services better for everyone and support value for money by getting services right first time.

EqIAs enable us to consider all the information about a service, policy or strategy from an equalities perspective and then create an action plan to get the best outcomes for service users and staff¹. They analyse how all our work as a council might impact differently on different groups protected from discrimination by the Equality Act 2010². They help us make good decisions and evidence how we have reached them.³

An EqIA needs to be started as a project starts to identify and consider possible differential impacts on people and their lives, inform project planning and, where appropriate, identify mitigating actions. A full EqIA must be completed before any decisions are made or policy agreed so that the EqIA informs that decision or policy. It is also a live document; you should review and update it along with your project plan throughout.

You should first consider whether you need to complete this full EqIA⁴.

Other key points to note:

- Full guidance notes to help you are embedded in this form – see the End Notes or hover the mouse over the numbered notes.
- Please share your EqIA with your Equalities Champion and the final/updated version at the end of the project.
- Major EqIAs should be reviewed by the relevant Head of Service.
- Examples of completed EqIAs can be found on the Equalities Hub

1. Responsibility for the EqIA

Title of proposal ⁵	Housing Allocation Scheme Review
Name and job title of completing officer	Andy Gale, Consultant Laura Giles, Head of Strategy and Compliance (The Barnet Group)
Head of service area responsible	Susan Curran, Head of Housing and Regeneration
Equalities Champion supporting the EqIA	Rosie Evangelou, Consultation and Engagement Manager
Performance Management rep	n/a
HR rep (for employment related issues)	n/a
Representative (s) from external stakeholders	n/a

2. Description of proposal

Is this a: (Please tick all that apply)	
New policy /strategy / function / procedure / service <input type="checkbox"/>	Review of Policy /strategy / function / procedure / service <input checked="" type="checkbox"/>
Budget Saving <input type="checkbox"/>	Other <input type="checkbox"/>
If budget saving please specify value below: £	If other please specify below:
<p>The proposal being assessed is the review of the council's Housing Allocation Scheme.</p> <p>Under Section 166A of the Housing Act 1996, as amended by the Localism Act 2011, every local housing authority in England must have a scheme (their "allocation scheme") for determining priorities, and as to the procedure to be followed, in allocating housing accommodation. The Housing Allocation Scheme is</p>	

one of the most important policy documents for the council. It makes a real difference to people’s lives, but inevitably there are far more residents seeking social housing than there are properties available to let.

The council established new priorities following the May 2022 local elections, including a commitment to review the council’s housing allocations and revert to a two-offer policy for social housing, and to introduce a local lettings policy to ensure local residents benefit first from regeneration projects. The updated Housing Allocation Scheme incorporates the administration’s priority changes in addition to a number of other changes proposed by the Housing Options service to ensure clarity, fairness, and the smooth-running of the service and application of the policy.

As an extensive EIA was completed in 2017 and amended in 2018 and this EIA specifically considers the changes to the policy.

There are 3 major changes to the policy. These are:

- 1) To revert to a two reasonable offers policy, meaning an applicant would not be sanctioned after refusing their first offer.
- 2) After allocating homes to secure tenants living on a regeneration estate, at the point of decanting a non-secure tenant the council will look to provide a new home on that regeneration estate for any non-secure tenant owed a main homelessness duty (under Section 193(2) of the Housing Act 1996) who has held that non-secure tenancy for five years or more at the point vacant possession of the property is sought.
- 3) Under a local lettings policy the Council will give priority for local people living on any regeneration estate to be allocated a new home on that estate ahead of those who are otherwise waiting for housing and even if their home is not being demolished.

In addition to considering the impact of these changes, the council is required to keep under review any existing aspects of the policy. In this respect the council has chosen to review the impact of:

- 1) The 5 year residency rule due a) to changes in caselaw and b) given the on-going impact that a 5 year residency rule has on applicants who apply to join the Register.
- 2) The decision to award applicants owed a homelessness duty who are in long term temporary accommodation Band 4 which is a policy position that the Local Government Ombudsman has asked the council to consider more closely.

3. Supporting evidence

What existing data informs your assessment of the impact of the proposal on protected groups of service users and/or staff?

Identify the main sources of evidence, both quantitative and qualitative, that supports your analysis

Protected group	What does the data tell you ⁶ ?	What do people tell you ⁷ ?
-----------------	--	--

Provide a summary of any relevant demographic data about the borough's population from the Joint Strategic Needs Assessment, or data about the council's workforce

The Council has considered a wide range of relevant data:

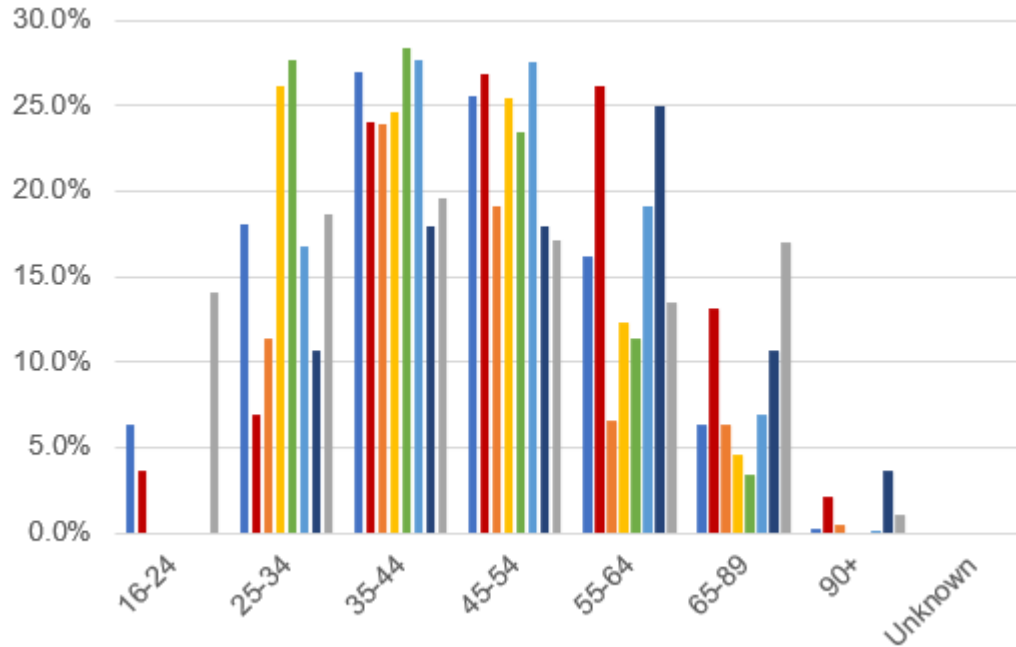
The key data is consideration of those on the Housing Register by the protected groups. This covers the numbers on the Register by each protected group and the numbers rehoused in the last 3 years by each protected group. However, it is recognised that the Council does not have a comprehensive set of data for the households on the Housing Register and for those rehoused. This is because a large number of applicants fail to complete the section of the application form that provides personal data.

Provide a summary of relevant consultation and engagement including surveys and other research with stakeholders, newspaper articles correspondence etc.

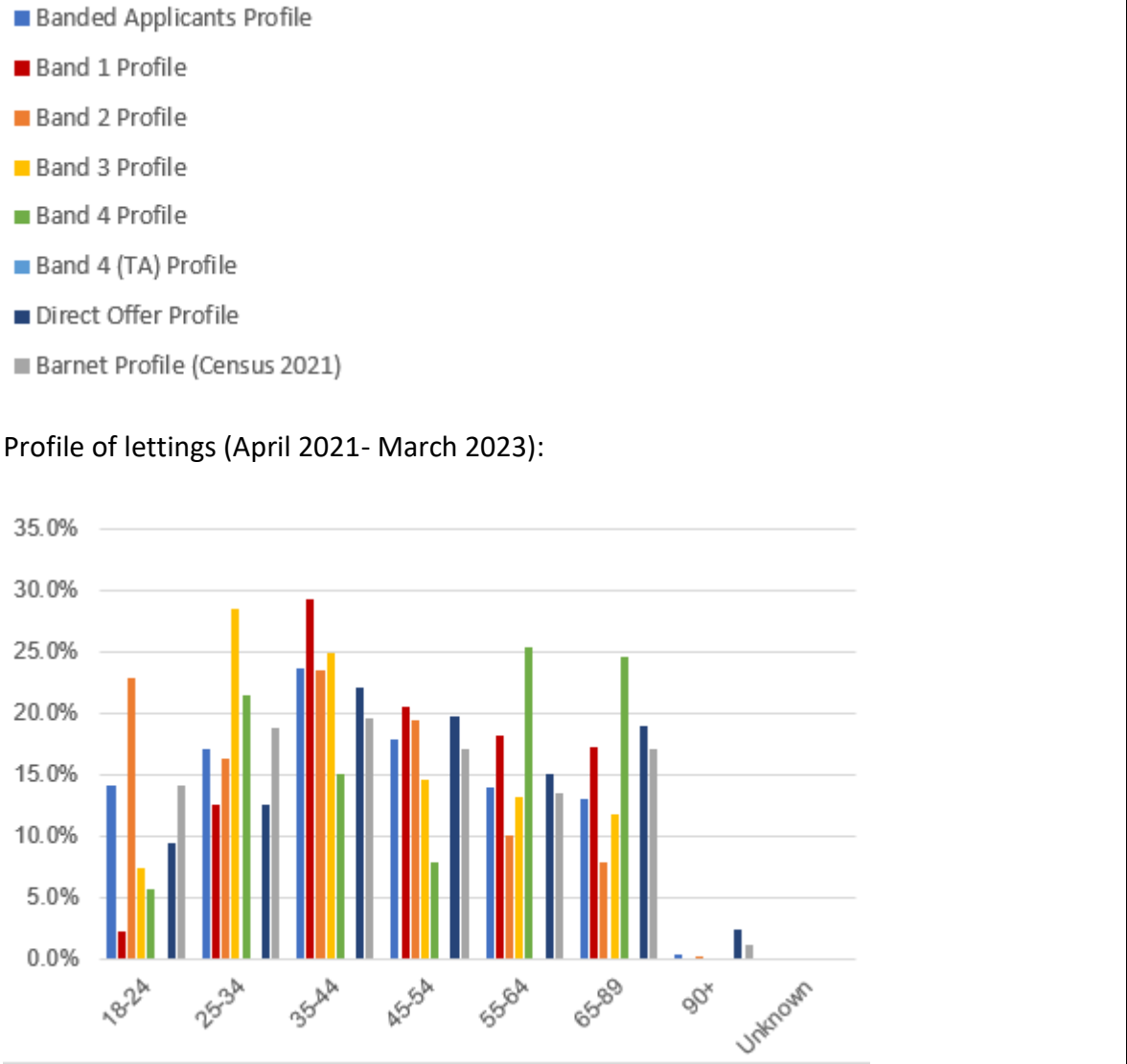
Age⁸

The majority of the banded applicants on the waiting list are aged 25 to 64 and this is higher representation than is in the borough’s overall population. The majority of lettings are spread fairly evenly across bands with higher representation of those aged 35-44 and lower representation of those aged over 65.

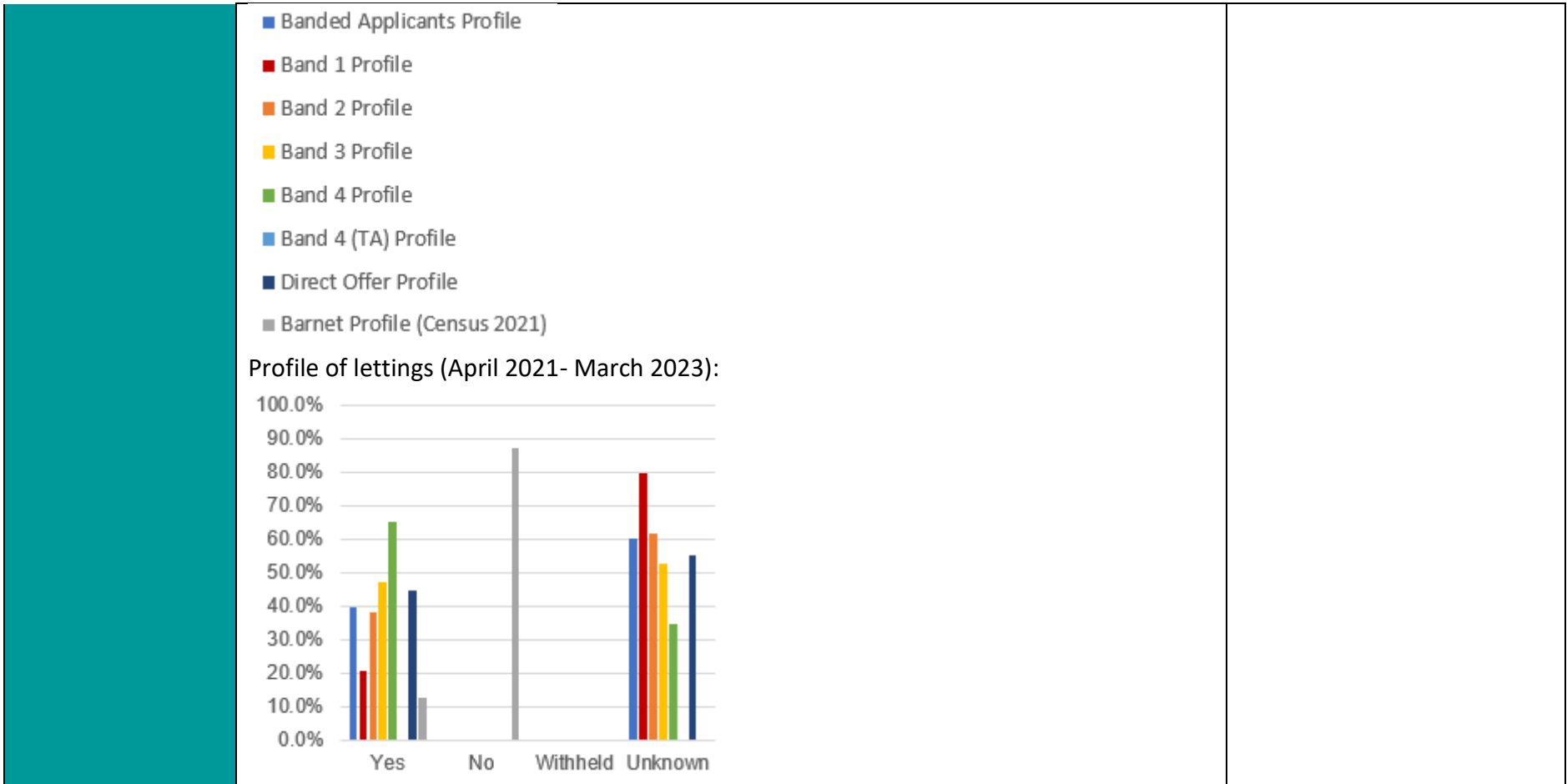
Profile of banded applicants:



The outcomes of the consultation are included in the Housing Allocation Scheme consultation summary; due to the number of respondents, analysis by protected characteristic is not considered to be statistically valid and has not been completed. There was strong support for the proposed changes from all respondents.

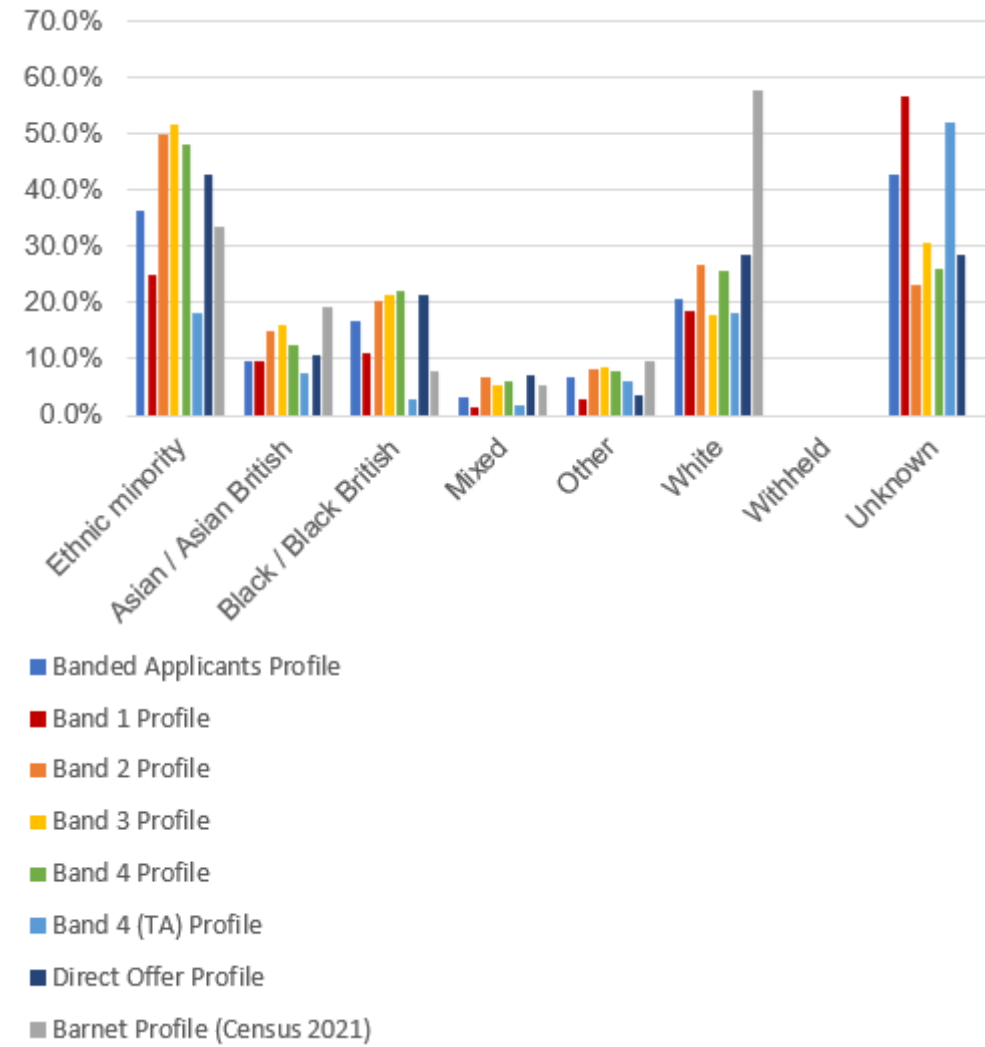


	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ■ All Lettings Profile ■ Band 1 Profile ■ Band 2 Profile ■ Band 3 Profile ■ Band 4 Profile ■ Band 4 (TA) Profile ■ Direct Offer Profile ■ Barnet Profile (Census 2021) 																																														
Disability ⁹	<p>There is higher representation of banded applicants on the Housing Needs Register who are disabled compared to the borough’s overall population. There is also higher representation of those with a disability amongst recent social housing lettings.</p> <p>Profile of banded applicants:</p> <table border="1"> <caption>Profile of banded applicants (%)</caption> <thead> <tr> <th>Category</th> <th>All Lettings Profile</th> <th>Band 1 Profile</th> <th>Band 2 Profile</th> <th>Band 3 Profile</th> <th>Band 4 Profile</th> <th>Band 4 (TA) Profile</th> <th>Direct Offer Profile</th> <th>Barnet Profile (Census 2021)</th> </tr> </thead> <tbody> <tr> <td>Yes</td> <td>45%</td> <td>18%</td> <td>28%</td> <td>35%</td> <td>42%</td> <td>15%</td> <td>45%</td> <td>12%</td> </tr> <tr> <td>No</td> <td>0%</td> <td>0%</td> <td>0%</td> <td>0%</td> <td>0%</td> <td>0%</td> <td>0%</td> <td>85%</td> </tr> <tr> <td>Withheld</td> <td>0%</td> <td>0%</td> <td>0%</td> <td>0%</td> <td>0%</td> <td>0%</td> <td>0%</td> <td>0%</td> </tr> <tr> <td>Unknown</td> <td>52%</td> <td>78%</td> <td>68%</td> <td>62%</td> <td>55%</td> <td>80%</td> <td>52%</td> <td>0%</td> </tr> </tbody> </table>	Category	All Lettings Profile	Band 1 Profile	Band 2 Profile	Band 3 Profile	Band 4 Profile	Band 4 (TA) Profile	Direct Offer Profile	Barnet Profile (Census 2021)	Yes	45%	18%	28%	35%	42%	15%	45%	12%	No	0%	0%	0%	0%	0%	0%	0%	85%	Withheld	0%	0%	0%	0%	0%	0%	0%	0%	Unknown	52%	78%	68%	62%	55%	80%	52%	0%	<p>The outcomes of the consultation are included in the Housing Allocation Scheme consultation summary; due to the number of respondents, analysis by protected characteristic is not considered to be statistically valid and has not been completed. There was strong support for the proposed changes from all respondents.</p>
Category	All Lettings Profile	Band 1 Profile	Band 2 Profile	Band 3 Profile	Band 4 Profile	Band 4 (TA) Profile	Direct Offer Profile	Barnet Profile (Census 2021)																																							
Yes	45%	18%	28%	35%	42%	15%	45%	12%																																							
No	0%	0%	0%	0%	0%	0%	0%	85%																																							
Withheld	0%	0%	0%	0%	0%	0%	0%	0%																																							
Unknown	52%	78%	68%	62%	55%	80%	52%	0%																																							



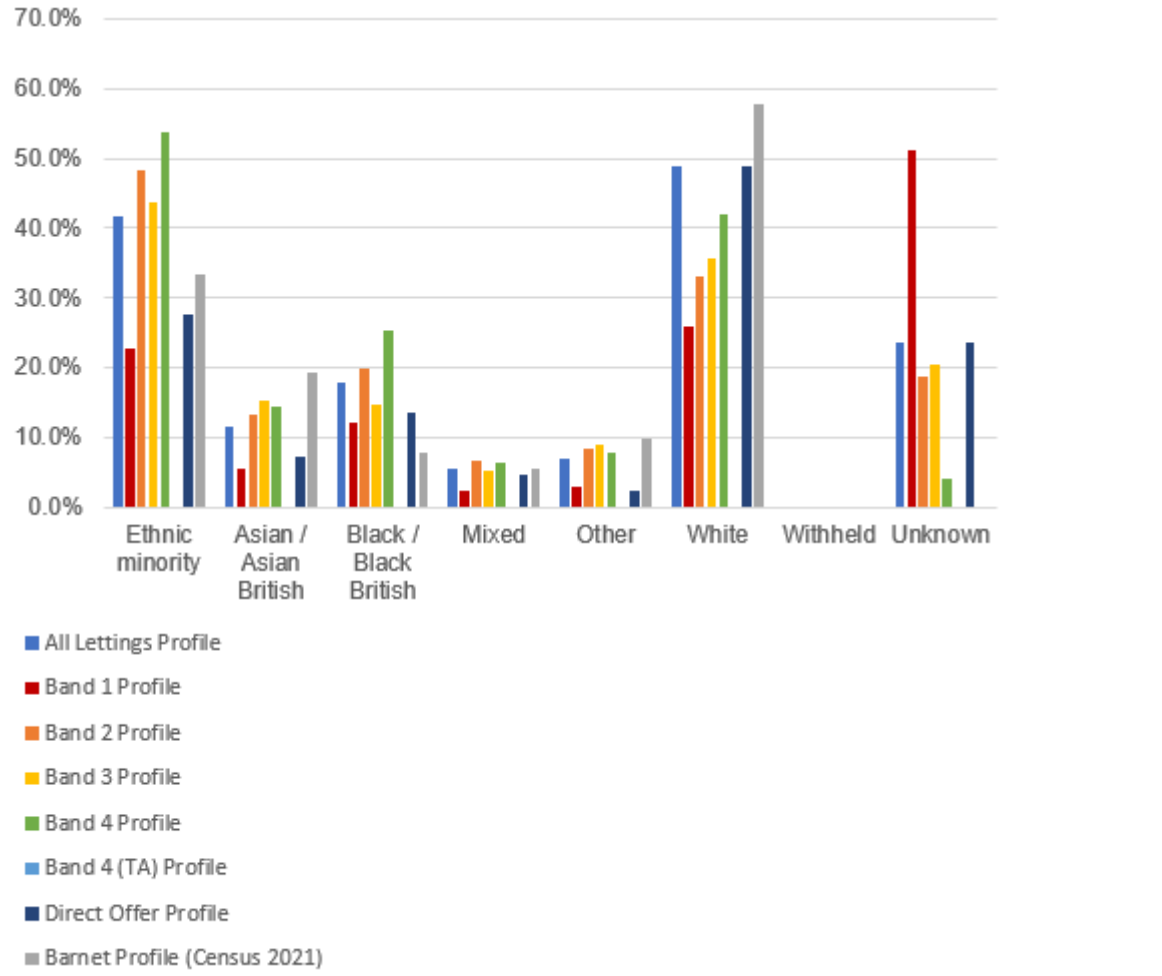
	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ■ All Lettings Profile ■ Band 1 Profile ■ Band 2 Profile ■ Band 3 Profile ■ Band 4 Profile ■ Band 4 (TA) Profile ■ Direct Offer Profile ■ Barnet Profile (Census 2021) 	
Gender reassignment ¹⁰	Information currently not captured	The outcomes of the consultation are included in the Housing Allocation Scheme consultation summary; due to the number of respondents, analysis by protected characteristic is not considered to be statistically valid and has not been completed. There was strong support for the proposed changes from all respondents.
Marriage and Civil Partnership ¹¹	Protected characteristic only relevant regarding employment matters	
Pregnancy and Maternity ¹²	Information currently not captured	
Race/ Ethnicity ¹³	<p>There is higher representation of banded applicants on the Housing Needs Register who are from a Black / Black British background compared to the borough's overall population.</p> <p>There is also higher representation of those who are from a Black / Black British background amongst recent social housing lettings.</p>	The outcomes of the consultation are included in the Housing Allocation Scheme consultation summary; due to the

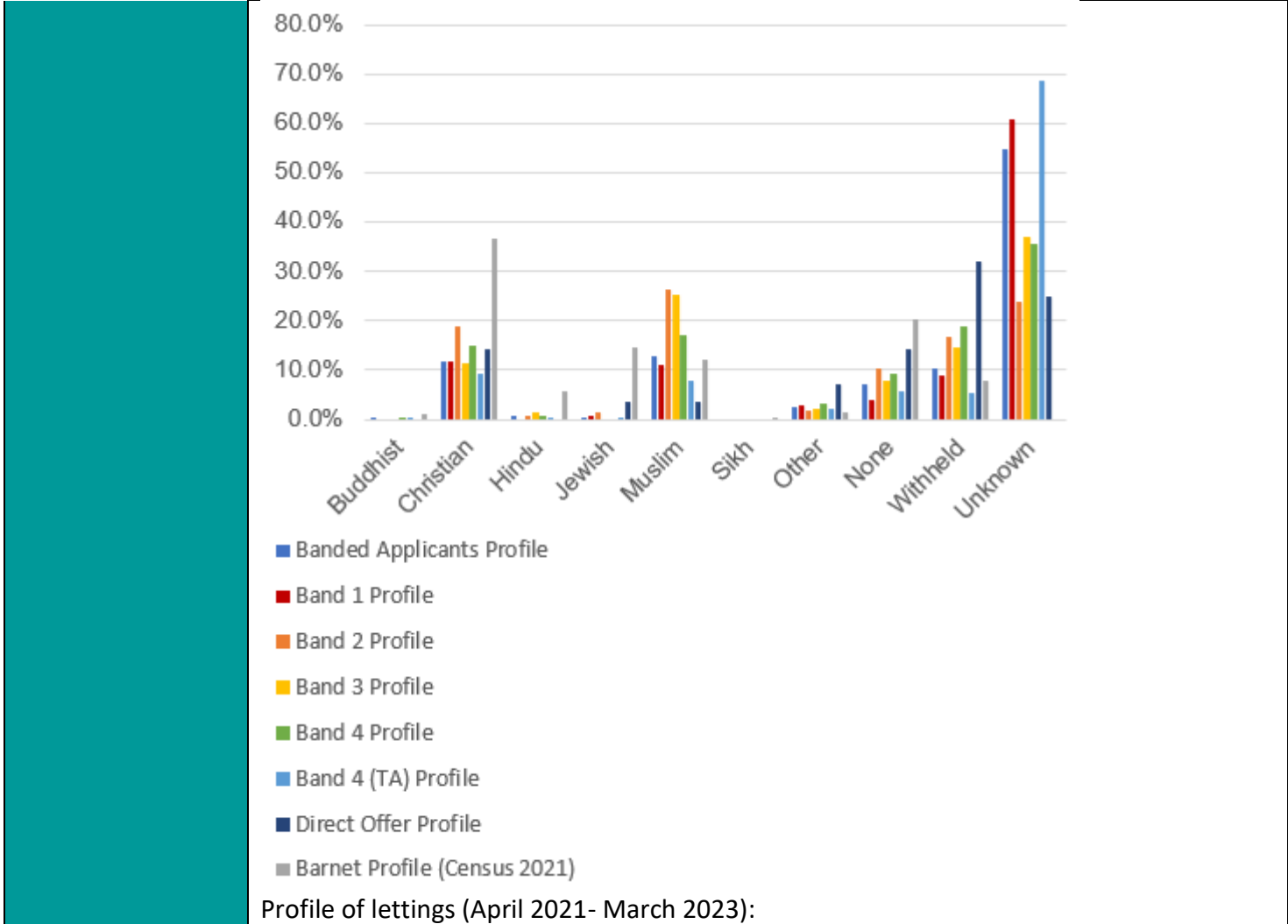
Profile of banded applicants:



Profile of lettings (April 2021- March 2023):

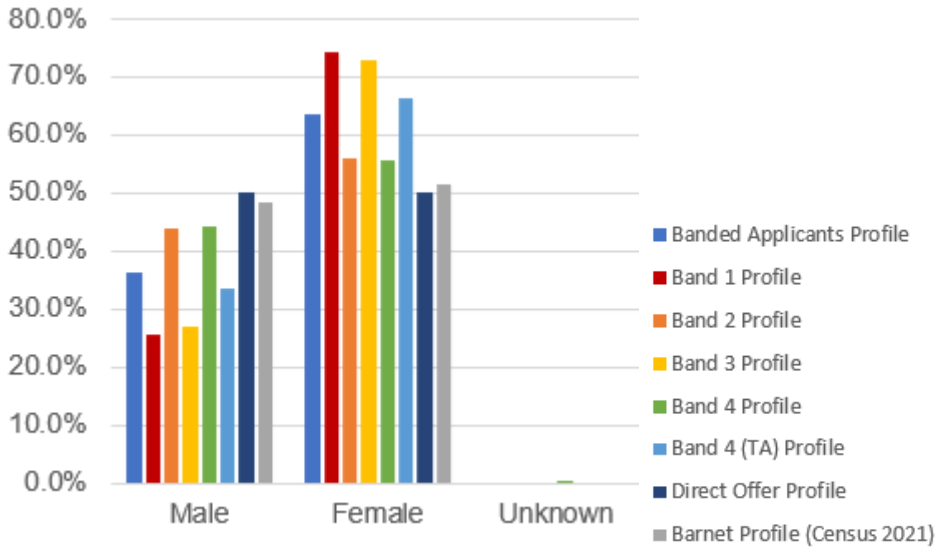
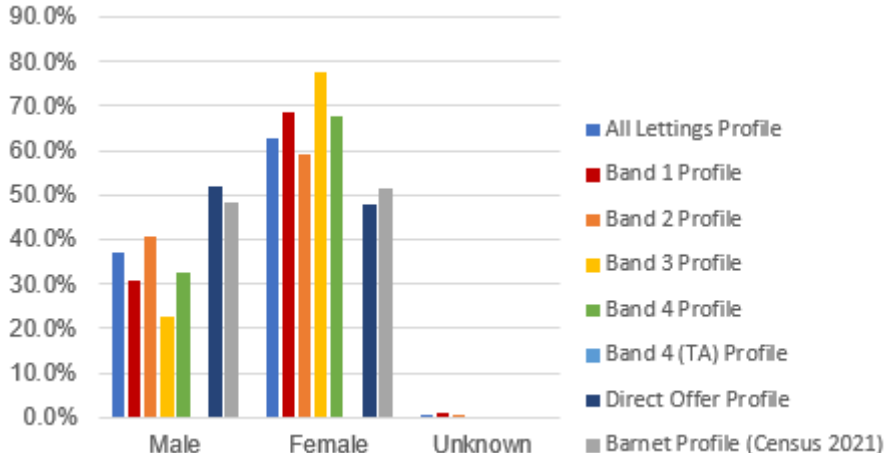
number of respondents, analysis by protected characteristic is not considered to be statistically valid and has not been completed. There was strong support for the proposed changes from all respondents.

	 <p>The chart displays the percentage distribution of banded applicants across different ethnic groups, comparing them to the overall 'All Lettings Profile' and the 'Barnet Profile (Census 2021)'. The y-axis represents percentages from 0.0% to 70.0%. The x-axis lists ethnic groups: Ethnic minority, Asian / Asian British, Black / Black British, Mixed, Other, White, Withheld, and Unknown. The legend identifies eight profiles: All Lettings Profile (blue), Band 1 Profile (red), Band 2 Profile (orange), Band 3 Profile (yellow), Band 4 Profile (green), Band 4 (TA) Profile (light blue), Direct Offer Profile (dark blue), and Barnet Profile (Census 2021) (grey).</p>	
<p>Religion or belief¹⁴</p>	<p>There is slightly higher representation of those who are Muslim amongst recent social housing lettings.</p> <p>Profile of banded applicants:</p>	<p>The outcomes of the consultation are included in the Housing Allocation Scheme consultation summary; due to the number of respondents, analysis by protected</p>

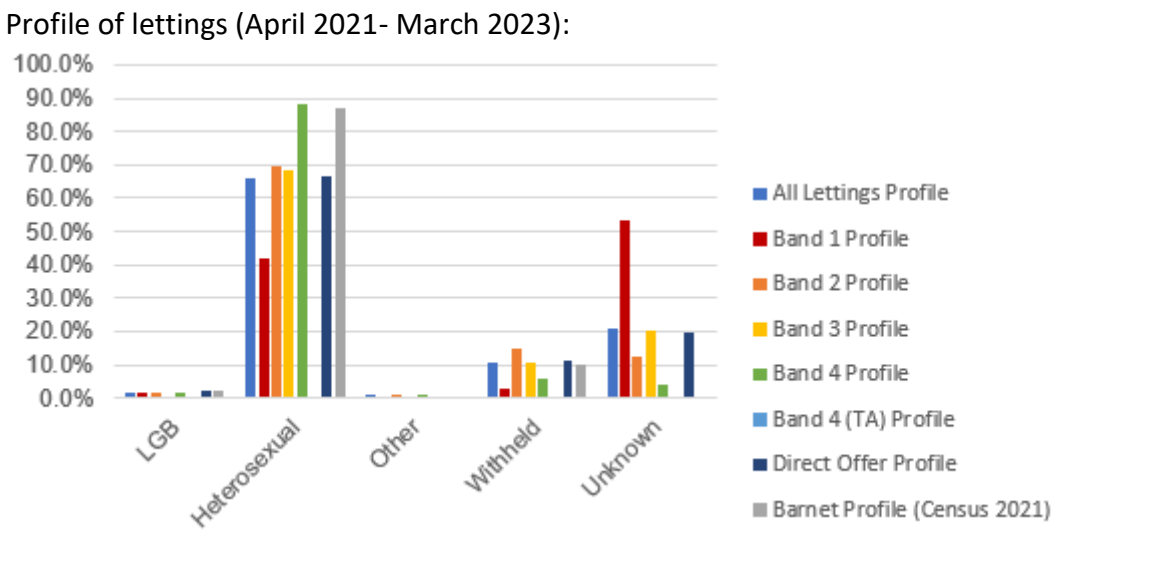
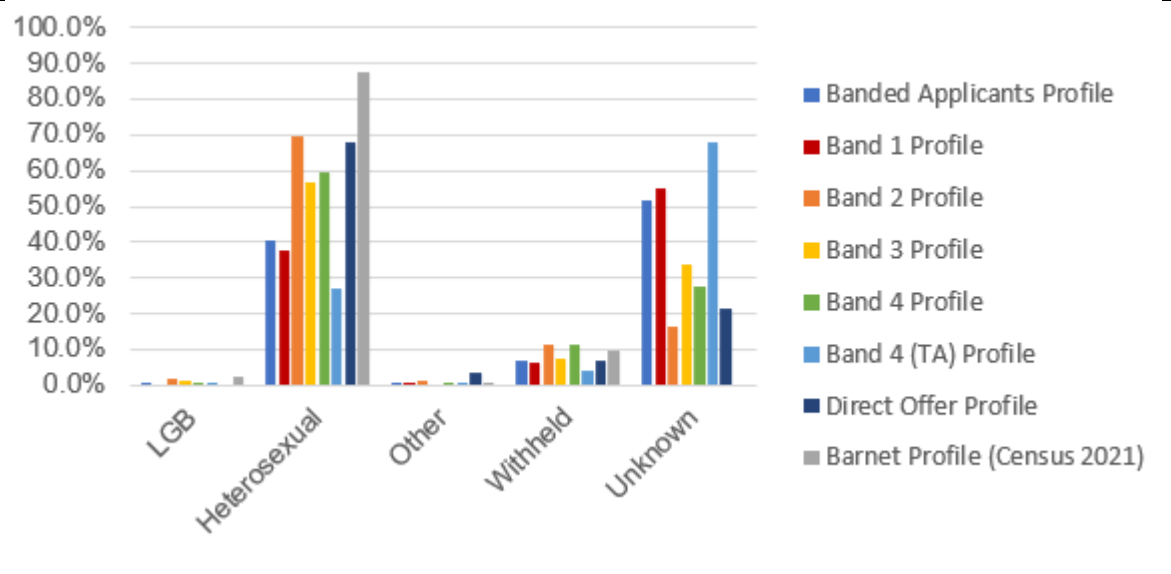


characteristic is not considered to be statistically valid and has not been completed. There was strong support for the proposed changes from all respondents.

	<p>The chart displays the percentage of applicants for various housing profiles across different religious groups. The y-axis represents the percentage from 0.0% to 60.0%. The x-axis lists the religious groups: Buddhist, Christian, Hindu, Jewish, Muslim, Sikh, Other, None, Withheld, and Unknown. The profiles are: All Lettings Profile (blue), Band 1 Profile (red), Band 2 Profile (orange), Band 3 Profile (yellow), Band 4 Profile (green), Band 4 (TA) Profile (light blue), Direct Offer Profile (dark blue), and Barnet Profile (Census 2021) (grey). Notable features include a high percentage of 'Unknown' for the Band 1 Profile (around 55%) and a high percentage for 'Christian' in the Barnet Profile (around 35%).</p>	
<p>Sex¹⁵</p>	<p>There is higher representation of banded applicants on the Housing Needs Register who are female compared to the borough's overall population.</p> <p>There is also higher representation of those who are female amongst recent social housing lettings.</p> <p>Profile of banded applicants:</p>	<p>The outcomes of the consultation are included in the Housing Allocation Scheme consultation summary; due to the number of respondents, analysis by protected characteristic is not</p>

	 <p>Profile of lettings (April 2021- March 2023):</p> 	<p>considered to be statistically valid and has not been completed. There was strong support for the proposed changes from all respondents.</p>
<p>Sexual Orientation¹⁶</p>	<p>Profile of banded applicants:</p>	<p>The outcomes of the consultation are included in the Housing Allocation</p>

Other relevant groups¹⁷



Scheme consultation summary; due to the number of respondents, analysis by protected characteristic is not considered to be statistically valid and has not been completed. There was strong support for the proposed changes from all respondents.

4. Assessing impact

What does the evidence tell you about the impact your proposal may have on groups with protected characteristics ¹⁸?

Protected characteristic	For each protected characteristic, explain in detail what the evidence is suggesting and the impact of your proposal (if any). Is there an impact on service deliver? Is there an impact on customer satisfaction? Click the appropriate box on the right to indicate the outcome of your analysis.	Positive impact	Negative impact		No impact
			Minor	Major	

<p>Age</p>	<p>The policy changes make no specific reference to age and is unlikely to have a discriminatory impact on younger/older people. It is not expected there will be any adverse impact on the grounds of age as a consequence of the changes to the Allocation policy.</p> <p>The Housing Needs Register is dominated by households owed a statutory homeless duty and the homeless population are predominantly younger people. people aged 30-39 years make up the biggest group of applicants on the register and of homeless acceptances.</p> <p>Women aged 30-39 years are the biggest group of homeless applicants, followed by women aged 20-29 years.</p> <p>We have no evidence that those in any age group who are on the Housing Needs Register are disadvantaged in their access to social housing due to their age. Housing legislation provides specific protection and priority for young applicants (16 -17 year olds) and homeless applicants who are vulnerable as a result of age.</p> <p>Low numbers in homelessness acceptances for older people indicate that current sheltered and extra care services available alongside non-age restricted accommodation adequately meets the current housing needs of our older population.</p> <p>There are positive impacts arising out of some of the changes for younger people and overall we do not anticipated adverse influences under this protected characteristic.</p> <p>Positive impacts include:</p> <p>Reverting to a two reasonable offers policy will give all applicants regardless of age more choice. Under the current policy younger people may not fully realise</p>	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
------------	---	-------------------------------------	--------------------------	--------------------------	--------------------------

	<p>the consequences of refusing 1 offer whereas reverting to a 2 offer policy will provide a second offer.</p> <p>Applicants who are homeless will still have their homeless duty ended through the refusal of one suitable offer (this reflects the current policy and is not a change). However, if they continue to have a statutory housing need for one of the other reasonable preference groups they will, under the new policy, be banded to reflect that need and still able to receive a second offer.</p> <p>The change so that at the point of decanting a non-secure tenant, the council will look to offer a new home on that regeneration estate for any non-secure tenant owed a main homelessness duty who has held a non-secure tenancy on that estate for five years or more, will have a positive impact on younger people who largely make up those households who are owed a main homeless duty.</p> <p>To band applicants owed the new prevention and relief of homelessness duties brought in under the Homelessness Reduction Act 2017 is a legal requirement and will mean priority banding for applicants who are not just owed a main homelessness duty. This will again have a positive impact on younger people who owed a homeless duty make up the majority of the Register.</p> <p>It is likely that there will be a positive impact for all age groups as the changes to the policy to band applicants owed a prevention or relief of homelessness duty will mean that all ages now have a banding to reflect a homelessness prevention or relief duty.</p> <p>The change to give priority for local people living on any regeneration estate to be allocated a new home on that estate ahead of those who are otherwise waiting for housing and even if their home is not being demolished will have a minor impact on younger people who are homeless in that a small number of</p>				
--	---	--	--	--	--

	<p>new homes on regeneration estates will be allocated to transfer cases rather than general needs cases. However, the numbers are anticipated to be low.</p> <p>The change to allow additional successions to take place for a household member of the tenant who has died, and they lived with the tenant for at least a year immediately before their death and there is no partner who can inherit the tenancy – This will have a positive beneficial impact on younger people who are often living with older parents due to the inability to afford to rent or buy a home. A number of households will now be able to succeed to the tenancy whereas under the current policy they would have been required to vacate the property.</p>				
Disability	<p>We anticipate there will be no anticipated adverse influences under this protected characteristic in respect of the changes.</p> <p>Loss of accommodation due to a deterioration in health, whether sudden or gradual, is a common cause of homelessness. In addition, around half of all homeless households applying to Barnet council for assistance in 2022/23 were recorded to have a support need. A history of mental health problems and physical health or disability accounted for an estimated 20% of the support needs of this group respectively. (HCLIC Government Homelessness Statistics).</p> <p>There are also some positive impacts arising out of the revised policy.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> a) The section covering disqualification for unacceptable behaviour has been extended to take account of the cause of the behaviour including mental health problems. b) The revised policy also includes a section setting out how the council will consider a claim that an extra bedroom is required for ADHD, Asperger's, sensory processing difficulties, and other mental or physical health problems. This was not covered in the current policy and a procedure for accessing the need for an extra bedroom is set out in Annex 5 of the revised policy. 	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
Gender reassignment	<p>Information is currently not captured for this protected characteristic. However, the policy changes make no specific reference to gender reassignment and there</p>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>

	<p>is unlikely to be a discriminatorily impact people based on this protected characteristic.</p> <p>The policy changes take into account individual needs and circumstances when deciding for example what constitutes a suitable accommodation offer of social housing. This will include taking into account the gender assigned to the applicant or a member of their household at the point of decision on a case-by- case basis. The revised policy now includes a definition of a suitable offer to help officers assess cases where an offer has been refused.</p>				
<p>Marriage and Civil Partnership</p>	<p>The policy changes make no specific reference to marital or civil partnership status and are unlikely to have a discriminatorily impact on people based on their marriage or civil partnership status. Applicants will continue to be able to apply to join the Register as a married couple or in a civil partnership wherein they will be treated as a single household.</p> <p>Applicants will not be disadvantaged by any of the proposed changes regardless of whether they are married or in a civil partnership or not.</p> <p>We anticipate that all applicants who are currently registered will continue to be assisted and therefore there will be no anticipated adverse impact under this protected characteristic.</p>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>
<p>Pregnancy and Maternity</p>	<p>Data is currently not captured for this protected characteristic.</p> <p>The policy changes make no specific reference to pregnancy and maternity and are unlikely to have a discriminatorily impact.</p> <p>Applicants will not be disadvantaged by any of the proposed changes regardless of whether they are pregnant or on maternity leave.</p>	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>

	<p>We anticipate that all applicants who are currently registered will continue to be assisted and therefore there will be no anticipated adverse impact under this protected characteristic.</p> <p>Emerging families (or existing families with another child on the way) statistically tend to be more represented by households owed a homelessness duty and the Register is dominated by households owed a homeless duty. As set out under the age group the changes to policy will overall benefit households owed a homeless duty.</p> <p>A significant number of lead applicants from accepted homeless households are pregnant women. Households with children are disproportionately represented among homeless households, as are lone parents who statistically in Barnet are more likely to be women.</p> <p>The change to the number of bedrooms identified as needed by households with a baby under the age of 1 is expected to have a positive impact upon these applicants.</p>				
--	---	--	--	--	--

<p>Race/ Ethnicity</p>	<p>The majority of applicants on the Housing Needs Register are from minority ethnic backgrounds including the majority of applicants owed a homeless duty who are registered.</p> <p>No adverse impact is foreseen on grounds of race/ethnicity as a consequence of the changes to the Housing Allocations Policy. There will be some positive impacts. Introducing local lettings plans to promote cohesion on regeneration estates through offering a new home on that regeneration estate for any non-secure tenant owed a main homelessness duty who has held a non-secure tenancy on that estate for five years or more, is likely to have a positive impact on people with this protected characteristic.</p>	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
<p>Religion or belief</p>	<p>Data about the religion and belief of households on the housing needs register are recorded, although there is a large percentage of cases recorded as unknown.</p> <p>Applicants will not be disadvantaged by any of the proposed changes regardless of their religion or belief and we anticipate that all applicants who are currently registered will continue to be assisted. No adverse impact is foreseen on grounds or religion or belief as a consequence of the changes to the Housing Allocations Policy.</p>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>
<p>Sex</p>	<p>Women make up the majority of applicants on the Housing Needs Register and the majority that receive an offer of social housing. This is because women are likely to be the main carers and are more likely as a result to come under one of the reasonable preference categories for a statutory housing need. This is likely to be unaffected by the changes proposed.</p>	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>

	<p>The policy changes make no specific reference to gender and is unlikely to discriminatorily impact people based on the gender to which they identify. They are not restricted to, or directed at, any particular group of people.</p> <p>In relation to gender, there are a high number of women in the homelessness cohort, e.g. single parents who presented as homeless to the council.</p> <p>Given the majority of applicants on the Register are owed homeless duty then the positive impact of the changes for homeless applicants, referred to elsewhere in this assessment will equally apply to women.</p>				
Sexual Orientation	<p>There is limited data held about this protected characteristic due to the high number of applicants who choose not to answer this question on their application form.</p> <p>However, no adverse impact is foreseen on grounds sexual orientation as a consequence of the changes to the Housing Allocations Policy.</p>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>

5. Other key groups Are there any other vulnerable groups that might be affected by the proposal? <i>These could include carers, people in receipt of care, lone parents, people with low incomes or unemployed</i>	Positive impact	Negative impact		No impact
		Minor	Major	

<p>Key groups</p>	<p>Revised consideration of the 5 year continuous residency rule</p> <p>The equality impact of the 5 year residency rule was fully considered in the impact assessment in July 2017. The additional considerations below should be read in conjunction with the 2017 assessment.</p> <p>It is recognised that a residency requirement of 5 years will impact on refugees, non-UK nationals, Gypsies and Irish Travellers and some other groups. The council has sought to:</p> <p>a) Strike the right balance between disadvantage to some groups of a residency requirement and the policy aims of the residence requirement which is to prioritise applicants who can demonstrate they have settled in the Borough for a period of 5 years continuous residence</p> <p>b) Mitigate any impact by building in exemptions and consideration of exceptional circumstances for applicants who do not meet the residency rules.</p> <p>The impact and mitigation is considered more fully below.</p> <p>The Localism Act implemented in 2012 allows local authorities to determine who may join their register. Statutory guidance from the Government’s DLUHC Department strongly encourages all local authorities to adopt a residency test as part of their qualification criteria.</p> <p>In accordance with the underpinning philosophy of the Localism Act and Government Guidance, Barnet embraces the principle of giving greater priority to applicants in housing need with a local connection to the area based on a period of 5 years continuous residence.</p> <p>Local connection rules including length of residency were strongly supported in the 2017 consultation and demonstrate a positive commitment to the area and contribution to the life of the local community, reflected through the length of time applicants had been settled in the Borough.</p>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>

	<p>However, the council continues to be mindful of the potential impact of continuing to adopt a residency local connection rule on some applicants who are classified as a protected group under the Equality Act. The council is satisfied that its adopted rule achieves an appropriate balance and namely any indirect discrimination of the local connection rules on applicants from a protected group has been minimised through the actions analysed below and is proportionate.</p> <p>Barnet Council is not alone in adopting a residency qualification rule and for that rule to be 5 years. The local authority statistical return to Government for 2021/22 gives the latest data re how many councils deploy a residency rule of 12 months or more.</p> <p>In total 152 out of 319 councils replied. The Government set question was how many had a residency rule of a year or more so for the non replies some will be because the rule is 6 months out of 12, some as they have no rule at all, and some would have failed to answer the question.</p> <p>The data for the 152 that did reply and had a residency rule of more than 1 year shows:</p> <p>1 year rule - 36 2-year rule - 54 3-year rule - 33 5-year rule - 23 More than 5 years - 4 (Thurrock 6 years, Epping Forest 7 years, Havering 6 years, Hillingdon 10 years)</p> <p>Therefore, the data records that 17.7 % of councils who reported had a residence rule of 5 years or more. In London the figure is 17 out of the 28 Boroughs that reported had a rule of 5 years or more – 60% of all councils in London that responded.</p>				
--	---	--	--	--	--

	<p>Importantly, the new 2023 Policy builds in further safeguards and exemptions building on the safeguards set in 2017. These additional safeguards include the fact that an applicant will retain their local connection where they have left the area due to:</p> <ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1) Living in an institution such as a prison or secure unit or a hospital and were resident in the Borough for 5 years before they entered that institution will be allowed to qualify as an exception to the 5-year continuous residence rule. 2) Having been placed outside of the area whilst in care. 3) Having been placed into temporary accommodation outside of the area by the Council. 4) Living in an institution such as a prison or secure unit or a hospital and were resident in the Borough for 5 years before they entered that institution will be allowed to qualify as an exception to the 5-year continuous residence rule. <p>Furthermore the revised policy recognises residency for:</p> <ol style="list-style-type: none"> 5) People who are forced to sleep rough in the Barnet area as long as overall, they meet the five-year period for residency 6) Extends the 5-year residency test to any partner of the applicant as well as the applicant. Under the current policy the applicant only had to demonstrate 5 years residency and would not qualify in the circumstances where their partner had lived in Barnet for 5 years but the applicant had not. <p>The 2023 policy also extends the groups for whom exceptional circumstances will automatically be considered to any application from a Gypsy or Traveller household who does not meet the continuous period of residence rule, as the period may have been broken by periods of travelling.</p> <p>The wording for the section of the Policy (section 2.9) pertaining to how exceptional circumstances will be considered has also been strengthened. The revised section states:</p> <p><i>Barnet Council will retain the ability, in exceptional circumstances, to exercise its discretion when applying any of the qualification rules adopted. It is for the applicant</i></p>				
--	---	--	--	--	--

to request that discretion should be applied to their case for exceptional circumstances. Where in their application to join the Housing Needs Register an applicant makes a case for discretion to be applied for exceptional circumstances, this will be considered as part of the application. Otherwise, it is for the applicant to request a review and make the case for why discretion should be applied to their case for exceptional circumstances. A request for a review of a decision that an applicant does not meet the qualification rule will be taken as a request for any exceptional circumstances to be considered. Where requested, the council will consider whether the applicant's circumstances (or those of a member of the applicant's household) are so exceptional that a qualification rule should be waived.

A residency requirement of 5 years will impact on refugees and non-UK nationals, and Gypsies and Irish Travellers (though safeguards have been built in for travellers). The council has sought to strike the right balance between indirect disadvantage to some groups of a residency requirement and the policy aims of the residence requirement, which is to prioritise applicants who can demonstrate a positive commitment to the Borough through being settled in the area as defined by 5 years residence.

The Statutory Guidance expressly highlights the need for local authorities to take proper account of exceptional or special circumstances and the wording for consideration of exceptional circumstances in the revised policy has been strengthened. The Policy also protects people who are moving into the Borough to escape violence.

All applicants on the housing needs register will be equally disadvantaged through the 5-year residency rule and there is unlikely to be a significant difference in the proportions of people from white, BAME or mixed heritage on the register compared to the population in the Borough as a whole.

It may still be the case under the revised Policy that by requiring residents to have resided in Barnet for 5 years to obtain the banding for their statutory housing need the council is indirectly discriminating against some applicants who come under a protected characteristic under the Equality Act. However, recent leading caselaw -

--	--	--	--	--

	<p><i>Khayyat and Westminster Council (2023)</i>, advises councils that exclusion of applicants otherwise entitled to a reasonable preference is lawful provided it is done by reference to a factor or factors of general application such as a local connection rule, rent arrears, unacceptable behaviour, etc. Exclusion that is by reference to a factor that is not of general application will not be lawful. The 5-year residency qualification rule adopted by the council is a factor of general application to all applicants.</p> <p>Furthermore, any disadvantage is only for a time period of 5 years after which an applicant will be allocated the band that fully reflects their housing need.</p>				
--	---	--	--	--	--

	<p>Consideration of the award of Band 4 for applicants owed a homelessness duty who are in long term temporary accommodation</p> <p>In March 2023 the Local Government and Social Care Ombudsman (LGSCO) found injustice for some applicants owed a main homelessness duty who are placed in the lowest Band - Band 4, under the Policy. Specifically, the Ombudsman found that:</p> <p><i>The Council is not taking active steps to end its duty to pre- 2012 applicants unless the lease on their accommodation is ending. At which point the council increases their priority for housing. This means that families remain in the limbo of temporary accommodation until their need to move becomes urgent.</i></p> <p><i>Therefore, the council neither awards sufficient priority under the allocations scheme to give a realistic prospect of securing social housing nor makes active attempts to end its duty in another way to households owed a main duty since before November 2012. I consider this creates a situation in which over 900 households have been homeless for over a decade</i></p> <p>The LGSCO asked the council to review its scheme in this respect and the impact on homeless applicants placed in Band 4.</p> <p>Given that applicants with one or more protected characteristics account for the majority of applicants who are owed a homeless duty who are on the Housing Need Register, the council has taken a number of steps to mitigate the impact on applicants with a protected characteristic. The actions taken are:</p> <p>1) The Housing Options Service has implemented a “PRS prioritisation scheme” and in June 2023 has written to all those affected Band 4 applicants in long-term TA about the new scheme which will give them preference for a PRS property if they confirm they would like to participate. The scheme is voluntary as those pre-2012 applicants have no obligation to accept an offer in the PRS. This initiative is in response to the LGSCO’s concern that <i>the council neither awards sufficient priority under the allocations scheme to give a realistic prospect of securing social housing nor makes active attempts to end its duty in another way to households owed a</i></p>	☒	☒	☐	☐
--	---	---	---	---	---

	<p><i>main duty since before November 2012.</i> The new initiative should result in a higher proportion of these cases moving on into the private rented sector.</p> <p>2) The council will more closely monitor Band 4 temporary accommodation cases to check whether there has been a change of circumstances that would mean they should be prioritised for rehousing. Checking data for 2021/22 it is not the case that no households are rehoused. Up to December 2022, the council had ended its duty to a total of 197 Band 4 TA households which is 17.8% of the 1,106 Band 4 cases owed that duty at that time.</p> <p>3) This group is also expected to experience a positive impact as a result of the major changes to the policy. Specifically, the change to the current policy will give some Band 4 TA cases living on regeneration estates an opportunity to obtain a secure tenancy of a new home on the estate where they live. Under this change after allocating homes to secure tenants living on a regeneration estate, at the point of decanting a non-secure tenant the council will look to provide a new home on that regeneration estate for any non-secure tenant owed a main homelessness duty (under Section 193(2) of the Housing Act 1996) who has held that non-secure tenancy for five years or more at the point vacant possession of the property is sought.</p> <p>Given the actions taken by the council in response to the LGSCO report the council does not intend to increase the banding priority for pre- 2012 applicants owed a main duty who are awarded Band 4 for being accommodated in long term TA.</p>				
--	---	--	--	--	--

	<p>Families and lone parents, people with a low income, people not in employment, education, or training, carers, all may come into contact with housing services in Barnet and due to the nature of social housing are more likely to be highly represented within the affected population of housing applicants.</p> <p>We may reasonably expect a broad positive impact on these group in line with the overall positive impact on all protected characteristics. This includes the positive impact due to the main changes to the policy regarding the number of offers and the local lettings policies.</p>	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
--	--	-------------------------------------	--------------------------	--------------------------	--------------------------

6. Cumulative impact¹⁹
 Considering what else is happening within the council and Barnet could your proposal contribute to a cumulative impact on groups with protected characteristics?

Yes No

If you clicked the Yes box, which groups with protected characteristics could be affected and what is the potential impact? Include details in the space below

7. Actions to mitigate or remove negative impact
 Only complete this section if your proposals may have a negative impact on groups with protected characteristics. These need to be included in the relevant service plan for mainstreaming and performance management purposes.

Group affected	Potential negative impact	Mitigation measures ²⁰ <i>If you are unable to identify measures to mitigate impact, please state so and provide a brief explanation.</i>	Monitoring ²¹ <i>How will you assess whether these measures are successfully mitigating the impact?</i>	Deadline date	Lead Officer
Groups that may be affected by the residency requirement of 5 years - including refugees, and non-UK nationals	Please see above (section 5, impact on other key groups)				
Pre 2012 applicants placed in Band 4	Please see above (section 5, impact on other key groups)				

8. Outcome of the Equalities Impact Assessment (EqIA)²²

Please select one of the following four outcomes

Proceed with no changes

The EqIA has not identified any potential for a disproportionate impact and all opportunities to advance equality of opportunity are being addressed

Proceed with adjustments

Adjustments are required to remove/mitigate negative impacts identified by the assessment

Negative impact but proceed anyway

This EqIA has identified negative impacts that are not possible to mitigate. However, it is still reasonable to continue with the activity. Outline the reasons for this and the information used to reach this decision in the space below

Do not proceed

This EqIA has identified negative impacts that cannot be mitigated and it is not possible to continue. Outline the reasons for this and the information used to reach this decision in the space below

Reasons for decision

The council is satisfied that the changes to the Policy are positive to many of the protected groups under the Equality Act and achieve an appropriate balance and if there is any negative impact on any group this is minimal.

Although it can always be argued that any change that positively impacts on the chances of social housing for one or more protected group may have a negative impact on other protected groups seeking social housing the impact is not considered to be substantial.

All applicants have a statutory right to seek a review of their housing application if they are dissatisfied with the council’s decision re how they have been assessed and the Band they have been awarded.

The Policy also provides all applicants with the opportunity to submit reasons why they believe their case should be considered under the exceptional circumstances part of the Policy.

Sign-off

9. Sign off and approval by Head of Service / Strategic lead ²³	
Name Susan Curran	Job title Head of Housing and Regeneration
<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Tick this box to indicate that you have approved this EqlA	Date of approval: 03/07/23
<input type="checkbox"/> Tick this box to indicate if EqlA has been published Date EqlA was published: Embed link to published EqlA:	Date of next review:

Footnotes: guidance for completing the EqIA template

¹ The following principles explain what we must do to fulfil our duties under the Equality Act when considering any new policy or change to services. They must all be met or the EqIA (and any decision based on it) may be open to challenge:

- **Knowledge:** everyone working for the council must be aware of our equality duties and apply them appropriately
- **Timeliness:** the duty applies at the time of considering proposals and before a final decision is taken
- **Real Consideration:** the duty must be an integral and rigorous part of your decision-making and must influence the process.
- **Sufficient Information:** you must assess what information you have and what is needed to give proper consideration.
- **No delegation:** the council is responsible for ensuring that anyone who provides services on our behalf complies with the equality duty.
- **Review:** the equality duty is a continuing duty – it continues after proposals are implemented/reviewed.
- **Proper Record Keeping:** we must keep records of the process and the impacts identified.

² Our duties under the Equality Act 2010

The council has a legal duty under this Act to show that we have identified and considered the impact and potential impact of our activities on all people with ‘protected characteristics’ (see end notes 9-19 for details of the nine protected characteristics). This applies to policies, services (including commissioned services), and our employees.

We use this template to do this and evidence our consideration. You must give ‘due regard’ (pay conscious attention) to the need to:

- **Avoid, reduce or minimise negative impact:** if you identify unlawful discrimination, including victimisation and harassment, you must stop the action and take advice immediately.
- **Promote equality of opportunity:** by
 - Removing or minimising disadvantages suffered by people with a protected characteristic
 - Taking steps to meet the needs of these groups
 - Encouraging people with protected characteristics to participate in public life or any other activity where participation is disproportionately low
 - Consider if there is a need to treat disabled people differently, including more favourable treatment where necessary
- **Foster good relations between people who share a protected characteristic and those who don’t:** e.g. by promoting understanding.

³ EqIAs should always be proportionate to:

- The size of the service or scope of the policy/strategy
- The resources involved
- The size of the likely impact – e.g. the numbers of people affected and their vulnerability

The greater the potential adverse impact of the proposal on a protected group (e.g. disabled people) and the more vulnerable the group is, the more thorough and demanding the process required by the Act will be. Unless they contain sensitive data – EqIAs are public documents. They are published with Cabinet papers, Panel papers and public consultations. They are available on request.

⁴ When to complete an EqIA:

- When developing a new policy, strategy, or service
- When reviewing an existing service, policy or strategy

-
- When making changes that will affect front-line services
 - When amending budgets which may affect front-line services
 - When changing the way services are funded and this may impact the quality of the service and who can access it
 - When making a decision that could have a different impact on different groups of people
 - When making staff redundant or changing their roles

Wherever possible, build the EqIA into your usual planning and review processes.

Also consider:

- Is the policy, decision or service likely to be relevant to any people because of their protected characteristics?
- How many people is it likely to affect?
- How significant are its impacts?
- Does it relate to an area where there are known inequalities?
- How vulnerable are the people who will be affected?

If there are potential impacts on people but you decide not to complete an EqIA you should document your reasons why.

⁵ **Title of EqIA:** This should clearly explain what service / policy / strategy / change you are assessing.

⁶ **Data & Information:** Your EqIA needs to be informed by data. You should consider the following:

- What data is relevant to the impact on protected groups is available? (is there an existing EqIA?, local service data, national data, community data, similar proposal in another local authority).
- What further evidence is needed and how can you get it? (e.g. further research or engagement with the affected groups).
- What do you know from service/local data about needs, access and outcomes? Focus on each characteristic in turn.
- What might any local demographic changes or trends mean for the service or function? Also consider national data if appropriate.
- Does data/monitoring show that any policies or practices create particular problems or difficulties for any group(s)?
- Is the service having a positive or negative effect on particular people or groups in the community?

⁷ **What have people told you about the service, function, area?**

- Use service user feedback, complaints, audits
- Conduct specific consultation or engagement and use the results
- Are there patterns or differences in what people from different groups tell you?
- Remember, you must consult appropriately and in an inclusive way with those likely to be affected to fulfil the equality duty.
- You can read LBB [Consultation and Engagement toolkit](#) for full advice or contact the Consultation and Research Manager, rosie.evangelou@barnet.gov.uk for further advice

⁸ **Age:** People of all ages, but consider in particular children and young people, older people and carers, looked after children and young people leaving care. Also consider working age people.

⁹ **Disability:** When looking at disability, consideration should be given to people with different types of impairments: physical (including mobility), learning, aural or sensory (including hearing and vision impairment), visible and non-visible impairment. Consideration should also be given to: people with HIV, people with mental health needs and people with drug and alcohol problems. People with conditions such as diabetes and cancer and some other health conditions also have protection under the Equality Act 2010.

¹⁰ **Gender Reassignment:** In the Act, a transgender person is someone who proposes to, starts or has completed a process to change their gender. A person does not need to be under medical supervision to be protected. Consider transgender people, transsexual people and transvestites.

¹¹ **Marriage and Civil Partnership:** consider married people and civil partners.

¹² **Pregnancy and Maternity:** When looking at pregnancy and maternity, give consideration to pregnant women, breastfeeding mothers, part-time workers, women with caring responsibilities, women who are lone parents and parents on low incomes, women on maternity leave and 'keeping in touch' days.

¹³ **Race/Ethnicity:** Apart from the common ethnic groups, consideration should also be given to Traveller communities, people of other nationalities outside Britain who reside here, refugees and asylum seekers and speakers of other languages.

¹⁴ **Religion and Belief:** Religion includes any religion with a clear structure and belief system. As a minimum you should consider the most common religious groups (Christian, Muslim, Hindu, Jews, Sikh, Buddhist) and people with no religion or philosophical beliefs.

¹⁵ **Sex/Gender:** Consider girls and women, boys and men, married people, civil partners, part-time workers, carers (both of children with disabilities and older cares), parents (mothers and fathers), in particular lone parents and parents on low incomes.

¹⁶ **Sexual Orientation:** The Act protects bisexual, heterosexual, gay and lesbian people.

¹⁷ **Other relevant groups:** You should consider the impact on our service users in other related areas.

¹⁸ **Impact:** Your EqlA must consider fully and properly actual and potential impacts against each protected characteristic:

- The equality duty does not stop changes, but means we must fully consider and address the anticipated impacts on people.
- Be accurate and transparent, but also realistic: don't exaggerate speculative risks and negative impacts.
- Be detailed and specific where you can so decision-makers have a concrete sense of potential effects.
- Questions to ask when assessing whether and how the proposals impact on service users, staff and the wider community:
 - Are one or more protected groups affected differently and/or disadvantaged? How, and to what extent?
 - Is there evidence of higher/lower uptake of a service among different groups? Which, and to what extent?
 - Does the project relate to an area with known inequalities (where national evidence or previous research is available)?
 - If there are likely to be different impacts on different groups, is that consistent with the overall objective?
 - If there is negative differential impact, how can you minimise that while taking into account your overall aims?
- Do the effects amount to unlawful discrimination? If so the plan **must** be modified.
- Does it relate to an area where equality objectives have been set by LBB in our [Barnet 2024 Plan](#) and our [Strategic Equality Objective](#)?

¹⁹ **Cumulative Impact**

You will need to look at whether a single decision or series of decisions might have a greater negative impact on a specific group and at ways in which negative impacts across the council might be minimised or avoided.

²⁰ **Mitigating actions**

-
- Consider mitigating actions that specifically address the impacts you've identified and show how they will remove, reduce or avoid any negative impacts
 - Explain clearly what any mitigating measures are, and the extent to which you think they will reduce or remove the adverse effect
 - Will you need to communicate or provide services in different ways for different groups in order to create a 'level playing field'?
 - State how you can maximise any positive impacts or advance equality of opportunity.
 - If you do not have sufficient equality information, state how you can fill the gaps.

²¹ **Monitoring:** The Equality Duty is an ongoing duty: policies must be kept under review, continuing to give 'due regard' to the duty. If an assessment of a broad proposal leads to more specific proposals, then further monitoring, equality assessment, and consultation are needed.

²² **Outcome:**

- Make a frank and realistic assessment of the overall extent to which the negative impacts can be reduced or avoided by the mitigating measures. Also explain what positive impacts will result from the actions and how you can make the most of these.
- Make it clear if a change is needed to the proposal itself. Is further engagement, research or monitoring needed?
- Make it clear if, as a result of the analysis, the policy/proposal should be stopped.

²³ **Sign off:** You will need to ensure the EqIA is signed off by your Head of Service, agree whether the EqIA will be published, and agree when the next review date for the EqIA will be.

By virtue of paragraph(s) 3 of Part 1 of Schedule 12A
of the Local Government Act 1972.

AGENDA ITEM 24

Document is Restricted

This page is intentionally left blank

By virtue of paragraph(s) 3 of Part 1 of Schedule 12A
of the Local Government Act 1972.

Document is Restricted

This page is intentionally left blank