

Meeting

Housing AND GROWTH COMMITTEE

Date and time

Thursday 23RD MARCH, 2023

At 7.00 PM

Venue

Hendon TOWN HALL, THE BURROUGHS, LONDON NW4 4BG

To: Members of Housing AND GROWTH COMMITTEE (quorum 3)

Chair: Councillor Ross Houston
Vice Chair: Councillor Anne Clarke

Zahra Beg
Richard Cornelius
Paul Edwards

Humayune Khalick
Kath McGuirk
Alex Prager

Ella Rose
Daniel Thomas
Sarah Wardle

Substitute Members

Joshua Conway
Laithe Jajeh

Geof Cooke
Paul Lemon

Val Duschinsky
Alison Moore

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

Andrew Charlwood – Head of Governance

Governance Service contact: Pakeezah Rahman Pakeezah.Rahman@Barnet.gov.uk

Media Relations Contact: Tristan Garrick 020 8359 2454 Tristan.Garrick@Barnet.gov.uk

Assurance Group

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Decisions of the Housing and Growth Committee

17 January 2023

Members Present:-

Councillor Ross Houston (Chair)
Councillor Anne Clarke (Vice-Chair)

AGENDA ITEM 1

Councillor Zahra Beg	Councillor Alex Prager
Councillor Richard Cornelius	Councillor Ella Rose
Councillor Paul Edwards	Councillor Daniel Thomas
Councillor Humayune Khalick	Councillor Sarah Wardle
Councillor Kath McGuirk	

1. MINUTES OF THE PREVIOUS MEETING

RESOLVED that the minutes of the meeting of the Housing and Growth Committee held on 16 November 2022 be approved as a correct record.

2. ABSENCE OF MEMBERS

There were none.

3. DECLARATIONS OF MEMBERS DISCLOSABLE PECUNIARY INTERESTS AND NON-PECUNIARY INTERESTS

Councillor K McGuirk declared an interest in relation to item 7 by virtue of being a social housing tenant although their provider was not present.

Councillor S Wardle declared an interest in relation to item 7 by virtue of their employer acting on behalf of some of the Registered Providers.

Councillor S Wardle declared an interest in relation to item 10, Fire Safety Update by virtue of their employer acting on behalf of a number of the parties involved.

Councillor A Clarke declared an interest in relation to item 10, Fire Safety Update, by virtue of being a Member of the Greater London Authority.

Councillor A Clarke declared an interest in relation to item 11, Month 8 Housing and Growth Outturn Report, by virtue of being a Member of the Greater London Authority.

Councillor A Clarke declared an interest in relation to item 12, 1000 Homes, by virtue of being a Member of the Greater London Authority.

Councillor A Clarke declared an interest in relation to item 15, Brent Cross Town Update, by virtue of being a Member of the Greater London Authority.

Councillor S Wardle declared an interest in relation to item 17 by virtue of their employer being involved in the project.

4. REPORT OF THE MONITORING OFFICER (IF ANY)

There was none.

5. PUBLIC QUESTIONS AND COMMENTS (IF ANY)

The Chair reported that a number of questions had been raised by Gin Emmanuel relating to item 15 on the agenda, Brent Cross Town Update. Prior to the meeting Officers had prepared a detailed response and this had been published as a supplement to the agenda. The Chair apologised for how Purbeck Drive had been dealt with, including communication with the public and Members. This had been identified as an area for improvement.

The Chair invited Gina Emmanuel to ask supplementary questions for each of her substantive items. A number of the questions related to details outside of the report, including issues which would be covered through the planning process, rather than through the Housing and Growth Committee.

The Assistant Director Economy & Growth proposed to meet with the questioner to go through the details of some of the question.

6. MEMBERS' ITEMS (IF ANY)

There were none.

7. REGISTERED PROVIDERS OF HOUSING

The Chair introduced the item as being a slightly different format with the Registered Providers of Housing invited to present. This had been raised at the last meeting due to the issues around damp and mould that had been highlighted by the Committee in previous meetings. The Registered Providers would present and then a period for Member questions would be held.

The presentations had been circulated to Members as a supplement prior to the meeting.

The first presentation was given for Home Group by Karen Yearly, the Head of Service Delivery for London and South East. Members questioned how the change of emphasis from blaming tenants to engaging had been received. The presenter stated that they had consulted first and had had positive feedback. They had changed the fundamental way that they considered both physical aspects and other things such as overcrowding. Looking at staff attitudes as well as technical solutions and costs, (such as heated rails) and looking to engage with residents. When they did a sweeping check, they had identified two residents with long term damp and mould issues who had never raised them.

Where necessary they were looking at flats which were difficult to heat and insulate and considering operations to demolish and rebuild. This would help to deal with issues around things like internal bathrooms and poor ventilation. They were also looking at the other tools available and running costs, for example around the use of dehumidifiers vs a heated clothes horse. There was not a singular or simple solution and they continued to monitor customer satisfaction.

In response to Member questions they could not answer how many were proactive vs reactive cases but they did have a Service Level Agreement in place to respond within a given time frame and this was monitored. Members noted that not all residents were able to advocate for themselves and many would not consider themselves "customers" but tenants. Members queried how tenants could make contact. The presenter responded that they had a service centre for national enquiries with a dedicated

complaints team, however they also had a local office. Feedback had resulted in the reinstatement of housing managers which gave people a named contact. The previous manager had been in post for four years, providing stability, and they were currently recruiting a replacement. The presenter was happy to provide more data after the meeting.

The second presentation was given for Metropolitan Thames Valley Housing by Jules Bickers, Director of Property, Experience. They highlighted how they had worked to change attitudes so that problems were seen as cases with individuals assigned to look at how repairs were done and whether further work following up was needed. They were also looking at what could be shared with contractors as they collected a lot of information from tenants on issues such as cultural issues and language barriers. They were keen to be judged not on that they happened, but on how they responded to cases of damp and mould.

Members queried the causes of dampness and whether overcrowding was a significant issue. They responded that the minority appeared to be overcrowding. Half were from leaks or minor issues which were easily rectified. The majority were from normal living, which could be linked to the number of people in the property. There were always going to be issues but they were changing the attitude from “Do it and Walk away” to ameliorate the problem and then monitor.

Members asked about the response timescales. The presenter noted that there was potential legislation coming that would set minimum standards. As a provider they published their standards and aimed to do urgent visits within 48 hours and general surveys within a week and works booked in within a month. It did vary depending on the nature of the issues. They actively encouraged tenants to take out contents insurance when taking on tenancies but would pursue if there was evidence that they had wilfully caused the issue.

Members queried the issues around “go slow”. The presenter reported that in some cases tenants had engaged solicitors who encouraged the tenant to use delaying tactics which could cause issues in getting access. This had been an issue with “claims farmers” and was partly due to a misunderstanding of what was possible. Protracted proceedings primarily benefitted the solicitor.

A question was raised around the level of responsibility for leaseholders and shared owners. The presenter stated that it would depend on the property although in many cases the Registered Provider owned the fabric of the building and would be responsible. They did get contact from sub tenants but the responsibility in some cases was with the owner of the property.

The next presentation was given for Network Homes by Elizabeth Lill, Service Quality Manager. They reported that although they had already placed a spotlight on mould and had a process in place, they were always looking to improve.

Members noted that with repeated cases of damp across different buildings which had similar designs in housing association properties, was work being undertaken to ensure that it was not an issue in future builds. The presenter confirmed that they were aware of the damp issues, especially around those built in the 1960s and this is part of why they had looked to redevelop and build a different type of structure. The development team could provide more information on this if required.

The final presentation was given for Peabody by Annemarie Fenlon, Managing Director North West London. Further to the responses from other presenters they reported that they were moving to a regional system so that residents had a named contact. They had also moved to a case management process to help residents and reduce the need to escalate issues. This included looking at how many different touch points that they had with them and how this experience could be improved. So for example while the annual gas safety check was completed, they would look out for signs of mould and damp.

Members of the Committee thanked the presenters for attending. The Chair noted that Notting Hill Genesis Housing Association would be attending the March meeting of the Housing and Growth Committee.

8. DAMP AND MOULD

The report followed a similar form to the Fire Safety Update which had been well received by the Housing and Growth Committee.

It was noted that the age of the stock held by Barnet Homes was an issue and that the works would have an impact on the Housing Revenue Account. Costs were being identified and officers appointed to support the work.

The issues ranged from no impact through to severe damp issues with a wide variance even within the same block of flats depending on their location and the levels of insulation. This made it important to speak to individuals and raise awareness of the impact, for example, of not using fans in bathrooms to retain heat, but also resulting in retaining moisture. All properties had been assessed and there was now a rolling programme to review 20% each year with an associated budget requirement being identified.

There were concerns that it was a hidden issue with many not knowing how to ask for support, or not realising it could be an issue. Many of those who made contact with the service had damp issues, or were subsequently identified as having issues during the engagement with the service. Meetings had been held with Barnet Homes and the Public Health directorate to ensure a consistent approach was taken to both public sector and private properties.

Members felt that more needed to be done around the private sector to raise awareness through Council publications and media channels as it was currently a high profile issue nationally but was not a new thing. There were concerns about whether reporting would continue once the media interest moved on. Officers said that overall numbers hadn't changed significantly, however the levels of concerns in those reporting was enhanced with some having had problems for years previously. There was work to get the message out proactively to residents and this was ongoing.

Members queried whether the issues with Barnet Homes properties were reoccurring or new cases. Officers stated that it was difficult to be specific. It might be due to a property needing more insulation, or overcrowding which was causing the condensation, or a combination. Some of the cases could be resource intensive where it required moving people out of a property whilst works were completed. It could be difficult to diagnose all of the causes which could lead to multiple visits or other issues being identified.

The Chair noted that, as a 100% survey had been completed there was a level of assurance as Barnet Homes was not using extrapolated data from a survey sample (which most other housing providers were doing).

RESOLVED unanimously that the Housing and Growth Committee noted the report.

9. HOUSING & GROWTH PRIORITIES UPDATE

The Chair introduced the regular report. He noted that this also included an update on rough sleepers which was an area impacted by the high levels of demand in the private rented sector. The netZero campaign was highlighted if fuel poverty could be tackled this would help with tackling climate change and also help with heating and ventilation which in turn would help to prevent mould and damp.

RESOLVED unanimously that the Housing and Growth Committee note the report.

10. FIRE SAFETY UPDATE - JANUARY 2023

The Chair welcomed the update and noted that the actions of the Officers to secure fire safety works at tribunal had had a positive outcome after two years of work.

Members queried what had changed to allow access to some of the properties with outstanding concerns. Officers responded that there were a few properties that had presented challenges with access issues but believed that they were now in a position to resolve these.

The Chair thanked the officers and the steady progress which had been made compared to a year ago. There had been a lot of investment in the Council's stock which had provided reassurance about the programmes of work being undertaken.

RESOLVED unanimously that the Housing and Growth Committee noted the Fire Safety Update – January 2023.

11. MONTH 8 HOUSING AND GROWTH OUTTURN REPORT

The Chair commented that overall this was a positive report with a forecast to reach the Committee's savings targets, although there were a number of challenges. Many of these were external and related to the economy which were leading to additional risks around temporary accommodation. Officers were working to manage this as there had already been a slight increase in the number in temporary accommodation.

Members queried whether the impact of various changes had led to a net loss of accommodation and the impact of changes to the cost of borrowing. Officers responded that there was an increased in costs as well as an increase in demand that were causing the pressures. The Chair noted that the financing issue would have been impacting private investors as well.

RESOLVED unanimously that the Housing and Growth Committee noted:

- 1. the current forecast financial outturn for 2022/23.**
- 2. the projected use of reserves.**

12. 1000 HOMES

The Chair introduced the report and noted the pressures due to changes in the economic climate. Members queried whether the target was still achievable and the Chair responded that it was more challenging, especially with the increase in the cost of financing but that it remained a top priority.

A Member queried whether the Council would be target or resident led due to the tensions where residents might want lower density developments. The Chair recognised the issue and highlighted that the aim would always be to work alongside residents.

Other Members noted that it was possible to achieve regeneration in difficult times and the Chair confirmed that they would be looking at all opportunities across both future and existing estates.

RESOLVED unanimously that the Housing and Growth Committee noted the report and the commitment of the council to deliver 1000 homes at 50% of market rent or lower.

13. ANNUAL REVIEW OF COUNCIL DWELLING RENTS AND SERVICE CHARGES AND TEMPORARY ACCOMMODATION RENTS FOR 2023/24

The Chair reported that the normal model for increases had been CPI+1% (Consumer Price Index). After extensive consultation across London, the proposal was to follow Government policy. This approach had been taken across London Boroughs.

Officers noted that there were two elements. The rents had been increased by 7% and service charges had also been increased. However this rate was below the level of inflation and would therefore have an impact on the Housing Revenue Account as costs, such as repairs, had risen at a faster rate.

In the special case of Grahame Park it was noted that the service charges, whilst being increased significantly as this covered a two year period, were still being kept at a subsidised rate. The Council would keep this under review and monitor the use of the hardship fund.

One of the Members asked whether it would be possible to get a break down on rent reviews from the registered social landlords.

RESOLVED unanimously that the Housing and Growth Committee noted and agreed for recommendation to the Policy and Resources Committee, and to be noted by Full Council:

- 1. The proposed rent increase in line with government policy for existing council tenants, as set out in paragraph 1.9 for social rent dwellings and 1.11 for Affordable Rent dwellings of the report;**
- 2. The proposed rent increase for temporary accommodation, as set out in paragraph 1.13 of the report; and**
- 3. The proposed service charges and garage rents as set out in paragraph 1.18 of the report;**

all to take effect from 1 April 2023.

14. CRICKLEWOOD

The Chair introduced the item as a positive development in the local area. Another Member thanked Officers for a good design, but queried how the situation had arisen in the first place.

RESOLVED unanimously that the Housing and Growth Committee:

- 1. Approved the Outline Business Case (OBC) for 164-168 Cricklewood Broadway (Cricklewood Junction Project) as set out in Appendix 1 to the report.**
- 2. Noted the funding strategy outlined within the Outline Business Case (Appendix 1) and approved the allocation of £1.25m capital funding from the Town Centres Capital Fund to deliver the Cricklewood Junction Project as set out in paragraphs 5.6-5.20 of the report.**
- 3. Delegated authority to the Director of Growth to approve the Full Business Case, when completed, in accordance with the Council's internal governance and assurance processes.**
- 4. Delegated authority to the Director of Growth to proceed with planning application(s) associated with the project in accordance with the Council's internal governance and assurance processes.**
- 5. Delegated authority to the Director of Growth to commence the procurement workstreams for design, construction and operation of the proposed units, in accordance with the Council's Contract Procedure Rules.**

15. BRENT CROSS TOWN UPDATE

The Chair noted the progress that had been made since the last report. Officers also reported that they were awaiting the outcome of a Levelling Up Fund bid.

Members raised concerns about how the emphasis and value was being placed on different parts of the project. Officers confirmed that they would look to address this. Members noted the change from Council housing to registered social landlord provision and that more needed to be done to reassure council tenants of the differences between the two provisions. It was noted that the agreements included protections on rent and that this should be highlighted.

A Member raised a query as to whether the requested delegations in the recommendations should be made to the Cabinet Member, rather than to the Chair of the Housing and Growth Committee. The Governance Officer confirmed that delegations under the current governance structure would continue to be made to the Chair. Once the new structure was in place it would be to the Cabinet member. Any existing delegations would be dealt with through a clause to allow the transfer of delegated powers as appropriate.

RESOLVED unanimously that the Housing and Growth Committee:

- 1. Noted the progress across the Brent Cross programme as detailed in the report; notably the start on site of above ground works for the first plots of Brent Cross Town, and the continued good progress of the station works programme.**
- 2. Approved the approach to carry out works to the former Hendon Waste Transfer Station to remove the council liability to pay National Non-Domestic Rates (NNDR) on the vacant premises as set out in paragraph 1.39 of the report.**

3. Delegated to the Chief Executive in consultation with the Chair to approve the form of the template Infrastructure Lease and template Service Charge Lease, pursuant to the project agreement, as set out in paragraphs 1.19 to 1.22 of the report.
4. Delegated to the Chief Executive in consultation with the Chair to finalise and enter into the required agreements to enable the drawdown of the primary substation and energy centre on Plot 59 to enable Brent Cross Town to deliver on the net zero carbon pledge for the new town as set out in paragraph 1.23 to 1.24 of the report. Agreements are expected to include;
 - i. Grant by LBB of an infrastructure lease for Plot 59 and entry by LBB into associated documents required to facilitate the granting of the infrastructure lease for plot 59 and;
 - ii. Grant by LBB of leases to various utility providers relating to the operation of the substation and energy centre on Plot 59.
5. Delegated to the Brent Cross Programme Director to agree and enter into relevant agreements with BXSLP or directly with services providers to grant required wayleaves for telecoms or other services being installed for delivery of the Brent Cross Town development, utilising the standard council wayleaves process wherever applicable, as set out in paragraph 1.25 of the report.
6. Delegated to the Deputy Chief Executive in consultation with the Chair to finalise the station construction contract as set out in the Exempt report.

16. THE ELECTRICAL SAFETY STANDARDS IN THE PRIVATE RENTED SECTOR (ENGLAND) REGULATIONS 2020 THE ENERGY EFFICIENCY (PRIVATE RENTED PROPERTY) REGULATIONS 2015

The Chair introduced the two papers which brought forward enforcement powers in line with the legislation. The Private Sector Housing Manager reported that they already used several processes under the Housing Act and that they had had applied this to the new regulations.

The Chair took the two votes, one on each set of recommendations, separately.

RESOLVED unanimously with regards to Implementation of The Electrical Safety Standards in the Private Rented Sector (England) Regulations 2020 seeks agreement that the Housing and Growth Committee:

1. Endorsed the approach detailed in Appendix 1 of the report to determine the amount of the (civil) penalty charge under the Electrical Safety Standards in the Private Rented Sector (England) Regulations 2020, and for this addition to be made to the Regulatory Enforcement Policy.
2. Delegated authority to the Deputy Chief Executive to implement any minor amendments needed to the Council's Regulatory Enforcement Policy in respect of the imposition of these civil penalties.
3. Noted that the schemes of delegation will be updated as appropriate to include the powers under the Electrical Safety Standards in the Private Rented Sector (England) Regulations 2020.

The Chair then took the second set of recommendations.

RESOLVED unanimously with regards to Implementation of The Energy Efficiency (Private Rented Property) (England and Wales) Regulations 2015 that the Housing and Growth Committee:

- 1. Endorsed the approach detailed in Appendix 1 of the report to determine the amount of the (civil) penalty charge under the Energy Efficiency (Private Rented Property) (England and Wales) Regulations 2015, and for this addition to be made to the Regulatory Enforcement Policy.**
- 2. Delegated authority to the Deputy Chief Executive to implement any minor amendments needed to the Council's Regulatory Enforcement Policy in respect of the imposition of these civil penalties.**
- 3. Noted that the schemes of delegation will be updated as appropriate to include the powers under the Energy Efficiency (Private Rented Property) (England and Wales) Regulations 2015.**

17. APTHORP CARE HOME LEASE SURRENDER

Councillor S Wardle left the meeting for the item due to a pecuniary interest as their employer was involved.

The Chair stated that this report continued an existing commitment that had been made by the Council previously. This paper was to ensure that the correct legal processes were met and there was a Part 2 exempt report which accompanied the recommendations.

RESOLVED that the Housing and Growth Committee:

- 1. Approved the surrender payment costs, and;**
- 2. That authority be delegated to the Deputy Chief Executive, in consultation with the Chair, to enter into a Deed of Surrender with Catalyst Housing Ltd to terminate the Council's lease (dated 28 March 2013) as soon as possible.**

18. BUSINESS IMPROVEMENT DISTRICT FOR EDGWARE

The Chair introduced the proposals and noted that the Business Improvement District (BID) would be subject to a ballot of the eligible business so that there would be a democratic element to the decision as to whether businesses wished to contribute. Officers highlighted that this was a paper for noting as there were a number of steps to be completed. They highlighted that they recognised that it was a difficult period for businesses and that a BID Steering group had been formed to ensure that the project was led by businesses rather than the Council.

Members raised concerns about the timing when businesses were under pressure and new funding would be coming available through the Edgware fund and the CIL funding. They queried whether it would be possible to use this to fund activity and then potentially move to a formal BID once there was visibility of the benefits. They were conscious of the dangers that the BID might be being pushed by a small vocal minority with a different reaction on the ground. This would require clear thresholds for both the response rate and the outcome of the ballot. The thresholds were set at 51% or above voting in favour with no minimum turn out. Officers confirmed that these issues were a consideration and that they were looking at how the different work streams could support each other and the business community with the changes coming to the area. Businesses tended to like the autonomy that a BID could provide with the use of funding, with the council one step

apart from the processes. There are a number of priorities emerging and they were looking at how businesses could get their voice heard through the use of the BID Steering Group. They confirmed to Members that the steering group had a range of bodies including shopping centre managers, Town Team and others.

It was noted that the BID would be in addition to the money and work being undertaken by the Council. The lion share of any levy would be picked up by large business and that it would be important to get the level of engagement right. Officers confirmed that they would be tracking attitudes across businesses in general to ensure there was support before any ballot took place. The Chair responded that it was important that comments and feedback were taken onboard and that the process would need to be looked at if the establishment of the BID failed.

A question was raised about continuity of the BID as evidence from other areas were that they relied heavily on individuals to maintain momentum and continuation. Members also noted that the time frame was set at five years for the first BID if successful. Officers responded that they were looking at this and that the length would be for the BID steering group to consider.

Officers agreed to report back to the next Housing and Growth Committee as part of the Priorities Update. Members asked that the local councillors be engaged in the process.

A Member of the Housing and Growth Committee asked for a vote on the recommendations. The results were:

Votes in favour: 7

Votes against: 0

Votes in abstention: 4

RESOLVED that the Housing and Growth Committee:

- 1. Noted that proposals are being developed for an Edgware Business Improvement District and the Council has received formal notice in accordance with the statutory BID regulations (Appendix C).**
- 2. That, upon receipt of the Edgware Business Improvement District Proposal, and the proposed Business Plan from the BID proposer, the Committee delegate authority to the Director of Growth in consultation with relevant council services and the Chair of Housing and Growth to:**
 - a. Consider, on behalf of the council as billing authority, whether the BID Proposal conflicts with any council policy or places an unjust financial burden on rate payers, and, if it does, gives notice of this veto in accordance with the Business Improvement Districts (England) Regulations 2004 (“the BID regulations”);**
 - b. Determine whether the council should support the Edgware BID Proposal including by voting in favour in the BID ballot;**
 - c. Ensure compliance with BID regulations and oversee the ballot process accordingly.**
- 3. Noted section 4 of this Report and, subject to a “yes” vote at ballot, agrees that:**
 - a. The council will act as the relevant billing authority and will manage the billing and collection of the additional levy, and its transfer to Edgware BID;**

- b. The council must meet its obligations in paying the BID levy, as a non-domestic ratepayer in the BID area, in accordance with the BID regulations over the life of the BID;
- c. The council will enter into operating agreements with the Edgware BID Company regarding the operation of the BID and its engagement with council services.

19. COMMITTEE FORWARD WORK PROGRAMME

The Chair introduced the Committee Forward Work Programme.

A Member queried whether the deferred report on the deferred petition with regards to Parklets could be extended to cover all of them. They noted that, whilst there was support from the business that benefitted, there was less support for those in the general area. The Chair responded that the original petition had been geographically specific and this would therefore be the focus. It would then be up to the Committee to decide if it wished to have the issue considered further.

RESOLVED that the Committee noted the Work Programme.

20. ANY OTHER ITEMS THAT THE CHAIR DECIDES ARE URGENT

There were none.

21. MOTION TO EXCLUDE THE PRESS AND PUBLIC

The Committee resolved – that under Section 100A (4) of the Local Government Act 1972 the public be excluded from the meeting for the following items of business on the grounds that they involve the likely disclosure of exempt information as defined in paragraph 3 of Part 1 of Schedule 12A of the Act (as amended).

22. EXEMPT: BRENT CROSS TOWN UPDATE

RESOLVED unanimously that the recommendations as set out in the Exempt Report be approved.

23. EXEMPT: APTHORP CARE HOME LEASE SURRENDER

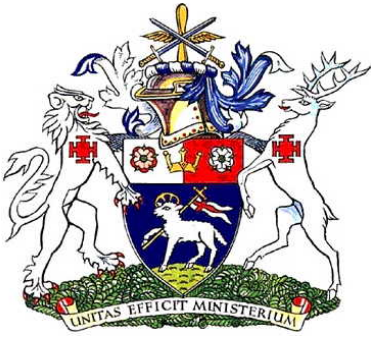
RESOLVED unanimously that the recommendations as set out in the Exempt Report be approved.

24. ANY OTHER EXEMPT ITEMS THAT THE CHAIR DECIDES ARE URGENT

There were none.

The meeting finished at 9.53 pm

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Housing and Growth Committee 23 March 2023

Title	Notting Hill Genesis response to damp and mould
Report of	Chair of Housing and Growth Committee
Wards	All
Status	Public
Urgent	No
Key	Non-key
Enclosures	Appendix 1 – Report from Notting Hill Genesis
Officer Contact Details	Cath Shaw, cath.shaw@barnet.gov.uk Susan Curran, susan.curran@barnet.gov.uk Mark Vaughan, Mark.Vaughan@nhg.org.uk ,

Summary

In November 2022 Housing and Growth Committee invited the Registered Providers with the most housing stock in the borough to attend Housing and Growth Committee and report on how they are responding to damp and mould. The following report provides an update from Notting Hill Genesis on their response to damp and mould. A representative from Notting Hill Genesis will be available at the meeting to answer any questions from Members.

Officers Recommendations

1. That the Committee note the report.

1. Why this report is needed

- 1.1 At the Housing and Growth Committee on 16 November 2022, the Committee invited the Registered Providers with the largest portfolios of housing stock in the borough to attend Committee and report on their response to damp and mould.

- 1.2 On 17th January 2023 representatives from Metropolitan Thames Valley Housing, Peabody, Home Group and Network Homes attended Housing and Growth Committee.
- 1.3 It was agreed that a representative from Notting Hill Genesis would attend the Committee on 23rd March. The attached report sets out Notting Hill Genesis' response to damp and mould. A representative from Notting Hill Genesis will be available at the meeting to answer any questions from Members.

2. Reasons for recommendations

- 2.1 In November 2022, the committee asked for a report about the handling of complaints and issues by Barnet Homes and Social Housing Providers.
- 2.2 Further to the tragic death of Awaab Ishak, and the publication of the coroner's report on 15th November 2022, there have been several communications from government, regulators and the ombudsman with directions and advice for landlords and local authorities.

3. Alternative options considered and not recommended

- 3.1 None

4. Post decision implementation

- 4.1 None

5. Implications of decision

5.1 Corporate Priorities and Performance

- 5.1.1 Barnet's Housing Strategy is currently being refreshed, and the emerging themes presented to the Housing and Growth Committee in October 2022 included a focus on ensuring safe, sustainable council housing, and on raising quality and standards in the private rented sector, which will include raising awareness of and, where the council has the authority to do so, tackling damp and mould issues.

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

- 5.2.1 Not applicable

5.3 Legal and Constitutional References

- 5.3.1 The Housing Act 2004 (sections 3 and 4) require local authorities to keep the housing conditions in their area under review and to inspect the same with a view to identifying any action that may need to be taken under the Housing Act 2004 and other legislation, and if it considers a Category 1 or 2 hazard (as defined by the Act) exists. The Act gives (a) powers to intervene where they consider housing conditions to be in breach of the

same and (b) under section 5, imposes a duty to take action where the authority considers that a Category 1 hazard exists on premises.

5.4 Insight

5.4.1 Not applicable

5.5 Social Value

5.5.1 Closer monitoring of damp and mould complaints should lead to a reduction in the incidence of properties that constitute a hazard to health, and improve the social and wellbeing outcomes for residents that are currently living in unsafe properties.

5.6 Risk Management

5.6.1 The council has an established approach to risk management, which is set out in the Risk Management Framework. There is a risk that limited engagement with the housing sector could lead to their lack of compliance with government legislation/regulations resulting in potentially unsafe housing and harm to residents. There are controls/mitigations in place to manage the risk.

5.7 Equalities and Diversity

5.7.1 The Equality Act, 2010 outlines the provisions of the Public Sector Equalities Duty which requires Public Bodies to have due regard to the need to:

- Eliminate unlawful discrimination, harassment and victimisation and other conduct prohibited by the Equality Act 2010.
- Advance equality of opportunity between people of different groups.
- Foster good relations between people from different groups

5.7.2 Relevant protected characteristics are: age, disability, gender reassignment, pregnancy and maternity, race, religion or belief, sex, sexual orientation.

5.7.3 There is high representation of some protected characteristics within the profile of Barnet Council tenants, and this is reasonably expected to be repeated within the demographic profiles of tenants living within social housing across the borough. Within homes rented from the council, those most likely to be disproportionately affected by damp and mould due to their high prevalence within the population compared to that of the borough (2021 Census results) include women, people from an ethnic minority background (particularly those from a Black or Black British background), and individuals aged over 45. It might reasonably be expected that those with a disability and those affected by socio-economic factors may also be disproportionately impacted, as these groups are more likely to be in need of social housing. In delivering the activities outlined within this paper to reduce the impact of and manage damp and mould within its properties, the council is observing its Public Sector Equality Duty.

5.8 Corporate Parenting

5.8.1 In line with Children and Social Work Act 2017, the council has a duty to consider Corporate Parenting Principles in decision-making across the council. There are no

adverse implications for Corporate Parenting in relation to this report.

5.9 Consultation and Engagement

5.9.1 There is ongoing engagement with the wider housing sector and landlords to monitor issues of damp and mould.

5.10 Environmental Impact

5.10.1 There are no direct environmental implications in relation to this report, however some of the works to properties may also support the journey to Net Zero.

6. Background papers

6.1 17 January 2023, Housing and Growth Committee, item 7, Registered Providers of Housing and item 8, Mould and Damp, [Agenda for Housing and Growth Committee on Tuesday 17th January, 2023, 7.00 pm \(moderngov.co.uk\)](#)



The following report covers Notting Hill Genesis response to damp and mould. The committee is asked to note the report.

Background to Damp and Mould Environment

Since the start of the new year there have been important announcements on damp and mould from the Government, the Regulator of Social Housing (RSH) and the Housing Ombudsman (HO).

Government

Following the death of two-year old Awaab Ishak, the [Housing Secretary and the Health Secretary responded to the Coroner's Report to Prevent Future Deaths](#). In the letter the Housing Secretary made clear that it is 'his relentless focus to restore the right of everyone in this country, whatever their race or cultural background, to live somewhere warm, decent, safe and secure.' He pledged to table an amendment to the Social Housing Regulation Bill relating to hazards in social homes.

He set out that the government will take the following further steps to drive up standards:

- The Health Department and the Levelling Up Department (DLUHC) will lead a review of existing guidance on the health impacts of damp and mould in homes and following consultation will develop new consolidated guidance tailored to the housing sector. This will be published by the summer.
- The DLUHC also set out an indicative timetable for changes to housing standards and guidance. This included the HHSRS review which is nearing completion and the Government will publish a summary of findings and set out next steps by the spring.
- The DLUHC will set out the next steps to the decent home's standard in 'due course.'
- The DLUHC also intends to create the new Private Rented Sector Landlord Ombudsman through the upcoming Renters Reform Bill.

Regulator of Social Housing

In November 2022, the RSH asked all larger registered providers of social housing (Housing Association's and Local Authorities), including NHG, to submit evidence about the extent of damp and mould in tenants' homes and their approach to tackling it.

In February 2023, the RSH published a high-level analysis report based on all the submissions it had received, covering over four million homes.

The initial findings from the responses show:

- Most social landlords understand the extent of damp and mould in their tenants' homes and take action to tackle it but could strengthen their approach.
- Most people living in social housing have homes that are free from damp and mould. However, living with damp and mould can have a serious impact on tenants' health and wellbeing. It is essential that landlords identify and address these issues promptly and effectively.
- Some landlords submitted poor quality responses that lacked the detail needed for RSH to have confidence about their approach to tackling damp and mould.
- While the picture is incomplete, RSH's best estimate is that less than 0.2 per cent of social homes have the most serious damp and mould problems, 1-2 per cent have serious damp and mould problems, and a further 3-4 per cent have notable damp and mould.

The regulator will now follow up directly with landlords who submitted poor quality responses and those reporting high numbers of cases of damp and mould.

The strongest responses demonstrated robust data on the condition of tenants' homes, as well as processes for investigating and remedying the root causes of damp and mould, and robust oversight from boards. Poorer responses relied more heavily on reactive approaches rather than proactively looking for evidence of damp and mould and had weaker data and evidence about the condition of tenants' homes.

The RSH stressed that residents who have damp and mould in their home should tell their landlord, and landlords should act promptly to address it and the underlying issue. The regulator will introduce more active consumer regulation from April 2024, including inspections, and the quality of homes, including the presence of damp and mould, will be a key focus.

The Housing Ombudsman

In February 2023, the HO issued an updated damp and mould report reflecting the renewed focus after the inquest into the death of Awaab Ishak. They have proposed key tests for landlords who are producing action plans to deal with damp and mould. It comes as they recorded a 77 per cent increase (3,530) in the number of enquiries and complaints due to damp, mould, and leaks from 2020-21 to 2021-22.

Analysing responses, they found that only 35 per cent of landlords have a specific damp and mould policy with streamlined processes for identifying and responding to damp and mould reports. A further 12 per cent said they were in the process of implementing one.

There was some good practice detailed, including installing sensors, conducting property MOTs, and undertaking root cause analysis modelling and staff training. However, there are areas of concern and they have identified ten key tests for landlords to evaluate its response to damp and mould, and highlighted areas that need continued focus: disrepair cases, fairness, good governance, and continued learning.

What Are NHG Doing?

We recognise the impact that damp and mould can have on our residents and ensuring healthy, safe homes now and in the future is fundamental to our operations, repairs, and asset management plans.

Damp and Mould Project Group

We have recently established a damp and mould project group made up of key staff from across the organisation. The group acts to review, challenge, learn and improve how we do things on damp and mould, as well as responding to the challenges of the external environment, particularly the approaches being taken by the RSH and the Housing Ombudsman.

Residents' Group

We have established a damp and mould residents' group. They have already provided valuable feedback on training, communication materials, communication messaging, damp and mould policy, and new processes.

We have agreed with the residents' group the following commitments.

- We will provide clear and concise guidance to help identify what may be causing a problem in the home and what actions will be taken.
- We will visit every resident who raises concerns with damp and mould to inspect and understand the issue within 10 days of reporting.
- We will discuss in person whether the issue could be caused by damp or condensation.
- We will discuss the ways to manage condensation, personally explain the literature and advise of next steps.
- We will check that ventilation facilities and equipment are operating satisfactorily and explain how they work.
- We will proactively follow up to ensure works are completed and that the issue is resolved long term

Policy and Processes

A damp and mould policy has been published and damp and mould processes have been updated.

Identifying Damp and Mould

We own and manage 4,177 homes in Barnet. At the end of February our rolling programme of surveys in Barnet had identified 2 category one hazards and 57 category two hazards.

At the end of February, we had 122 open damp and mould repairs, as well as 7 damp and mould disrepair cases.

We have a risk-based approach to identifying properties that might have damp or mould.

We conduct stock condition surveys on a five-year cycle, allowing us to continuously assess and monitor our homes. Considering factors such as the age and property type, EPC rating and history of repairs of a property, as well as the presence of any HHSRS hazard we determine which properties are more likely to require investment.

Along with stock condition surveys, we capture high-resolution ‘upshot’ images of all our externals of buildings every seven years to ensure the fabric remains in good condition and free from rising damp. These aerial photos capture the conditions of the roofs, chimney stacks and anything that is visible.

In addition, our programme of annual visits to each rented home provides us with further opportunity to identify any potential issues. Our staff discuss with the tenant if there are any damp and mould issues at the property at each visit, and if necessary, inspect the property.

To do this we recently improved the training we give to staff on damp and mould, and over the last 3 months all our housing officers and property managers have completed it. Training is mandatory for resident facing staff. Going forward we will hold training monthly and all new starters will need to complete it during the probationary period.

Residents can report suspected damp and mould through a variety of methods:

- Calling us directly on our dedicated damp and mould phone number
- In person, for example, at their annual visit
- Online through their individual ‘My Account’ housing account
- By email or phone to their named local officer

We visit a property where damp or mould is reported within 10 days of receiving a report. At the visit, our staff will determine the severity of the issue, and where possible, the cause. They will also consider any evidence of detrimental impact the damp is having on the resident’s or anyone in the household’s health. We have introduced a damp and mould section for residents on our website with latest information and resources to help identify, report, and manage damp and mould in homes.

Remediation Works

If minor repairs are needed, we will arrange for remediation works to take place and will contact the resident to ensure they have been completed and the issue has been resolved.

For more severe cases, a follow-up inspection by a surveyor will be arranged within 10 days of the first inspection. Remediation works will be prioritised according to the severity of the risk the damp or mould poses. Where a risk to the health and safety of the household is identified, works will be arranged immediately.

Where damp and mould are a result of condensation, we support residents to alleviate any contributing factors that might exacerbate the issue, for example, by improving poor ventilation or offering advice about how to control moisture levels.

Asset Management Strategy

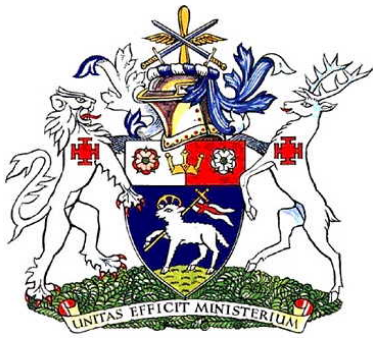
At a wider level, we are using the stock condition surveys and prevalence data to inform our asset strategy with the aim to consistently improve standards and prevent failure over the long term.

Our strategy sets out three key strands of work to improve our homes: a planned investment programme, a retrofit programme and a refreshed void upgrade programme ensuring new residents move into fully updated properties which have been assessed and where needed treated for damp and mould.

Underpinning this is a commitment by our Board to investing a total of £495m in our homes between now and 2032.

We are targeting work to the homes that need investment most. Any homes with an aging component where failure that could impact the health and safety of a resident are prioritised. We have then looked across the portfolio at investment need and considered customer experience indicators, history of repairs, risk factors for damp and mould (e.g. basement homes, low EPC rating) to set the longer-term approach.

This has led to a 3-year planned programme and we are now working on a 10-year programme as well. Where there are significant concerns about a home, we have recently commenced a programme to offer voluntary opportunities for residents to move to already upgraded home.



Housing and Growth Committee 23 March 2023

Title	Petition to remove the Golders Green Parklets
Report of	Cllr Ross Houston, Chair of the Housing and Growth Committee
Wards	Childs Hill Ward
Status	Public
Urgent	No
Key	Non-key
Enclosures	Appendix A – Golders Green Petition Appendix of Explanation Appendix B – Detailed points raised in the petition and council responses Appendix C – Impact of Parklets on parking transactions and income: Golders Green
Officer Contact Details	Cath Shaw, Deputy Chief Executive cath.shaw@barnet.gov.uk Jamie Robinson, Head of Economic Development jamie.robinson@barnet.gov.uk

Summary

This report considers a petition against the Temporary Streetspace Fund parklets in Golders Green Town Centre (Childs Hill ward). The petition has been submitted by Councillor Dean Cohen (Golders Green ward) and signed by 321 people.

Officers Recommendations

- 1) That the Committee rejects the Petition to remove the Golders Green Parklets on the basis that:
 - a) one of the actions proposed by the petitioners has already been taken; and
 - b) claims regarding the impact of parklets on local traffic and customer footfall are inaccurate and unsubstantiated.
- 2) That the Committee agrees for officers to conduct an evaluation of the Temporary Streetspace Fund to analyse its impact on town centres across the borough.

1. Why this report is needed

- 1.1 In January 2020, the council adopted the Golders Green Town Centre Strategy. The strategy had three aims: celebrate the unique qualities, make room for people and adapt to the 21st Century. Among the suggested projects and opportunities was the idea of incorporating parklets into the high street and, specifically, to:
- Increase pedestrian and cycling/public space and reduce road and car parking. Additional pedestrian crossings and traffic-calming features.
 - Trial temporary 'parklets' and spaces for planting, sitting out (south facing) and bike racks – develop a special street furniture collection and sell it – use the public realm as a display space and provide space for pop-up markets.
 - Short term trials and street closures on a Sunday – markets, festivals, cycling space, BBQs and family feasts.
- 1.2 The Town Centre Strategy was developed through extensive consultation and engagement with local communities and businesses, including over 270 survey respondents and close to 300 people engaged at various pop-up events.
- 1.3 Shortly after the Golders Green Town Centre Strategy was adopted, the COVID-19 pandemic struck, leading to widespread impacts across local communities and economies. As part of the council's response to the pandemic and the impact of lockdown and social distancing measures on hospitality businesses, the council set up the Temporary Town Centre Streetspace Fund, also known as parklets. The Fund provides:
- A Temporary Pavement License;
 - Wooden, planted barriers to create pleasant and safe trading space in front of premises, these are located in reallocated car parking spaces.
- 1.4 The council enters into contracts with businesses that successfully apply to the Fund. The parklets are initially provided at no charge to participating businesses, with the annual Pavement License then charged thereafter.
- 1.5 Installations commenced in September 2020. Approximately 25 parklets have been installed across nine of Barnet's town centres. There have been two phases to the programme: the first saw the installation of temporary, low-cost planters in parking spaces and the second, still temporary, comprised upgraded parklets with integrated seating and modifications to make them level with the pavement, thus improving accessibility.
- 1.6 Businesses were only offered Phase 2 parklets where they had met the terms of the contract and the parklets were observed to be well-used. Parklets have been removed from businesses where they are not well-used or not appropriately cared for by businesses.
- 1.7 In Golders Green Town Centre, five parklets were installed, occupying ten parking spaces. Upgraded parklets were then installed in June 2022, occupying the same

spaces. Overall, the car parking space taken up by parklets in Golders Green is relatively small when looking at the full extent of parking in the town centre.

- 1.8 It is important to note that, although the parklets were installed in response to COVID-19, they were first identified and consulted on as part of the adopted Golders Green Town Centre Strategy.

2. Reasons for recommendations

- 2.1 In Autumn 2022, a petition was submitted calling for the removal of the parklets in Golders Green Town Centre. The lead petitioner is Cllr Dean Cohen, ward member for the adjacent ward of Golders Green. The petition has been signed by over 300 people. An Appendix of Explanation was later drafted to support the petition (see Appendix A).
- 2.2 The petition makes a number of arguments, which can be summarised as ‘parklets have a negative impact on local traffic, parking availability and customer footfall’ and ‘the cost to the taxpayer of parklets is not justified’. Appendix B provides a more detailed breakdown of the specific arguments and responses.
- 2.3 It is important to address this issue within the wider context of high streets. In Barnet, as elsewhere across the country, high streets have been struggling in recent years. Whether measured by footfall, retail vacancies or customer spend, the general pattern is one of decline. The COVID-19 pandemic unfortunately exacerbated these long-standing trends.
- 2.4 To address this decline and support businesses, the council has been taking action on a number of fronts across town centres. This includes: investing in new public realm to make Barnet’s town centres more attractive, thus encouraging people to spend more time and money there; working with Town Teams and other local groups to fund and deliver business-led activities that attract people to town centres; providing one-to-one support to businesses to help them with issues such as marketing and communications; and working to sustainably reduce the amount of retail floorspace in town centres to make way for alternative uses, such as leisure and housing.
- 2.5 Although parklets were intended to support individual businesses in recovering from the pandemic, they also contribute more broadly to town centres by making them more people-friendly, by adding plants and greenery and by providing seating in areas that generally lack benches. This feedback was gathered through an initial evaluation of the parklets, undertaken in September 2021.
- 2.6 With respect to the primary contention of the petition that parklets have a negative impact on local traffic, parking availability and customer footfall, no evidence has been provided to support this assertion. Officers have, however, analysed the data that is available from the Parking Service to understand whether this might be the case.
- 2.7 Looking across a number of town centres, including Golders Green, parking use has fluctuated greatly in recent years. Overall, the level of parking in Barnet’s town centres is now lower than it was prior to the COVID-19 pandemic. However, the data do not show any relationship between parking activity and the installation of parklets.

This is the case when looking both at income from parking (i.e. the level of revenue generated) and the number of transactions (the overall number of times people pay to park). It is also the case when looking at the core town centre area and the fringes that serve it (see Appendix C).

- 2.8 On the point raised in the petition that the council is losing income due to the parklets, it is important to note that monthly income is regularly higher now than prior to their installation.
- 2.9 The petitioners also request the specific removal of one of the parklets, outside a business that has closed down. This action was taken in December 2022.
- 2.10 Housing and Growth Committee is therefore recommended to reject the petition calling for the removal of the Golders Green parklets.
- 2.11 It is recommended, however, that a more fulsome evaluation be conducted of the Temporary Streetspace Fund across the borough, including Golders Green. As with the evaluation of the first phase of the parklets, this will consider available parking data, survey those businesses that have parklets as well as their neighbours, and seek feedback from users of the parklets and other visitors to high streets.

3. Alternative options considered and not recommended

- 3.1 The council could opt to remove the parklets, in line with the petition, however, this decision would not be evidence-based and would undermine the gains made in supporting businesses and improving the high street.

4. Post decision implementation

- 4.1 Following this decision, officers will:

- Continue to work with the parklet businesses in Golders Green to optimise their use as the weather warms up; a recent survey of the businesses demonstrated that they are already actively considering this;
- Review the state of the plants and take action to refresh/renew these where required;
- Consider ways in which parklets can be more actively used during colder/wetter months when visitors to the town centre are less inclined to sit outdoors; for example, serving as bicycle parking areas;
- Conduct a second evaluation of the Temporary Town Centre Streetspace Fund to update understanding of its benefits and impacts and to learn lessons on how to further improve the initiative; this will include gathering feedback from businesses and visitors and further analysis of parking data;
- Seek to undertake a review of parking policy and pricing in Golders Green Town Centre to ensure that it is consistent with the council's objectives for supporting town centre businesses;

- Continue to work with the recently-formed Golders Green Town Team (made up of local community members) to develop ways of improving the town centre in line with the adopted Town Centre Strategy and the aspirations of local communities and businesses.

4.2 Officers will keep all parklets under review.

5. Implications of decision

Corporate Priorities and Performance

5.1 The Temporary Streetspace Fund supports the Corporate Plan priority of 'Caring for our places', specifically:

- a vibrant and fun place to live, work and visit;
- champion and develop our town centres and neighbourhoods;
- be a destination, a place to visit, live and enjoy ourselves, where people connect to each other.

5.2 The initiative also contributes to the goal of Caring for the planet, in particular, Enhance our green and open spaces so they are attractive places with excellent biodiversity and tree cover. Importantly, the parklets demonstrate that parking spaces can be given over to alternative, more environmentally-friendly uses without necessarily compromising parking availability.

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

5.3.1 There are no resource implications at this stage. The recommendations can be actioned within existing resources.

5.4 Legal and Constitutional References

5.4.1 The Council's Constitution (Article 7 – Committees, Forums, Working Groups, and Partnerships) sets out the responsibilities of the Housing and Growth Committee which include:

(1) Responsibility for:

- housing (including housing strategy, homelessness, social housing and housing grants, private sector housing and leasing, housing licencing and enforcement, HRA Revenue Account and Capital Programme).
- Regeneration Strategy and Overseeing Major Regeneration Schemes
- Asset Management
- Development of Council Land
- Fire Safety

- Economic Development including: Employment Strategy; Business Support and Engagement; and Town Centres

5.4.2 The Council's Constitution, Article 3 – Residents and Public Participation includes that where the petition relates to the matters outside the functions and responsibilities of an Area Committee, the petition will be reported to the relevant Theme Committee.

5.5 Insight

5.5.1 Officers have used data and intelligence from the Parking Service in making the recommendations included in this report.

5.6 Social Value

5.6.1 Not applicable.

5.7 Risk Management

5.7.1 Standard council risk management procedures have been followed in delivery of the Temporary Streetspace Fund.

5.8 Equalities and Diversity

5.8.1 Officers have worked to embed equality and diversity into the Temporary Streetspace Fund. The initiative has been open to any business in any town centre that could demonstrate that it would benefit from the support. As such, businesses from a variety of ethno-cultural backgrounds have been supported, reflecting the diversity of Barnet's high streets.

5.8.2 Furthermore, in Phase 2 of the programme officers designed in measures to better accommodate those with physical disabilities and mobility issues by making parklets level with the pavement and integrating seating.

5.8.3 In making its decision the committee must observe the public sector equality duty. Under section 149 of the Equality Act 2010, a public authority must, in the exercise of its functions, have due regard to the need to:

(a) eliminate discrimination, harassment, victimisation and any other conduct that is prohibited by or under this Act;

(b) advance equality of opportunity between persons who share a relevant protected characteristic and persons who do not share it;

(c) foster good relations between persons who share a relevant protected characteristic and persons who do not share it.

5.8.4 The relevant protected characteristics are:

- age; disability; gender reassignment; pregnancy and maternity; race; religion or belief; sex; sexual orientation and to a degree, marriage and civil partnership.

5.8.5 The public sector equality duty was addressed in the report to Committee as to the Golders green Town Centre Strategy, mentioned at paragraph 6 below.

5.9 Corporate Parenting

5.9.1 Not applicable.

5.10 Consultation and Engagement

5.10.1 As noted above, the Golders Green Town Centre Strategy was developed through extensive consultation and engagement with local communities and businesses. Over 270 people responded to surveys and almost 300 people were engaged at various pop-up events on a range of issues and proposals, including the proposed parklets.

5.10.2 While the petition is signed by over 250 people, it is not clear whether this includes businesses nor whether community members were also asked about the positive impacts of the parklets.

5.11 Environmental Impact

5.11.1 In general, efforts to replace car parking spaces with plants and vegetation will have a positive environmental impact. Importantly, analysis to date demonstrates that parking spaces can be removed in town centres without significantly impacting parking availability and therefore reducing visits to town centres.

6. Background papers

6.1 Housing and Growth Committee - January 2020: Golders Green Town Centre Strategy and update on Finchley Central Housing Infrastructure Fund:

6.2 <https://barnet.moderngov.co.uk/documents/s57507/Golders%20Green%20Town%20Centre%20Strategy%20and%20update%20on%20Finchley%20Central%20Housing%20Infrastructure%20Fund.pdf>

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Golders Green Petition

Appendix of Explanation

The reason for this appendix is laid out below:

Due to the pre-election period which began on the 12th of Jan, the hearing and decision of the petition in the name of Cllr Dean Cohen regarding the parklets on Golders Green Road has been postponed. Below is a brief explanation of the reasonings and feelings regarding the parklets.

These parklets were put in by members of the Environment Committee with Cllr Dean Cohen as the former Chairman of Environment Committee. The management and decision making of the parklets were then moved to the Housing and Growth Committee.

The parklets were a temporary measure under Covid to allow businesses to have more space to retain footfall whilst adhering to government guidelines re spacing in restaurants.

It was put there to help 5 restaurants on Golders green road. Of those 5 restaurants:

- Only one uses the space
- The others have not used the space (with one closed)

Our Golders Green Town Centre Strategy 2019

It is noted that in the 2019 'Our Golders Green Town Centre Strategy' (page 20, para 2) a lack of parking was one of the main areas of concern.

It is further noted on page 29 that these parklets were supposed to be a temporary measure with the aim of promoting businesses. As stated before out of those 5 businesses only one uses this parklet and uses it effectively.

Page 30 also notes that the temporary parklets could be introduced to 'test public appetite and potential implications on traffic flow or town centre parking'.

The petitioners, in this petition, would like to relay their opposition and lack of appetite to these parklets.

In the opinion of the petitioners the community loss of these parklets is established below.

The effect on local traffic and customer footfall

Due to the parklets, local traffic has increased. The petitioners ask the council to consider the environmental of traffic congestion due to the narrowing of the road.

With the inability to park where the parklets now are, other traders alongside the strip are losing footfall. Additionally, these parklets have made it difficult for the said traders to get their deliveries in without causing traffic issues.

Cost to the taxpayer

These parklets cost £14,000 to put into place. As stated before, only one of these parklets/extended seating areas are currently in use.

It is the belief of the petitioners that the prior to these parklets, there were £40 charges for the use of the space for parking.

The petitioners ask the council to consider the cost of these parklets alongside the loss of the income. Particularly the lack of charges and the decreased business rates that may occur due to the lack of footfall in other traders.

The petitioners could compromise on the following:

- One parklet could stay.
- The ones by the closed restaurant should be removed

Golders Green cost over £14,000 each to install, get very little use and reduce parking for residents and businesses.

These parklets were originally installed as a part of the COVID-19 measures, along with other restrictions. While the restrictions have ended, these parklets have remained. Alongside lead petitioner Cllr Dean Cohen - we, the undersigned, believe that these parklets should be removed.





Appendix B: Detailed points raised in the petition and council responses

Reason stated in the petition	Council response
The parklets were a temporary measure under Covid to allow businesses to have more space to retain footfall whilst adhering to government guidelines re spacing in restaurants.	Parklets were first proposed as part of the Golders Green Town Centre Strategy, adopted prior to the pandemic.
Parklets were put there to help five restaurants on Golders Green Road. Of those five restaurants: only one uses the space; the others have not used the space (with one closed).	All five restaurants used the space extensively during warmer weather. This was verified prior to upgrading the parklets in June 2022. The parklet outside the closed business was moved in December 2022.
Due to the parklets, local traffic has increased.	There is no evidence to substantiate this claim.
The petitioners ask the council to consider the environmental [impact] of traffic congestion due to the narrowing of the road.	Parklets occupy existing parking spaces meaning that the carriageway has not been narrowed.
With the inability to park where the parklets now are, other traders alongside the strip are losing footfall.	No evidence has been provided to substantiate this claim. Parking data shows no discernible relationship between the installation of parklets and levels of parking activity. Any impact on footfall is therefore assumed.
Parklets have made it difficult for the said traders to get their deliveries in without causing traffic issues.	Prior to their installation, all parklets are assessed for their possible impact on loading, pedestrian crossings and other highways issues.
These parklets cost £14,000 to put into place. The petitioners ask the council to consider the cost of these parklets alongside the loss of [parking] income. Particularly the lack of charges and the decreased business rates that may occur due to the lack of footfall in other traders.	Funding for the parklets was drawn from central government grants for business support. Due to their modular nature, parklets can be – and often have been – re-used outside multiple businesses, thus contributing to their value for money. Site visits and parking data show no discernible relationship between the installation of parklets and levels of parking activity. Indeed, parking income in Golders Green increased in the months after the parklets were upgraded in June 2022. There is no evidence of a link between parklet installations and reductions in business rates.
The petitioners could	Officers will keep all parklets under review.

compromise on the following:

- One parklet could stay;
- The ones by the closed restaurant should be removed.

The parklet outside the closed restaurant was moved in December 2022.

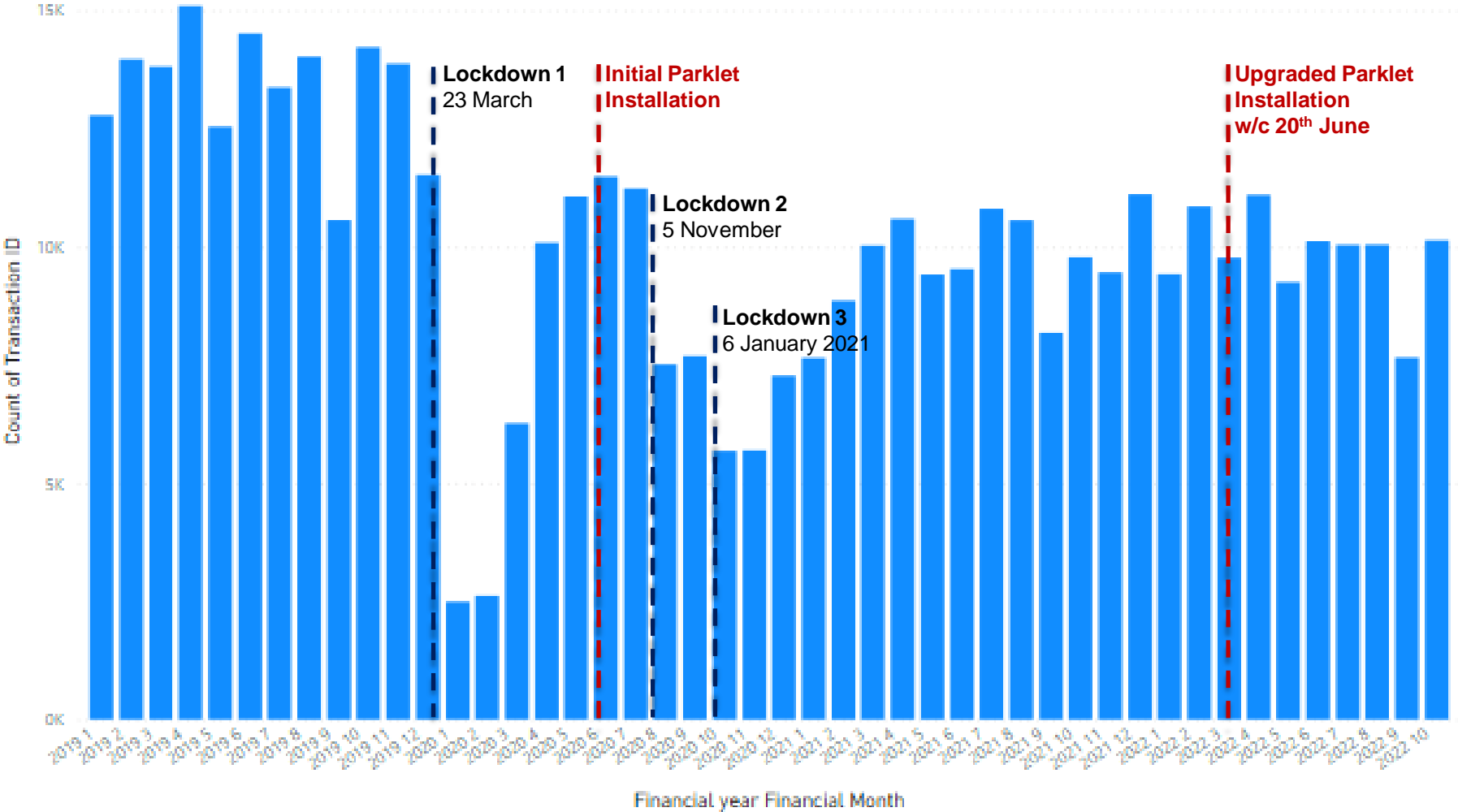
Impact of parklets on parking transactions and income: Golders Green

Parklets in Golders Green: Overview

- Five parklets installed September 2020, occupying ten parking spaces.
- Parking income and number of transactions fluctuated greatly throughout Covid-19 pandemic.
- An evaluation of the programme was carried out in October 2021.
- No discernible relationship between installation of parklets and parking income or number of parking transactions.
- Upgraded parklets installed June 2022, occupying the same ten parking spaces.
- In December 2022, a parklet was moved from the business that closed (Florentin) to another business (Farsi) who passed the council's assessment process.
- In February 2023, dead plants were replaced with 76 new ones across Golders Green parklets.

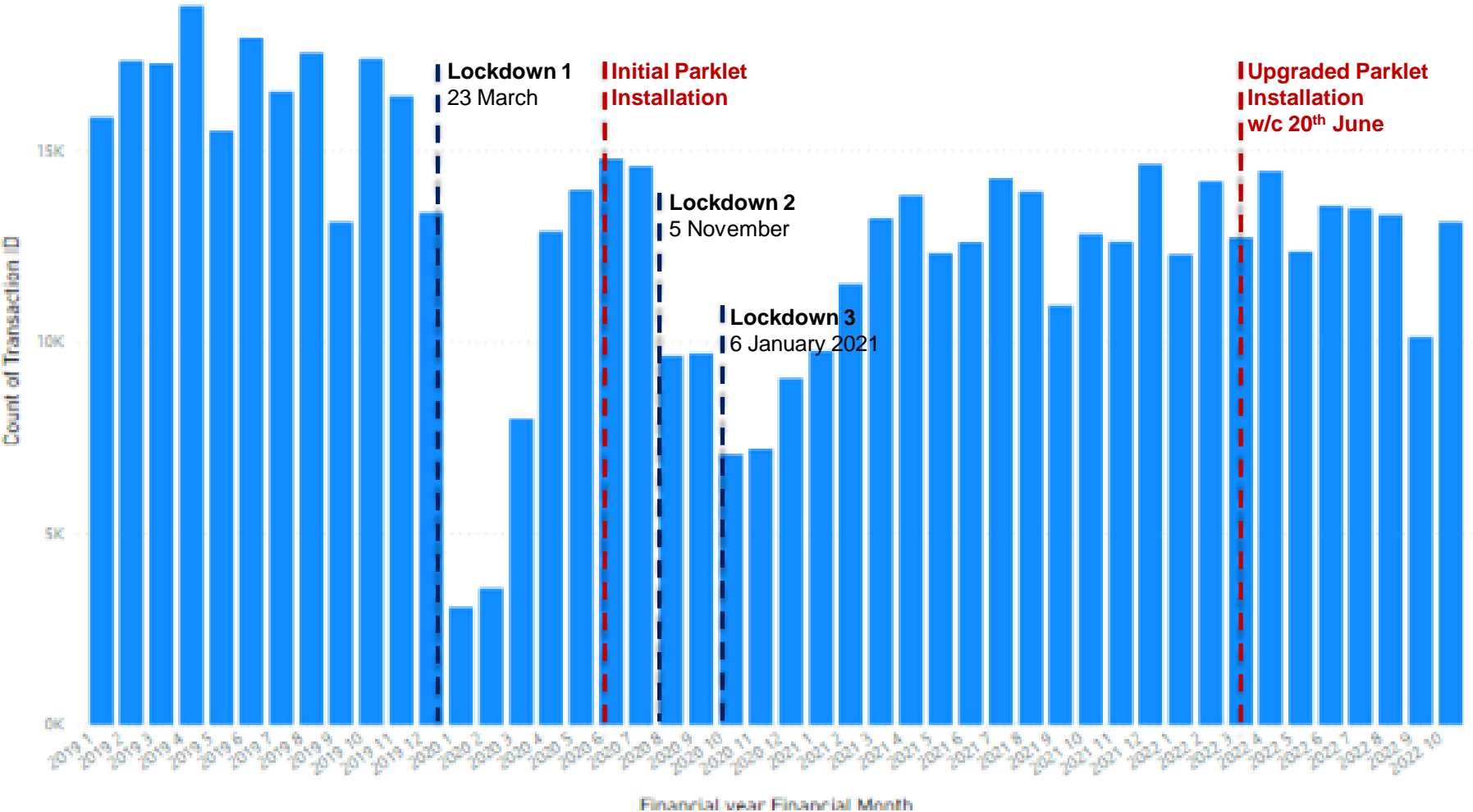
Parking Transactions: Town Centre Only

Count of Transaction ID by Financial year and Financial Month



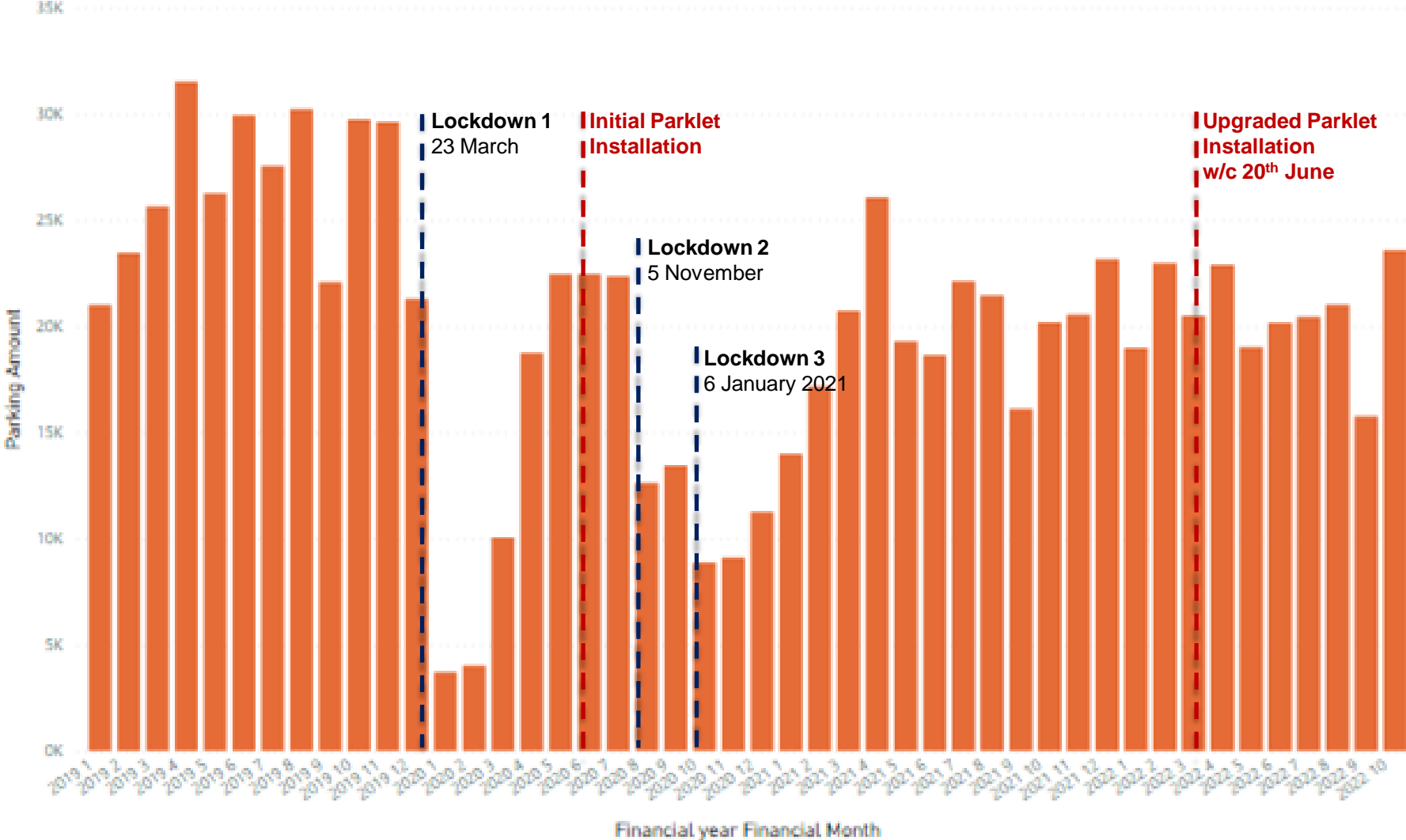
Parking Transactions: Town Centre and Fringes*

*Fringes = those areas associated with and likely to be serving the Town Centre but not within its borders



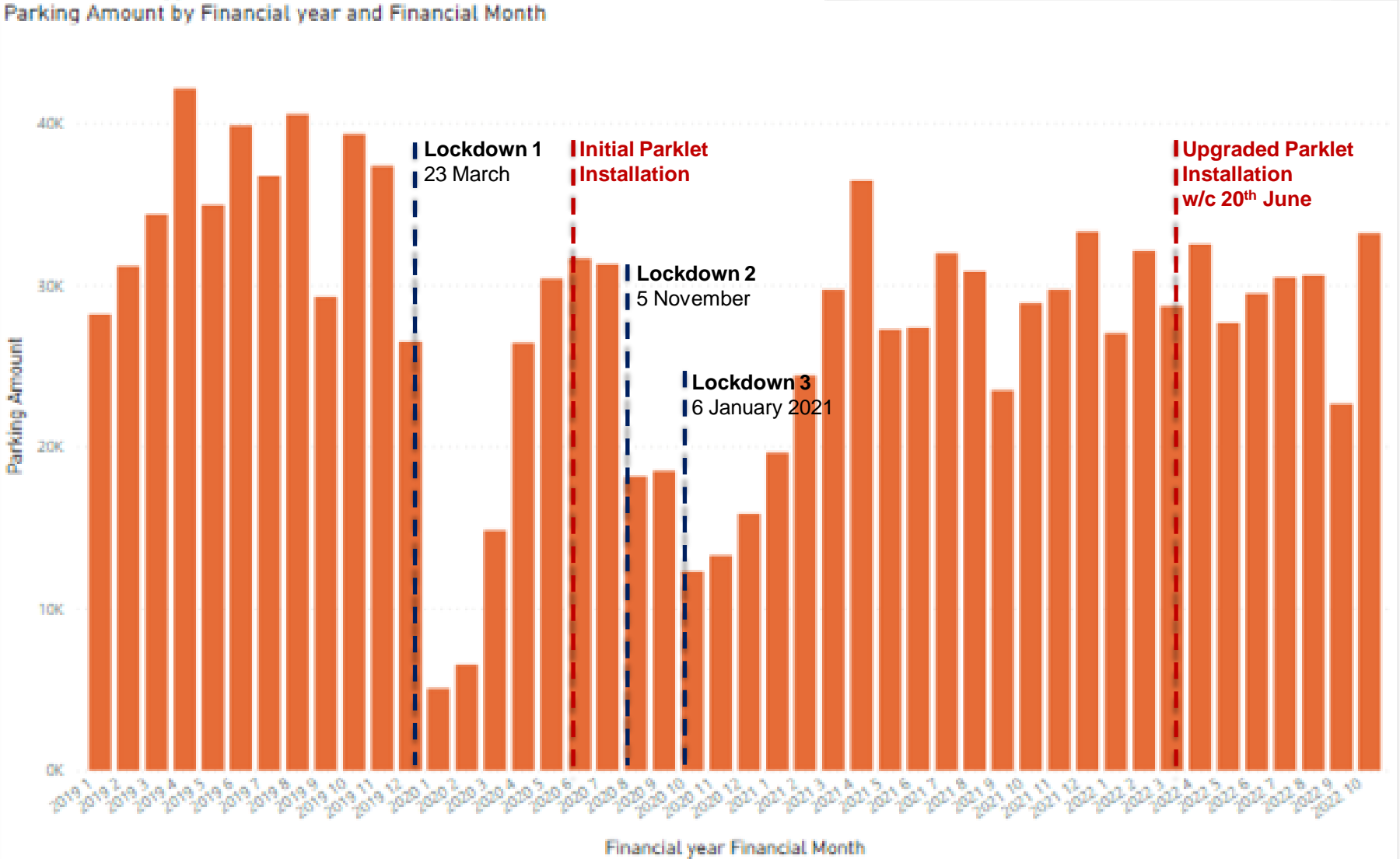
Parking Income: Town Centre Only

Parking Amount by Financial year and Financial Month

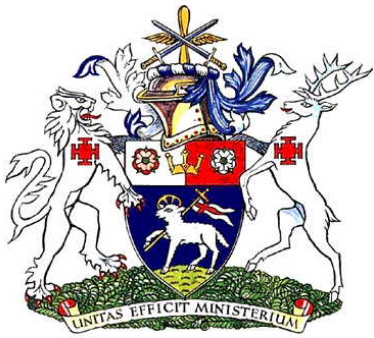


Note: Tariff increase July 2019

Parking Income: Town Centre and Fringes



Note: Tariff increase July 2019



Housing and Growth Committee

AGENDA ITEM 9

23 March 2023

Title	Edgware Town Centre ‘in principle’ CPO Resolutions
Report of	Chair of Housing and Growth Committee
Wards	Edgware
Status	Public with accompanying Exempt Report (not for publication by virtue of paragraph 3 of Schedule 12a of the Local Government Act 1972 on account that it contains information relating to the financial or business affairs of any particular person (including the authority holding the information)).
Urgent	No
Key	Yes
Enclosures	Appendix 1 Edgware Town Centre CPO Plan Appendix 2 Railway Hotel Plan
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Summary

This report asks the Committee to consider the regeneration proposals being put forward by a Joint Venture (“the JV”) between Ballymore and Transport for London’s commercial property company TTL Properties Limited (TTLP). In recognition of the extent to which the JV’s proposed Edgware Town Centre Regeneration Scheme promotes economic, social and environmental well-being of the town centre the Committee is also asked to agree in principle to use compulsory purchase powers on the basis that compulsory acquisition of land required for the Scheme may ultimately be necessary to enable timely delivery, assuming that current negotiations by the JV to secure the land by agreement/ private treaty prove unsuccessful.

The Committee is also asked to approve in principle the commencement of a compulsory acquisition process for the Railway Hotel in Edgware on the basis that reasonable steps are not being taken for its proper preservation.

Officers Recommendations

That the Committee:

1. Agrees **in principle** to use compulsory purchase powers under section 226(1) (a) and Section 226 (1) (1A) of the Town and Country Planning Act 1990 (as amended) in respect of acquiring the land and rights within the area described in this report for Edgware Town Centre and shown on the plan attached at Appendix 1. This is on the basis that the Council is of the view that compulsory acquisition of the land may ultimately be necessary to secure delivery of the Edgware Scheme, which is seen as essential for the future economic, social and environmental well-being of the Town Centre.
2. Agrees **in principle** to use compulsory purchase powers under Section 47 of the Planning (Listed Buildings & Conservation Areas) Act 1990 in respect of the Railway Hotel, Station Road, Edgware.
3. Subject to the 'in-principle' decisions being made, authorises the Director of Growth or other Officer as delegated by the Director of Growth to:
 - a) settle the proposed form and content of the relevant Compulsory Purchase Orders (CPOs) and begin preparatory work to use compulsory purchase powers and the application for any other necessary statutory consents, licenses and orders to enable project delivery in a timely manner, potentially including the use of Section 203 of Housing and Planning Act 2016 to appropriate easements and other rights in the property. Preparations for making the CPOs are likely to involve appointing land referencing agents to thoroughly investigate all land interests, together with the preparation of draft Statements of Reasons and an Equalities Impact Assessment together with all other necessary documentation to progress a CPO.
 - b) ensure all reasonable endeavours are used to assemble the land by agreement/private treaty prior to the making of any CPO. This will include settling the compensation payable in acquiring any land interests including entering into compensation settlement agreements or undertakings (where such agreements or undertakings are appropriate); as well as seeking to remove land no longer required from the CPO and/or making arrangement for relocation of occupiers and vesting of land acquired in the ownership of the Council or to transfer any interest in land in respect of the properties and proprietary interests acquired pursuant to the CPO to the Scheme regeneration partners, should this be required.
4. Notes that:

- a) The CPOs will only be made following a further detailed report and a Statement of Reasons being brought back to the Council.
- b) A 'Promotion Agreement' is being negotiated with the JV which will indemnify the Council for costs incurred in promoting the Edgware Town Centre CPO for the benefit of the JV.
- c) Any other necessary expenditure associated with preparatory work for the CPOs will be contained within the Council's existing approved budgets.
- d) Approval of these recommendations in no way endorses the Scheme design now or at any time in the future. In this respect, the Local Planning Authority is the authority.

1. Why this report is needed

- 1.1 The Council has been in discussion with a joint venture (the JV) between Ballymore and Transport for London (TfL) - who are intending to redevelop Edgware town centre.

The importance of delivering vibrant town centres and new homes was emphasised in the Council's recently adopted plan: Caring for People, our Places and the Planet: our plan for Barnet 2023-2026. The plan notes that the Council aims 'to create fun places people want to live in and visit. For this, we need safe and clean neighbourhoods, with flourishing town centres where creativity is encouraged, and businesses thrive'.

In addition, the plan notes that 'Barnet's town centres are at the core of our places. We want to champion their diversity, creativity, histories and identities at the same time as making them feel safer for businesses, residents and visitors. As well as providing opportunities for shopping and services, they are important sites of employment, recreation, religion and cultural life.'

The Plan also highlights the importance of delivering the right homes, to meet the diverse needs now and the needs of future generations, so that not only is the borough welcoming for new residents, but it also provides high quality and energy efficient homes for those who have grown up and want to stay here.

Given this context, we are supporting the JV in moving to the next phase of the Edgware town centre project.

Edgware, the Broadwalk Centre & Station

- 1.2 In July 2020 Ballymore acquired the freehold interest in the 190,000 sq. ft Broadwalk Shopping centre, which sits on a 13-acre site next to Edgware Underground Station. Transport for London (TfL) own the adjacent 7-acre site, which currently comprises a bus depot and underground railway sidings. The JV have been considering potential options for the redevelopment of the site with high quality new homes and retail, public realm and

green spaces and community and leisure facilities in consultation with officers at London Borough of Barnet since 2021. A Partnership Board has been formed with Ballymore, Transport for London, the Libraries Service and local businesses which is starting to develop plans for the town centre, including high street activations, new murals and artwork and other creative approaches to place-making.

1.3 The developer has set out their aspiration to deliver a vibrant destination where people can prosper. Whilst the Scheme has yet to be submitted for planning, the proposals are looking to include:

- A new Town Square for farmers markets and celebratory events for people to meet and socialise;
- A new flexible community library, cinema, leisure centre and office space;
- Creating a new shopping district by retaining and attracting anchor retailers and creating new food & beverage, evening economy and health and well-being uses;
- Providing a new and improved Sainsburys Superstore with car parking.

1.4 As well as being a destination in itself, the developer's vision of the new Edgware Town Centre would serve the local community as a passenger-friendly place to travel around North London and beyond. Currently the town centre can be unwelcoming to pedestrians and cyclists, with poor permeability and low-quality routes across the site. The proposals being put forward seek to transform the pedestrian environment and public realm, opening up the site with a series of new routes for pedestrians and cyclists. The developer has proposed:

- A new Station Square with new transport interchange outside the underground station;
- An electrified underground bus garage for TfL opening up the site for community and leisure uses at ground level and improving the local air quality by removing fossil fuel driven buses.
- Hundreds of car parking spaces for residential and town centre / Sainsburys use, including blue badge and parent and child spaces;
- A new cycle hub with new publicly accessible cycling spaces in addition to provision for residents and staff;
- A safer, improved environment for pedestrians and cyclists with a network of routes across the site and to wider neighbourhoods opening up access to the town centre.

However, no planning application has yet been submitted and further community consultation is planned so scheme details are likely to evolve as designs are developed.

1.5 The developer has stated that proposals seek to ensure that Edgware Town Centre is a place built for the future, serving all generations, and allowing families to live and grow in North London for years to come. To enable the delivery of the outlined benefits the developer will deliver much-needed new homes on this site, alongside all the benefits the community and Barnet Council expect from a new town centre. The new homes will be a mix of private and affordable housing.

- 1.6 To achieve redevelopment on this scale it is likely to be necessary to seek vacant possession of the existing shopping centre and other property held by TfL. Negotiations have commenced with parties affected by the Scheme. A number of properties have either been purchased or restructured to enable possession to be obtained but we understand agreement with all parties is very unlikely. In 2022 the Council were asked to consider use of compulsory purchase powers.
- 1.7 Given the nature of the Scheme proposed is to promote regeneration in Edgware and deliver socio-economic improvements and local economic growth and wellbeing, it is believed that there will be a compelling case in the public interest to acquire the property by way of compulsory purchase should that be required. Mindful that a general compulsory purchase power should not be used when a more specific one is available, the Council considers that the most relevant powers available to the authority to help enable regeneration of the Edgware Town Centre site are those under s.226 (1) (a) and Section 226 (1) (1A) of the Town & Country Planning Act 1990 in order to ‘facilitate the carrying out of development, redevelopment or improvement on or in relation to the land’ to be acquired, with the objective of promoting the economic, social and environmental well-being of the area. The benefit to be derived from exercising the power is not restricted to the area subject to the compulsory purchase order, as the concept is applied to the improvements and wellbeing of the whole (or any part) of the acquiring authority’s area.

The Railway Hotel

- 1.8 Another key issue for Edgware Town Centre is that the Council’s vision for Edgware involves celebrating local heritage. The area has many heritage assets, which have an important role to play in the growth and renewal of Edgware, by providing historical context and supporting local identity. Whilst some of Edgware’s heritage assets are well cared for and well used, in other cases the buildings have been neglected and should be restored and brought back to suitable uses. This is particularly the case with the privately owned Grade II listed Railway Hotel, which is a valued landmark heritage building in the town centre. The building was once a public house, which has been closed since 2006 and is now derelict and is on Historic England’s Heritage at Risk Register.
- 1.9 The National Planning Policy Framework (NPPF) details a significant role for local planning authorities in caring for heritage assets and legislation gives local authorities a lead role in taking enforcement steps for a breach of listed building, conservation area and planning controls. The NPPF at paragraph 190 states:

Plans should set out a positive strategy for the conservation and enjoyment of the historic environment, including heritage assets most at risk through neglect, decay or other threats. This strategy should take into account:

- a) the desirability of sustaining and enhancing the significance of heritage assets, and putting them to viable uses consistent with their conservation;
- b) the wider social, cultural, economic and environmental benefits that conservation of the historic environment can bring;

- c) the desirability of new development making a positive contribution to local character and distinctiveness; and
- d) opportunities to draw on the contribution made by the historic environment to the character of a place.

- 1.10 The freehold of the Railway Hotel is owned by Milegate Limited. It was purchased in 2018 together with some vacant land to the rear known as the Forumside site, which together are shown edged red in the plan at Appendix 2. Since 2017 the site has been the subject of a number of planning enforcement actions and occasional engagement with the owners. These actions have, however, achieved sporadic but limited works. Following a site visit in April 2022, accompanied by Historic England, it was considered that the listed building was in severe danger of irreparable harm and an Urgent Works notice was served. Following the failure of the owner to undertake any works listed within the Urgent Works notice a Repairs Notice was served in September 2022, but once more not all works required have been completed.
- 1.11 The Council recognise that there may be benefits of including the Railway Hotel and the land to the rear within the wider town centre redevelopment. The JV approached the freehold owner of this site in 2022 but was unable to acquire the land. However, the repairs to the Hotel are urgent and the Council consider the complexity and risk associated with a large CPO for Edgware town centre would cause significant delay compared to a stand-alone CPO for the Hotel. Therefore, given the urgency of the repairs, the Council considers the most appropriate course of action is to explore using Section 47 of the Planning (Listed Buildings & Conservation Areas) Act 1990 (“the PLBCAA”), which gives a local authority the power to compulsorily acquire a listed building where reasonable steps are not being taken for its proper preservation. The Council are advised that such a PLBCAA CPO could only include the Hotel and not the land to the rear. Therefore, the back-land owned by Milegate Limited is proposed to be incorporated into the CPO for Edgware. Together they form part of the same regeneration scheme.

General Issues Relating to Compulsory Purchase

- 1.12 The most recent guidance to acquiring authorities on the compulsory purchase process was issued by the Ministry of Housing, Communities and Local Government (now Department of Levelling UP, Housing & Communities) in July 2019 on the compulsory purchase process (“the Guidance”). It provides that compulsory purchase orders should only be made where there is a compelling case in the public interest, and further that an acquiring authority must take reasonable steps to acquire all the land and rights necessary by agreement. The Guidance goes on to explain that whilst compulsory purchase is intended as a last resort, it may often be sensible to initiate formal procedures so that the seriousness of the acquiring authority’s intentions are clear from the outset and encourage acquisition by agreement.
- 1.13 The Human Rights Act 1998 places direct obligations on public bodies such as the Council to demonstrate that the use of compulsory purchase powers is in the public interest and that use of such powers is proportionate to the ends being pursued. Should the Council

decide to make a CPO it will need to be sure that the purpose for which the land is required can sufficiently justify interfering with the human rights of those with an interest in the land. These include rights under Article 1 of the First Protocol of the European Convention on Human Rights (“ECHR”) (which provides that every natural or legal person is entitled to peaceful enjoyment of their possessions) and Article 8 of the ECHR (which provides that everyone has the right to respect for their private and family life, home and correspondence).

- 1.14 When preparing the CPO, officers will keep in mind and advise the Council about the need to balance the public interest and individual’s rights and that any interference with these rights will be necessary and proportionate. Proportionate, in this context, is generally held to mean that the interference must be no more than is necessary to achieve the identified and legitimate aim of the proposed regeneration or redevelopment Scheme and that compulsory purchase is only being used as a last resort following reasonable endeavours to purchase land and property by agreement. As part of the work that will need to be undertaken ahead of making any CPO there will be an investigation into the impact on landowners and leaseholders affected by the CPO and this will be taken into account before a final decision is made as to whether or not to put forward a resolution for making a CPO. Given that compulsory purchase is only used as a last resort, the Council together with the JV will also be making every effort to acquire interests required by agreement first.

2 Reasons for recommendations

- 2.1 The resolutions now being sought will not, of themselves, authorise the making of a CPO at this stage, but they will enable further work to be undertaken by the Council and the JV, as the Council’s potential development partner, to enable a decision about whether or not the making of a CPO at a later date is desirable and achievable, and if so how it should be implemented. The ‘in principle’ decisions should give landowners a clear indication that the Council is serious about land acquisition and thereby encourage them to negotiate in a meaningful way. Any future decision to proceed with CPOs will be dependent on a compelling case having been assembled in support of the need to make a CPO for either Edgware, or in respect of the Railway Hotel, and for significant further progress to be made towards satisfying all the necessary financial, legal and planning conditions.
- 2.2 The Guidance states that in considering whether or not to confirm a CPO, the Secretary of State will have regard to the extent to which the purpose for which the land is being acquired fits with the adopted Local Plan for the area or, where no such up to date Local Plan exists, with the draft Local Plan and the NPPF.
- 2.3 Through the London Plan, the Mayor establishes the growth needs for London and places housing targets for all 33 local authorities. The London Plan sets out where the Mayor would prefer to see growth delivered, within an emphasis on directing development towards land that:
 - Is brownfield and within or on the edge of town centres;
 - Is well connected by existing or planned public transport;

- Can intensify the use of land to support additional homes and workspaces, promoting higher density development, particularly in locations that are well-connected to jobs, services, infrastructure and amenities by public transport, walking and cycling.

- 2.4 Outer London boroughs such as Barnet and Harrow are required to meet the Mayor's growth requirements through their Local Plan documents and by identifying suitable places where new housing and supporting infrastructure could be delivered. The Mayor's Good Growth Principles underpin this approach, in particular Policy GG2 Making the best use of land, which expects application of a design-led approach to determine the optimum capacity of sites. The Barnet Local Plan Core Strategy supports vibrant suburban town centres and the Council considers that a high-density approach in Edgware Town Centre is a sustainable way of meeting the borough's growth needs while protecting precious green spaces, including Green Belt. The London Plan provides the overall housing target for Barnet. This stands at 2,364 new homes per annum as set out in recently adopted 2021 London Plan. It is a challenging target and although Barnet has performed well in recent years in meeting or exceeding the target, the Council is clear that delivering the right homes in the right locations at the right time underpins successful and sustainable growth. The Council continues to take steps to speed up and get the balance right on housing delivery and major redevelopments such as that proposed in Edgware Town Centre can make a major contribution to new housing in the Borough and also increase the supply of affordable housing.
- 2.5 The emerging Local Plan identifies Edgware as a Growth Area which needs to deliver 5,000 new homes. Both the shopping centre and stations sites are included in the emerging Local Plan's "Site Allocations". This means that planning policy requires these sites to come forward for redevelopment and deliver significant numbers of new homes and jobs. The site allocations target the delivery of over 4,600 new homes as well as new commercial uses such as shops, offices, leisure, community facilities and restaurants, cafes and bars.
- 2.6 In line with the London Plan, the Edgware Growth Area Supplementary Planning Document (SPD), jointly prepared and endorsed by both Barnet and Harrow Councils, seeks to build on the current assets of Edgware and to identify where there are opportunities for improvement and development. It sets out a clear vision for a town centre that will guide regeneration and renewal activity by the respective Councils as well as encouraging investment into the town centre by landowners, investors and other public sector bodies. It aims to deliver the vision both Barnet and Harrow Councils have for a reimaged Edgware Town Centre and thriving high street.
- 2.7 The SPD establishes a vision for Edgware together with 16 key objectives to help realise that vision and nine development principles that will guide sustainable development in the town centre. These principles include renewal of the Town Centre and High Street as a major destination; improved transport and movement options with a need for the station to provide a sense of arrival in Edgware, bringing people into the heart of the town centre and connecting this key public transport node with the surrounding town centre; as well as the need to ensure high quality design and a sensitive approach to Heritage. The SPD

specifically highlights (para 4.24) The Railway Hotel as ... “a valued landmark heritage building that must be brought back into use as part of the renewal and redevelopment of the wider area.”

- 2.8 The SPD also identifies some key opportunity sites within the SPD area. These include the Broadwalk Centre and Station, which is seen as providing the major strategic development opportunity for Edgware. It is noted that this site has the potential for the creation of a modern urban environment with opportunities for tall buildings and higher densities in some parts – dependent on high quality design – while being sympathetic to the context and adjacent residential areas. It is further noted that proposals must also carefully consider the setting and context of surrounding heritage assets, such as the Railway Hotel. Another opportunity site identified is the Forumside site to the rear of the Railway Hotel, where it is noted that a co-ordinated approach is required to realise the site’s full potential, including the opportunity to create a new high-quality ‘heritage quarter’ with a high-quality environment and greatly improved linkages to the surrounding areas.

3 Alternative options considered and not recommended

- 3.1 We understand that the Scheme design for Edgware and the Broadwalk Centre has been developed in consultation with the local community (see Section 5.9 below) and taking account of the views of wider community stakeholders. We also understand that careful consideration has been given to the extent of the land and rights to be included in the CPO and whether it is necessary to include all of these. The developer will be required to demonstrate that site-specific circumstances such as existing plot boundaries, site access and present use have all been considered in developing the Scheme layout.
- 3.2 Community consultation and the feedback received on the Edgware regeneration proposals has been used to shape the emerging masterplan:
- Parking was one of the most important issues to the local community, with concerns about a significant reduction in Sainsbury’s & town centre parking. The JV have reviewed proposed parking and included a new multi-story car park in response to community feedback.
 - The community was clear that they wanted more ‘things to do’ – the cinema in particular is viewed as a big loss to the community. There is a lack of services and activities for young people and families and a need for a greater ‘night- time economy’ in Edgware. Older generations are worried about social isolation and want more community spaces. As a result the JV are including a range of community, cultural and leisure uses from a new cinema, library, leisure centre with 3 lane swimming pool and tennis courts, a range of pubs, restaurants, cafes etc. They will also be providing a range of flexible public spaces to help foster a sense of community among people of all ages.
 - There is a real lack of green and open spaces in Edgware and the JV have included new green spaces, new play space and are now proposing to open up access to a town centre nature reserve.

- Station Road is not viewed as a welcoming pedestrian environment and is one that is dominated by cars and buses and as a result can feel unsafe. By moving the bus garage underground the JV is seeking to reduce traffic movements and improve public realm, addressing key community concerns.
- There was a real sense from younger people in particular that safety and security were a concern in and around the town centre. As a result the JV have developed a new lighting and ground floor strategy to ensure new spaces and streets are safe, especially during the evening.

3.3 If the CPO cannot be made, then the only way of acquiring the interests needed to deliver the Scheme would be by agreement. Nonetheless, despite the progress of negotiations undertaken by the JV to date, unless the CPO is made and confirmed, there is a danger that the JV may not be able to assemble the necessary interests within a reasonable timescale. On this basis, whilst it is intended to acquire all land interests through private treaty negotiation wherever possible, the CPO is a necessary safety precaution. Without compulsory purchase powers there is a risk that the regeneration of Edgware could be delayed or not delivered in the comprehensive manner planned. However, prior to the approval of any CPO the Council will work with the JV to ensure that there is early and meaningful engagement with all affected parties and that reasonable endeavours are made to purchase properties by agreement wherever possible.

4 Post decision implementation

4.1 The Council and its advisors will continue to monitor the progress the CPO proposals to ensure effective delivery of the Edgware Town Centre and Railway Hotel Proposals in line with best practice. On this basis the Council will:

- Begin to prepare the necessary documentation required for the CPOs together with undertaking initial land referencing and an Equalities impact Assessment;
- Ensure that there are robust funding proposals which underpin the Edgware Town Centre and Railway Hotel Schemes;
- Monitor negotiations for the acquisition of properties required for the Scheme by agreement and thereby ensuring the minimum objections to any future CPO;
- Settle the final form and content of the CPO, making any reductions to the extent of the interests to be acquired, and proceed toward an approval for making, confirmation and implementation of the CPO only if the interests required for the regeneration scheme cannot be acquired by private treaty on reasonable terms;
- Ensure that the JV undertake further rounds of public consultation to allow the wider public to have their say on the proposals with a focus on ‘hard to reach’ groups e.g:
 - Young people (local schools and youth groups)
 - Faith groups (local churches, synagogues, Eruv Committee)
 - Disability & accessibility groups (RNIB, AgeUK, Jewish Blind & Disabled)

- ESOL groups (Paiwand /Afghan Association and Park Tuition)

5. Implications of decision

5.1 Corporate Priorities and Performance

- 5.1.1 The Barnet draft Corporate Plan 2023-26 puts Caring for People, our Places and the Planet at the heart of everything the Council does. It embraces: all people, no matter their background or circumstances; each place, whether a home, street, neighbourhood, green space, natural habitat, or bustling town centre; and it is our contribution to help protect our planet. On this basis the Edgware town centre regeneration proposals will help to deliver the Council's priorities in making Barnet a brilliant place to live, to grow up, study, work, start a business and raise a family.
- 5.1.2 The Edgware proposals are intended to deliver on what residents have asked for during consultations on the redevelopment proposals, to encourage the further development of a sense of community locally, improving existing facilities and providing safe and affordable accommodation for residents and vulnerable people.
- 5.1.3 Following the declaration of a climate emergency, delivering and implementing the Sustainability Strategy and Climate Action Plan is a key corporate priority for the Council. On this basis the Edgware town centre Scheme aims to achieve a range of nationally and globally recognised sustainability accreditations including TfL's Sustainable Development Framework, BREEAM Outstanding; LEED Platinum for Neighbourhood Development etc.

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

Edgware Town Centre CPO

- 5.2.1 The JV have agreed in principle to indemnify the Council against all costs and professional fees it incurs in preparing the case for a resolution to make the Edgware town centre CPO. It is expected that costs will be recovered monthly. All land acquisition for this CPO is expected to be funded by the JV. A cost indemnity letter has been provided to the Council and a Promotion Agreement setting out the roles and responsibilities of each party in promoting the CPO is in the process of being negotiated.
- 5.2.2 CPO Guidance is clear that the acquiring authority should provide substantive information as to the sources of funding available for both acquiring the land and implementing the scheme for which the land is required. It must show that all the necessary resources are likely to be available to achieve that end within a reasonable time-scale. At this stage we have received the JV funding strategy. This confirms that Ballymore has an extensive and successful track record in putting together funding packages for complex multi-phase developments of a similar size and scale to that proposed in Edgware, having raised c. £2billion in debt finance over the last ten years, including £725m since the onset of COVID-19.

5.2.3 Whilst Ballymore have a proven track record in funding large residential developments, the key issue will be to ensure that the proposed Scheme remains viable as it progresses through the various stages of planning and development so that the authority can remain confident that such funding will be available to fund land acquisition and to implement the Scheme and its associated benefits. At this stage whilst the Council and its development partners are confident that Scheme funding could be secured, there is as yet no settled scheme to assess. However, further due diligence will be undertaken on both viability and funding before the Council authorise the making of the CPO. The Scheme's viability will be kept under constant review by the JV and by the Council and its advisers.

The Railway Hotel

5.2.4 The Council are in discussion with the JV about integrating the Railway Hotel into the Scheme. However, the different timing of the CPOs means the Council are likely to have to fund (at least in the short term) a separate CPO for the Railway Hotel under Section 47 of the PLBCAA 1990. The terms of a possible onward sale to the JV have yet to be discussed.

5.2.5 Legal and Constitutional References

5.3.1 The Council's Constitution, Article 7 sets out the terms of reference of the Housing and Growth Committee including: responsibility for regeneration strategy and overseeing major regeneration schemes, asset management, employment strategy, business support and engagement.

5.3.2 The Council has wide-ranging powers to buy, sell and develop land, which is set out in various statutes including:

- Local Government Act 1972;
- Housing Act 1985;
- Town and Country Planning Acts;
- Local Authorities (Land) Act 1963
- Housing and Planning Act 2016
- Highways Acts.

5.3.3 As stated above, the power that is most appropriate to enable regeneration of the Edgware Town Centre site is Section 226(1)(a) and 226(1A) of the Town and Country Planning Act 1990, as amended by the Planning and Compulsory Purchase Act 2004. The section provides that a local authority shall, on being authorised to do so by the Secretary of State, have power to acquire compulsorily any land in their area if they are satisfied that the acquisition will facilitate the carrying out of development, redevelopment or improvement on or in relation to the land. However, the power must not be exercised unless the authority thinks that the development is likely to contribute to the achievement of the economic, social and environmental well-being of the area. The compulsory purchase will enable regeneration to take place in accordance with an agreed programme and will provide certainty for site assembly and the implementation of the Scheme – thus enabling the Council's objectives to be achieved in respect of the land the subject of the Order.

Railway Hotel

- 5.3.4 Where it appears to the Secretary of State (“SoS”) that reasonable steps are not being taken to properly preserve a listed building, for example, the Railway Hotel being a Grade II listed building, the SoS can authorise the *appropriate acquiring authority*, i.e. the Council, to acquire the building under compulsory purchase powers (s.47, (compulsory acquisition of listed building in need of repair) of the Planning (Listed Buildings and Conservation Areas) Act 1990). The SoS must consult Historic England before deciding whether to confirm a CPO under s.47. The Council may acquire by agreement any building appearing to it to be of special architectural or historic interest and for preserving the building or its amenities (s.52). Any person who has an interest (freehold or leasehold) in a listed building who is served with notice of a CPO having been made (in respect of that building) may within 28 days of receipt of the notice apply to the magistrates’ court for an order to stay (or “stop”) further proceedings on the CPO. The magistrates’ court can make an order stating that reasonable steps have been taken to preserve the building (s.47(5)). Where the Council or any person is aggrieved by the decision of the magistrates’ court, they may appeal to the Crown Court (s.47(6)).
- 5.3.5 Section 227 of the Town and Country Planning Act 1990 provides that a Council may acquire by agreement any land which they require for any purpose for which a local authority may be authorised to acquire land compulsorily under section 226.
- 5.3.6 Section 13 of the Local Government (Miscellaneous Provisions) Act 1976 provides for the acquisition of new rights over land where such rights are not in existence when the order specifying them is made. In order to facilitate the redevelopment, it may be necessary to acquire new rights over the land for purposes such as crane oversailing.
- 5.3.7 In using the enabling powers pursuant to section 226 (1)(a) and 226(1A) of the Town and Country Planning Act 1990 and Section 13 of the Local Government (Miscellaneous Provisions) Act 1976, the Council is using the most specific powers available to it for the purposes of the Scheme.
- 5.3.8 The Adopted Core Strategy September 2012, the adopted Development Management Policies (DMP) September 2012 and the adopted London Plan March 2021 provide a strong planning policy basis to support the Scheme.
- 5.3.9 As stated above, consideration has been given to the provisions of the Human Rights Act 1998 including Article 8 (respect for private and family life and home) and Article 1 of the First Protocol (right to peaceful enjoyment of possessions). A decision to make compulsory purchase orders must strike a fair balance between the public interest in the regeneration of the land and interference with private rights. Bearing in mind the provisions for compensation to be payable and the compelling case in the public interest for the acquisition of the interest, as explained elsewhere in this report it is considered that the interference with private property rights is proportionate and strikes a fair balance between

the public interest and the private interests being acquired in compliance with the requirements of Article 1 of the First Protocol.

5.4 Insight

5.4.1 None in the context of this report

5.5 Social Value

5.5.1 The development of Edgware Town Centre brings with it with it a range of social value benefits. For example, significant employment will be generated over the course of the development and construction programme. This will create employment locally and opportunities for skills and training including apprenticeships etc particularly with regard to construction.

5.5.2 There will also be significant numbers of end-use jobs created. These would range across skills and sectors based on the land uses delivered. The range of jobs could include:

- Retail Jobs
- Office based employment
- Leisure and community jobs

5.5.3 The economic activity generated by these jobs will benefit the local economy. New employees working in Edgware would contribute towards the local economy through additional spending during the working day. New residents would have a positive impact upon the local economy through additional household spending on goods and services much of which could be captured locally.

5.6 Risk Management

5.6.1 The decision in principle does not give rise to any onerous obligations on the Council as it is just approving progression to the next stage of preparing a resolution to make the CPO in parallel to negotiations to acquire land. Compulsory purchase is a specialist area. The Council has therefore appointed the consultants, aspire Compulsory Purchase LLP, to advise on the process and oversee the acquisition of land. They will work closely with the Council's planning, property and legal teams to ensure that the process is understood, risks anticipated and appropriate mitigation is put in place.

5.6.2 There is a risk that the Secretary of State may refuse to consent to the CPO. Clearly, construction will not commence until properties are available and other conditions precedent satisfied.

5.6.3 There are a number of other normal project risks that would be associated with any major regeneration project of this nature. These include:

- a) Title – Extensive legal due diligence has been undertaken to ensure there will be clean title on the land to be used for redevelopment/public realm works and this, together with the

CPO and appropriation workstreams noted above will ensure this is in place in order to enable a start on site.

- b) Land – If the necessary land and rights cannot be assembled via CPO there is a risk that the redevelopments of both Edgware Town Centre and the Railway Hotel scheme won't be able to proceed.
- c) Viability – Maintaining Scheme viability will be a key factor in having sufficient developable area to produce satisfactory financial returns sufficient to enable the completion of the proposed Scheme together with affordable housing, new and improved local community facilities and the associated Scheme features to ensure economic, social and environmental well-being across the town centre.
- d) Finally, there is always a risk of third-party legal challenge to the decision-making process by the Council and also to any decision granting the CPO by the Secretary of State. The Council has involved both its in-house lawyers and instructed leading counsel in order to help minimise the risk of legal challenge.

5.7 Equalities and Diversity

5.7.1 The Equality Act 2010 places a duty on the Council as follows:

- (1) A public authority must, in the exercise of its functions, have due regard to the need to:
 - (a) eliminate discrimination, harassment, victimisation and any other conduct that is prohibited by or under this Act;
 - (b) advance equality of opportunity between persons who share a relevant protected characteristic and persons who do not share it;
 - (c) foster good relations between persons who share a relevant protected characteristic and persons who do not share it.

The relevant protected characteristics are: age; disability; gender reassignment; pregnancy and maternity; race; religion or belief; sex; sexual orientation.

5.7.2 This is referred as the Public Sector Equality Duty ('**PSED**'). The PSED is set out at Section 149 of the Equality Act 2010. In performing their public functions, acquiring authorities must have due regard to the need to meet the three aims of the Equality Act 2010 set out above.

5.7.3 The Council is committed to improving the quality of life and wider participation for all the economic, educational, cultural, and social and community life within the borough. This is achieved by pursuing successful regeneration of the Borough's regeneration areas, in this instance Edgware.

5.7.4 Further, the Council's Equalities, Diversity & Inclusion policy (2020-24) helps ensure the Council are committed to making decisions that are informed by diverse points of view and

feeding those into the design, commissioning and delivery of services e.g. by building measures within our commissioning procedures so that providers develop and deliver anti-discriminatory services to residents with all protected characteristics.

- 5.7.5 On this basis it is proposed to undertake an Equalities Impact Assessment (EqIA) as part of the next phase of work and before any formal resolution is passed to make the CPO. This will ensure that the Council can fully understand the potential impact of the CPO on the local community and in particular any differential impacts on those with protected characteristics. The findings of the EqIA will allow suitable mitigating actions to be identified and put in place in advance of the CPO being made.
- 5.7.6 The Council also recognises that equality issues will require regular review to ensure that people continue to be treated equally, with understanding and respect, and have equal access to quality services which provide value to the taxpayer.
- 5.7.7 Section 17 of the Crime and Disorder Act 1998 states that all relevant authorities have a duty to consider the impact of all their functions and decisions on crime and disorder in their local area. The principles within LBB's Design Guidance Note on Designing to Reduce Crime will be considered during the design stage and there will be regular design review meetings with the Metropolitan Police crime prevention and safer neighbourhood teams to ensure the building designs and associated technology maximises safety for users and those in proximity of the new buildings and thereby minimises the possibility of crimes being committed. This will continue as the design is developed and consideration will be had as to how the development meets 'Secured by Design' standards.

5.8 Corporate Parenting

- 5.8.1 None in the Context of this report.

5.9 Consultation and Engagement

- 5.9.1 Eight public exhibitions were held by the JV partners between Summer 2021 and Spring 2022 and there have been more than 100 community engagement sessions including monthly drop-ins, 1-2-1s, group meetings and workshops, including targeted workshops for those with disability or accessibility issues and with youth groups. The JV have also established an online consultation hub which has elicited 9,500 visits and over 1,200 contributions, together with the creation of Edgware Town Centre Steering Group to connect with the local business Community. Community engagement has included youth groups and the Future of Edgware art project undertaken with Edgware Primary School, where approximately 200 pupils participated across reception to year six. There has also been regular engagement with LBB leadership and local and neighbouring ward members. Whilst there has been initial engagement with those parties most likely to be affected by the CPO this will be the focus of activities during the next stage of work.

5.10 Environmental Impact

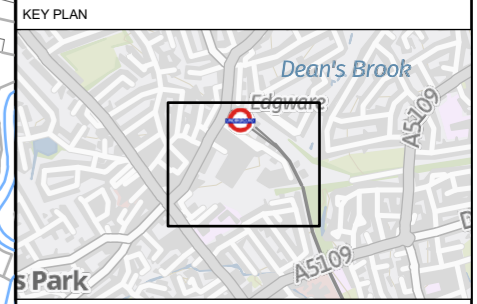
5.10.1 Sustainable design is at the heart of the Edgware town centre development proposals. The JV are proposing a landscape led development that repairs and improves Edgware's environment. Edgware Town Centre will be a safe and inclusive community, resilient and working towards net zero carbon with key initiatives that will improve blue and green networks through the site, increasing biodiversity and providing access to natural landscapes which are currently inaccessible.

5.10.2 In addition the scheme aspires to achieve the following nationally and globally recognised sustainability accreditations:

6. Background papers

[Housing and Growth Committee 13 June 2022](#)
[Our plan for Barnet 2023 to 2026 | Barnet Council.](#)


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KEY
 Redline Boundary

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Client

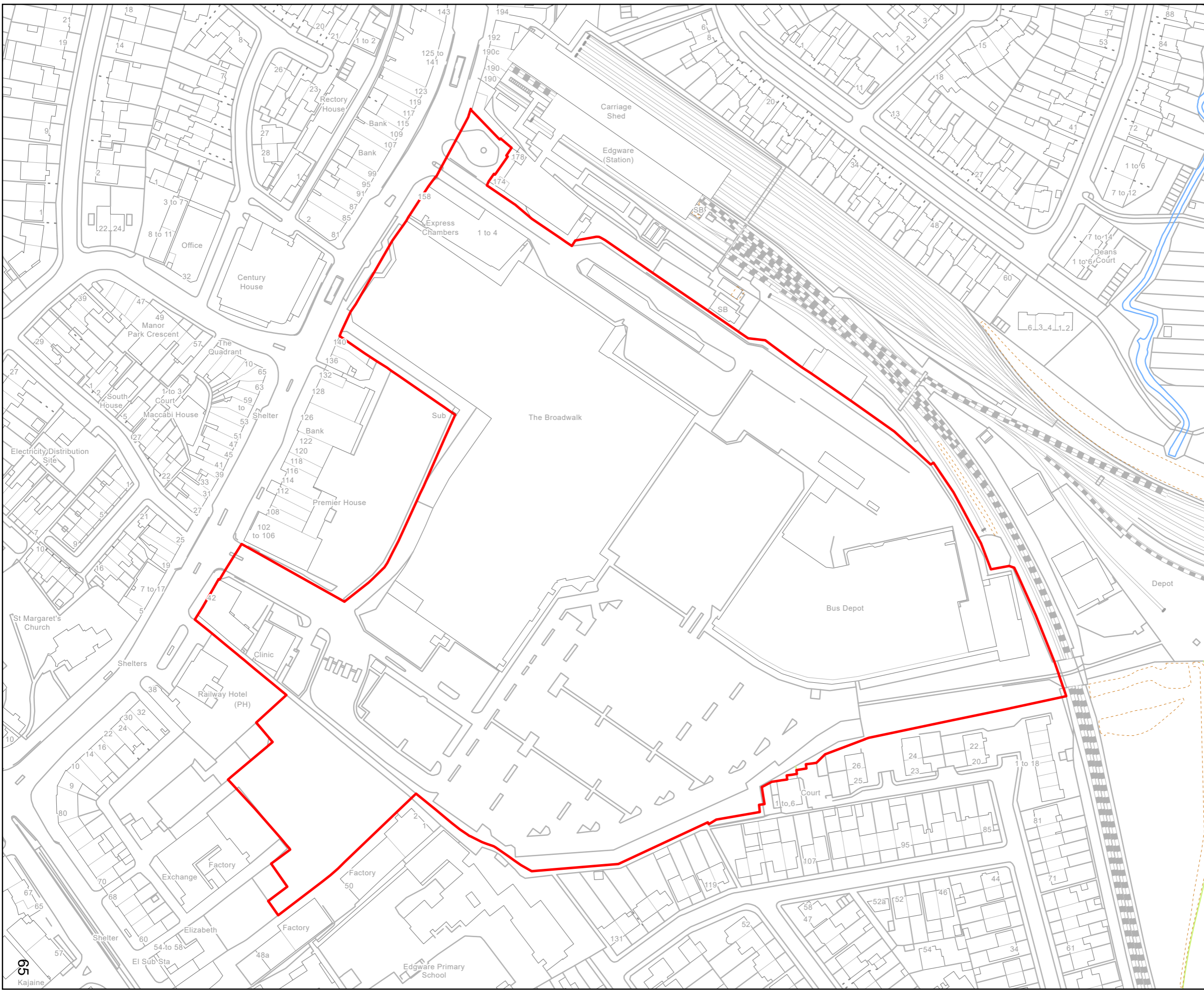
	Designer 
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Project
EDGWARE TOWN CENTRE

Drawing Title
RED LINE BOUNDARY

Status	FINAL	Revision	001
Scale	1:1,750 @ A3	Date	07/03/2023
Spatial Reference System		British National Grid	
Drawn By	A.HANKINSON	Checked By	S.SOMAL
Approved By	J.SAYER		
Drawing reference	ARD_EDG_RLB_001		

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— Railway Hotel — Forumside

APPENDIX 2



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Housing & Growth Committee 23 March 2023

Title	Outline Business Case for the Whitings Road and Moxon Street Development Sites
Report of	Chair of the Housing & Growth Committee
Wards	High Barnet
Status	Public with accompanying exempt report and appendix - Exempt from publication in accordance with paragraphs 3 and 5 of Schedule 12A of the Local Government Act 1972 on account that it contains information relating to the financial or business affairs of any particular person including the authority holding the information, and information in respect of which professional legal privilege could be maintained in legal proceedings.
Urgent	No
Key	Key
Enclosures	Appendix 1: Whitings Road & Moxon Street OBC Appendix 2: Whitings Road existing site plan Appendix 3: Whitings Road proposed site plan Appendix 4: Moxon Street existing site plan Appendix 5: Moxon Street proposed site plan Appendix 6: Whitings Road & Moxon Street Equalities Impact Assessment Appendix 7: Whitings Road & Moxon Street OBC [Exempt]
Officer Contact Details	Stephen McDonald, Director of Growth, Barnet Council stephen.mcdonald@barnet.gov.uk Derek Rust, Director of Growth and Development, The Barnet Group derek.rust@barnethomes.org Susanna Morales, Development Manager, The Barnet Group susanna.morales@barnethomes.org

Summary

In 2015, Re. acting on behalf of Barnet Council, secured resolution to grant planning consent for five mixed tenure sites. Re. was a joint venture formed by Barnet Council and Capita to deliver regeneration. However, these sites did not progress to delivery and in 2018, it was agreed that; one

of the sites would be disposed of, one delivered for affordable housing using GLA grant by Barnet Homes and three transferred to The Barnet Group to bring forward as mixed tenure options. This included Hermitage Lane which is now complete as well as sites at Whitings Road and Moxon Street, both on general fund land.

The Barnet Group (TBG), which includes Barnet Homes and Opendoor Homes, is acting as development agent on behalf of Barnet Council. The Barnet Group and its subsidiaries are wholly owned by the council.

The council approved that TBG take forward proposals for housing led schemes at Whitings Road and Moxon Street.

In 2022, the TBG New Build team appointed Peter Barber Architects to deliver Royal Institute of British Architects (RIBA) plan of works stage 3 Planning designs for both sites. The team is also supported by Potter Raper as employer's agent, JLL's planning consultancy and Staton Cohen landscape architects. A budget of £1.27m was secured from Barnet Council to deliver this work.

Both sites will be submitted to planning together. The target tenure mix is 50:50 private:affordable policy compliant across both sites, including 12no. affordable 3 and 4-bed homes and at least 10% wheelchair accessible. This helps meet the council's 1,000 affordable homes target and is in line with the needs of TBG's Housing Options service greatest need. The homes have been designed to a high quality and target net zero carbon, they will achieve Energy Performance Certificate category "A" or strong "B".

The local community has been consulted as well as local interest and stakeholder groups. Feedback has been positive and supportive of the designs, aspirations for affordable homes and how the consultation has been conducted. The scheme design has been positively amended and impacted by stakeholder feedback.

Opendoor Homes successfully bid for a grant allocation from the Greater London Authority's Affordable Housing programme 2021-2026 for the Whitings Road and Moxon Street sites. An allocation of £3.79m has been approved.

The Hermitage Lane delivery model may represent a feasible delivery model for the council, subject to agreement on land value and financial viability. It also needs to be demonstrably more advantageous than other options such as direct delivery through the Housing Revenue Account (HRA), or disposal.

This outline business case (OBC) seeks approval to submit planning applications for the sites and, subject to planning approval, for The Barnet Group to procure a private sector partner to support delivery of the schemes. The outcome of the tender and further detail of the development agreement structure will then be presented to the Housing & Growth Committee as part of the full business case.

Officers Recommendations

- 1. That the Housing and Growth Committee notes and approves the Outline Business Case, including planning submission for the general fund land identified on the plans in appendices 2 and 4.**
- 2. Note that the additional capital funding for the next stage of work up to Full Business Case stage is subject to approval by Policy and Resources Committee in April 2023.**
- 3. Delegate approval of the procurement and development delivery strategy to the Director of Growth.**

4. Note that the Full Business Case will be presented to Housing and Growth Committee ahead of entering into legal agreements at a later date.
5. Note that for the Whittings Road site an amendment to the existing Secretary of State approval for removing the land from education use will be sought, to reflect amendments made to the boundary with the school, subject to the school's agreement.
6. Note that The Barnet Group will continue discussions with the commercial tenant at 1-7 Moxon Street to determine whether an early start on site is possible.
7. That the Housing and Growth Committee delegate to the Director of Growth the approval of the appropriation of the site, if required, to Planning purposes.

1. Why this report is needed

- 1.1 This report sets out the Outline Business Case for the council-led redevelopment of the Whittings Road and Moxon Street sites shown on the site plans in appendices 2 and 4. Both sites are on general fund land and within the High Barnet ward.
- 1.2 The Whittings Road site is adjacent to Whittings Road Primary School, on Whittings Road, EN5. The school was originally situated on the subject site but as part of the council's primary school investment programme the new school building was constructed on a portion of the playing field and the existing school was demolished with the land being committed for residential development. The site was then cleared and has been empty and overgrown since.
- 1.3 The Moxon Street site is immediately off the High Street in High Barnet, EN5 and is currently partially occupied by Checkalow, a tile showroom and distributor, whose commercial lease expires in April 2025. The lease is contracted out of the landlord and Tenant Act 1954 and Checkalow have no right to renewal or compensation. Checkalow have already received compensation for their previous protected lease. The buildings on site are in generally poor condition and a previous planning application demonstrated that the site could yield 12 new homes. The team have worked closely with Checkalow and if alternative premises can be identified, they may agree to vacating earlier than that. A car storage company occupy the remainder of the site on a short term lease with a rolling break clause.
- 1.4 The buildings on site are in generally poor condition and a previous planning application demonstrated that the site could yield 12 new homes. The team have worked closely with Checkalow and if alternative premises can be identified, they may agree to vacating earlier than that.
- 1.5 Part of the Moxon Street site is within the Wood Street Conservation Area. Adjacent the site is a Grade II listed cottage and a cottage listed as a local heritage asset.
- 1.6 In 2018 the Housing & Growth Committee approved that The Barnet Group could bring forward development options for the two sites, to deliver high-quality mixed tenure housing.

- 1.7 The Barnet Group working as development agent on behalf of Barnet Council, has established policy compliant mixed-tenure development proposals for the sites.
- 1.8 At Whitings Road, the proposed scheme includes the construction of 35 new homes, mainly 3 and 4-bed houses including 4no. that are fully wheelchair accessible, around a communal garden. There will be close to 100% parking on site for the scheme, given the site's PTAL rating and distance from local public transport networks. See appendix 3 for the proposed scheme.

Moxon Street site

- 1.8.1.1 At Moxon Street, the proposed scheme includes 21 mews houses, set in an L-shape around the existing heritage cottages. Part of the existing Checkalow building will be retained and refurbished. The scheme will include 7no. 1-beds and 14no. 2-beds, including 2no. fully wheelchair accessible homes. See appendix 3 for the proposed scheme.
- 1.8.1.2 All of the homes will have their own front door onto the mews or Moxon Street. The scheme will be car free, given the site's access to good public transport. This has been supported by Planners and the local community.
- 1.8.1.3 The existing commercial space will be replaced but at a reduced amount, in agreement with the council's Economic Development Team and Local Planning Authority, given the high number of commercial spaces along the high road. Barnet Council is likely to retain ownership of this commercial space as part of the consideration for the scheme. The council's Economic Development Team will work closely to support the letting of the completed commercial space, including exploring the potential for the scheme to support the council's emerging Arts and Culture Strategy. It is also possible that Checkalow, the existing commercial tenant, may return upon completion to occupy some or all of the commercial space.
- 1.9 The current proposed tenure mix across both sites is as follows:

	Whitings Road		Moxon Street		Combined	
Tenure	Homes	%	Homes	%	Homes	%
Social rent	11	31%	0	0%	11	20%
Shared ownership	9	26%	8	38%	17	30%
Open market sale	15	43%	13	62%	28	50%
Total	35	100%	21	100%	56	100%

- 1.10 Two community engagement events have been held for each site and a number of local stakeholder groups have been consulted on the proposals. This has included a specific focus on the residents living adjacent the sites as well as Whitings Road School. Feedback shows support for redeveloping the sites with enthusiasm about the design and consultation process.
- 1.11 Subject to approval of the Outline Business Case, the intention is to progress to submit detailed planning applications for the sites.

- 1.12 Thereafter, the sites will be tendered as one package to procure a private sector partner for delivery. It is envisaged that the two sites will be delivered through a development agreement with a private sector partner, following the formula of the Hermitage Lane project. That arrangement follows these key principles:
- Barnet Council secures planning consent via The Barnet Group – this adds value to the sites
 - Developer partner procured by The Barnet Group
 - Developer partner provides working capital to deliver the scheme, takes both build cost and sales risk on market sale and provides a capital receipt to Barnet Council for land value; the land receipt could be a mixture of capital and a longer-term revenue contribution subject to negotiation
 - Opendoor Homes, a subsidiary of The Barnet Group, purchases the discounted affordable rent homes and takes sales risk on any shared ownership
 - Freehold to Opendoor Homes after final sale
 - Overage agreement if priority return achieved
- 1.13 Opendoor Homes, a subsidiary of The Barnet Group, successfully completed the Hermitage Lane mixed-tenure project in Childs Hill, NW2 in 2022. This was conceived by The Barnet Group as an innovative and alternative way to deliver more new homes in addition to the direct delivery programmes via the housing Revenue Account (HRA), deploying the skills and capacity of the wider Barnet Group. It also enables the limited capacity to support development in the HRA to be “ring fenced” to support the delivery of high priority schemes such as the regeneration of Grahame Park North East.
- 1.14 Following approval of the outline business case and subject to a resolution to grant planning consent being granted, The Barnet Group will procure a private sector partner on the basis of a contractual development agreement. The development partner will provide post-planning development manager and construction services. Final approval of the procurement strategy is to be delegated to the Director of Growth.
- 1.15 Prevailing market conditions make financial viability ever more challenging. If financial viability poses too great a challenge to Opendoor Homes or Barnet Council, then selling the sites with the benefit of planning consents could form an alternative exit strategy in the last resort.
- 1.16 The preparation of the delivery strategy will be supported by soft-market testing and continued financial appraisal modelling with scenario and stress testing.
- 1.17 Macroeconomic conditions are making financial viability of residential development a challenge at present. To help improve the project’s financial viability, the council can consider a number of options including different funding streams, reviewing rent levels, reviewing the target for net zero and altering the design.

- 1.18 The Greater London Authority have approved a grant allocation of £3.79m from their Affordable Housing Programme 2021-26. The number of units and the tenure splits/types have been adjusted since the bid application was made and will be updated as part of the Full Business Case. The grant requires a start on site by March 2026.
- 1.19 The proposal in this Outline Business Case will put the council at the heart of delivering these two projects and retaining the new developments in the ownership of the wider council 'family'.

2. Reasons for recommendations

- 2.1 Across Greater London, it is widely considered that there is a chronic undersupply of affordable housing. Over the last three years, the average London borough has delivered 21% of units as Affordable Housing. Barnet is below this average at circa 18%. The Mayor of London has set a strategic target of 50% of all new homes to be affordable homes, with individual sites expected to contribute 35% affordable housing as a minimum.
- 2.2 Delivering more affordable homes in the borough is a priority of the council, as set out in the Corporate Plan 2023 – 2026, and the Growth Strategy. A new Housing Strategy is currently being prepared and providing the right homes in the right places and more affordable homes is a key ambition. The schemes will support the ambition to deliver 1000 homes at 50% of market rent or lower. The council is currently also preparing a new Homelessness and Rough Sleeping Strategy. There are on-going homelessness pressures that could be relieved earlier through increased provision of new homes in this area.
- 2.3 This project will support the council's commitments and priorities in the following way:
- Contribute towards the council's commitment for 1,000 affordable homes, including larger family accommodation and wheelchair accessible homes to meet the greatest need
 - Build high-quality housing in compliance with local planning policy
 - Build 50% affordable homes across the two sites
 - Target net zero carbon and minimum of EPC B
 - Build homes that help to eliminate fuel poverty and improve energy efficiency
 - Build schemes that deliver low and medium rise streetscape design-led housing
 - Work with the local community in developing the design of new housing
- 2.4 Grant from the Greater London Authority's Affordable Housing Programme 2021-26 has been formally approved, with £3.79m grant confirmed.
- 2.5 All the new homes provided through this development will meet the former Lifetime Homes standard through a standardised approach centred around building regulations. At least 10% will be fully wheelchair adapted, meeting the objective in the council's emerging Housing Strategy by delivering new homes to meet the diverse needs of residents and increasing the provision of wheelchair accessible homes. The

council already provides a range of housing options for vulnerable adults with a focus on helping people live as independently as possible.

- 2.6 Despite the current wider climate, Savills Research forecast that subject to mortgage markets settling down, and the Bank of England base rate gradually reducing as inflation cools down, there should be a marked improvement in mortgage affordability. Combined with nominal price falls of -10% in 2023 (-12.6% adjusted for inflation), that would gradually bring more buyers into the market and allow a return to modest house price growth from 2024 onwards, with a more pronounced rebound in 2026.
- 2.7 In October 2022, the Barnet Post reported that over the past year, the average sale price of a property in Barnet rose by £52,000. Buyers paid 10.1% more than the average price in London (£553,000) in August for a property in Barnet. Across London, property prices are higher than those across the UK, where the average cost is £296,000.
- 2.8 The additional capital funding to proceed to Full Business Case stage is £0.485m. This budget will enable the procurement of a private sector partner to support the delivery of the two sites. This budget is subject to approval by the Policy & Resources Committee in April 2023.

3. Alternative options considered and not recommended

3.1 Do nothing

An alternative option is to do nothing. This option retains the status quo and would mean no development risk for the council. However, it would result in the loss of the Greater London Authority's Affordable Housing Programme 2021-26 grant, the council would fail to meet strategic objectives of delivering new homes, there would be no capital or revenue receipt to the council and no improvement to the street scene.

3.2 Dispose of the site, with the benefit of a planning consent

This option sees the council dispose of the sites, with the benefit of resolution to grant planning consent. If financial viability poses too great a challenge to Opendoor Homes or Barnet Council, then selling the sites could form the exit strategy as last resort, with the benefit of planning consents and correlating uplift in land value.

However, the council would fail to meet strategic objectives of delivering new homes, the purchaser may seek an alternative planning consent / land use, the purchaser may seek to reduce the number of affordable homes on the site, this does not prevent landbanking and no assurance of delivery, there would be resources required to manage the disposal.

3.3 Develop the site as affordable housing only

This option sees the council deliver the scheme for affordable housing only. The schemes would be delivered and a significant contribution to new affordable housing targets achieved, strategic growth achieved, the assets would be retained within the Barnet 'family', the council and ODH have control / influence over the development, it minimises profit leakage to the private sector.

However, this would rely on the HRA having the capacity to fund the schemes. The remaining development capacity of the HRA is already committed to supporting the delivery of existing schemes, most notably the regeneration of Grahame Park North East. This approach would not make the most of some of the commercial opportunities that the sites afford in respect of values and its ability to subsidise the delivery of affordable housing.

4. Post decision implementation

- 4.1 The additional budget for delivery of the next phase of work is £0.485m. This will be considered by Policy and Resources Committee in April 2023. It is envisaged that the pre-contract costs will be recovered through the development agreement model, subject to financial viability or by disposal of the site in the last resort.
- 4.2 The commercial tenants of Checkalow will continue to be engaged with, to understand the opportunity for vacant possession at Moxon Street earlier than April 2025.
- 4.3 For the Whitings Road site an amendment to the existing Secretary of State approval for removing the land from education use will be sought, to reflect amendments made to the boundary with the school, subject to the school's agreement.
- 4.4 The planning applications will be made in April 2023, with a 12-week determination period.
- 4.5 The development delivery model will be progressed and a developer partner procured. This will be supported by soft-market testing and stress and scenario testing. Legal and financial advice will be received to support this.
- 4.6 The Full Business Case will be presented to Cabinet in early 2024.

5. Implications of decision

Corporate Priorities and Performance

- 5.1 Delivering more affordable homes in the borough is a priority of the council, as set out in the Corporate Plan 2023 – 2026, Housing Strategy and the Growth Strategy. Since May 2022, this has become a council priority.
- 5.2 A new Housing Strategy is currently being prepared and providing the right homes in the right places and more affordable homes is a key ambition. The schemes will support the ambition to deliver 1000 homes at 50% of market rent or lower. Work is underway to convert current delivery plans to ensure they contribute to starting on site with 1,000 affordable social rent homes over the next 4 years.
- 5.3 The new Corporate Plan is built around a council that cares for people, our places, and the planet. Under the People priority, it aims to be family friendly, tackle inequality, and support health and independence. Under the Place priority, it aims to ensure safe, attractive neighbourhoods, quality affordable homes, sustainable growth, and thriving town centres and make Barnet a fun place to visit. Under the Planet

priority, it aims to focus on the council's journey to net zero, local environment, and green spaces.

- 5.4 The council is currently also preparing a new Homelessness and Rough Sleeping Strategy.
- 5.5 The Health and Wellbeing Strategy 2021 to 2025 recognises that the condition of and access to local housing has an important role in the quality of life and health of both individuals and communities.
- 5.6 **Resources (Finance & Value for Money, Procurement, Staffing, IT, Property, Sustainability)**

5.6.1 Finance

- 5.6.2 In September 2020, the Policy & Resources Committee approved a budget of £1.27m from the general fund to bring three mixed tenure sites forward to outline business case stage, including Whittings Road and Moxon Street which accounted for £0.755m of this budget.
- 5.6.3 The spend to achieve outline business case stage for Whittings Road and Moxon Street has been 25% higher than originally approved. However, the sites are developing 25% more homes than originally proposed. There have also been significant cost increases across the sector.
- 5.6.4 Additional capital funding of £0.485m is required from the general fund for the post-planning and pre-contract stage, for professional services support to tender and set up the development agreement for delivery. This includes a development fee for The Barnet Group acting as development agent for the council. This is subject to Policy & Resources Committee approval in April 2023.
- 5.6.5 It is envisaged that the two sites will be delivered through a development agreement with a private sector partner, following the formula of the successful Hermitage Lane project. In that arrangement the development partner provides working capital to deliver the scheme, takes sales risk on market sale and provides capital receipt to Barnet Council for land value.
- 5.6.6 Opendoor Homes may supplement this with revenue contribution in respect of land value, if required.
- 5.6.7 The Hermitage Lane project was conceived by TBG as an innovative and alternative way to deliver more new homes in addition to the direct delivery programmes via the Housing Revenue Account (HRA), deploying the skills and capacity of the wider Barnet Group.
- 5.6.8 Opendoor Homes successfully bid for a grant allocation from the Greater London Authority's Affordable Housing programme 2021-2026 for the Whittings Road and Moxon Street sites. An allocation of £3.79m has been approved.
- 5.6.9 **Value for Money and Procurement**
- 5.6.10 Soft market testing for delivery partners is underway and will be subject to a competitive process.

5.6.11 Independent valuations will be commissioned as necessary to verify and confirm that any disposals are at best consideration to fulfil the council's overriding obligations to secure the same.

5.6.12 A chartered surveyor from a Royal Institution of Chartered Surveyors registered construction consultancy will manage the future tender process. This will be in accordance with The Barnet Group's contract procedure rules and applicable laws, acting as development agent for the council.

5.6.13 **Social Value**

5.6.14 Increasing the utility of existing assets through mixed use redevelopment will enable the council's portfolio of assets to go further towards supporting local needs by helping to provide new opportunities for housing, (in particular, affordable housing) and new, improved community facilities.

5.6.15 The main contractor will be required to provide opportunities for employment, training and apprenticeships for local people and use local suppliers where appropriate.

5.7 **Legal and Constitutional References**

5.7.1 Council Constitution Article 7.5 states that the remit of the Housing and Growth Committee includes responsibility for regeneration strategy and oversight of major regeneration schemes, asset management, and economic development including employment strategy, business support and engagement.

5.7.2 The Council Constitution, Article 10 Table A states that the Housing and Growth Committee is responsible for authorising all acquisitions and disposals over £500K.

5.7.3 The council has a range of powers including the general power of competence under Section 1 of Chapter 1 of the Localism Act 2011 to do anything that individuals can do subject to any specific restrictions contained in legislation and Section 111 of the Local Government Act 1972 which provides that a local authority has power to do anything which is calculated to facilitate, or is conducive or is incidental to, the discharge of its functions, subject to any specific restrictions contained in legislation.

5.7.4 Additionally, the council has the power to acquire and dispose of land in accordance with Sections 120 to 123(2A) of the Local Government Act 1972, and subject to obtaining all appropriate consents and approvals.

5.7.5 On any disposal of property, the council is required to observe the requirements of s123(2) of the Local Government Act 1972 to ensure that any disposal is not for a consideration less than the best that can reasonably be obtained, except with the consent of the Secretary of State. To cleanse a site of third party interests, where it is in the public interest to do so and on satisfaction of conditions, land can be appropriated from its current purpose to planning purposes under section 122 of the LGA 1972. Any disposal of land appropriated for such purposes is effected in reliance on Section 233 Town and Country Planning Act 1990, which requires that it is for the best consideration reasonably obtainable (otherwise Secretary of State consent shall be required). Additional conditions would apply if this land were held in the housing revenue account, but we understand it is not.

5.7.6 The council will need to consider, comply with and obtain any statutory and legal

requirements /consents to give effect to the preferred option.

- 5.7.7 Procurement of public works and services contracts over the relevant value thresholds must observe the requirements of the Public Contracts Regulations 2015, to include the placing of Find a Tender Service notices where such contracts are not drawn down from a compliant framework. Any procurement activity undertaken must also be in accordance with the Council's Contract Procedure Rules.
- 5.7.8 Where the Council accesses an existing Framework Agreement, the Framework Agreement terms and conditions of contract must be used, amended as appropriate as permitted by the Framework Agreement. Before entering into a Framework Agreement due diligence checks must be carried out to demonstrate that the Council can lawfully access the Framework Agreement and that it is fit for purpose and provides value for money.
- 5.7.9 Any conditions applicable to the grant mentioned at para 2.4 will need to be observed. This includes a start on site before the end of March 2026, compliancy with the London Housing Design Guide or any other prevailing grant design standards and a tenure and unit mix as approved by the GLA before start on site.
- 5.7.10 In the event the delivery option for the proposed development is with the assistance of a loan/grant by the council to a developer then the council must comply with the rules related to subsidy control, as required by the UK-EU Trade and Co operation Agreement and other relevant agreements, to the extent they are applicable.
- 5.7.11 The Public Services (Social Value) Act 2012 requires If a relevant authority proposes to procure or make arrangements for procuring the provision of services, it must consider—
- (a)how what is proposed to be procured might improve the economic, social and environmental well-being of the relevant area, and
- (b)how, in conducting the process of procurement, it might act with a view to securing that improvement;
- and it must consider whether to undertake any consultation in relation to such matters.

5.8 Insight

- 5.8.1 The council's emerging Housing Strategy and Local Plan respond to evidence such as the Strategic Housing Market Assessment and other needs assessments that have identified a need for increased housing delivery. Barnet has 393,000 residents and this figure is expected to grow by 76,000 over the next 25 years; an increase of 19%.
- 5.8.2 The delivery of new affordable rented homes will help to meet the objective in the council's emerging Housing Strategy and Homelessness and Rough Sleeping strategy to prevent and tackle homelessness, by reducing the use of temporary accommodation. There are currently more than 2,700 households living in temporary accommodation which presents significant budgetary pressures for the council.
- 5.8.3 Barnet's Health and Wellbeing Strategy recognises the importance of access to good quality housing in maintaining well-being in the Community.

5.8.4 Lack of affordable housing is highlighted in Barnet's Joint Strategic Needs Assessment (JSNA) as one of the top three concerns identified by local residents in the Residents' Perception Survey.

5.9 Risk Management

A summary of the key project risks is included below, using the risk scale as set out in the Outline Business Case (section 6 of Appendix 1):

Risk	Total	Actions to mitigate
That the scheme becomes financially unviable due to wider market pressures	12	<p>The council could dispose of the sites with the benefit of a planning consent. Alternative delivery options could be explored.</p> <p>Regular financial appraisal and cost monitoring.</p> <p>Use right to buy receipts instead of GLA grant on the larger family homes at Whitings Road and charge LAR or BAR.</p> <p>Work with the developer partner to review the efficiency of how the buildings are constructed and make improvements if necessary including reducing the net zero specification if necessary.</p> <p>Alter unit mix as there are a lot of larger oversized homes at Whitings Road.</p> <p>Change tenure so that it is not 50:50</p> <p>Consider London Living Rent or other tenures.</p> <p>Assume house prices will recover by the time the built products come to market.</p>
That title matters or rights prevent or delay development, including Rights of Light	12	<p>All title matters being reviewed by legal representatives.</p> <p>A detailed RoL report has been obtained and specialist advice is being obtained together to provide a robust strategy.</p> <p>Secretary of State consent to the amendment of the boundary at the Whitings Road site will be submitted.</p>
That there are unforeseen costs arising during the project and a subsequent budget shortfall	9	<p>A client contingency will be included in the project budget.</p> <p>The proposed delivery model should help mitigate rising costs once in contract.</p>
Wider pressure on the construction sector due to construction inflation and high interest rates	9	<p>Complete financial due diligence of the developer partner will be carried out</p>

That site conditions cause delay or cost increase	9	A number of surveys and investigations have taken place. The proposed delivery model should help mitigate rising costs once in contract.
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5.10 Equalities and Diversity

- 5.10.1 Barnet Homes is committed to taking a proportionate approach to equalities and considering which groups with protected characteristics are likely to be affected, whether this is a large or small group and the level of impact; nil, minimal or significant.
- 5.10.2 An Equalities Impact Assessment (EqIA) has been completed and included at Appendix 6.
- 5.10.3 The EqIA assessment identified that a few groups are impacted negatively by the delivery of the project, primarily due to disruption during the construction period. However, it is assessed that these are short term impacts only and that they are outweighed by the longer-term benefits of the project. The needs and requirements of the pupils and wider school community at Whittings Hill Primary School, has received specific focus to ensure any potential impact has been minimised.
- 5.10.4 There are clear mitigations for the short-term negative impacts, including a communications plan and appointment of a Resident Liaison Officer, which in the longer-term will help to establish good relationships and build trust with the community.
- 5.10.5 Under the Equality Act 2010, the council must have due regard to the need to:
- a) eliminate discrimination, harassment, victimisation and any other conduct that is prohibited by or under the 2010 Act;
 - b) advance equality of opportunity between those with a protected characteristic and those without.
 - c) promote good relations between those with a protected characteristic and those without.

The 'protected characteristics' referred to are age; disability; gender reassignment; pregnancy and maternity; race; religion or belief; sex; sexual orientation. It also covers marriage and civil partnership with regards to eliminating discrimination.

5.11 Corporate Parenting

- 5.11.1 Barnet Council have a small number of care leavers in temporary accommodation. Increasing the supply of affordable housing is therefore a corporate parenting issue.

5.12 Consultation and Engagement

- 5.12.1 The project team have undertaken a wide ranging and comprehensive consultation, reaching out to engage with all stakeholders for both sites.
- 5.12.2 Initial public exhibitions were held on 5 and 7 December 2022 for Whittings Road and Moxon Street, respectively, at local venues, where plans were presented on large format presentation board. At the same time electronic versions were made available on Barnet Homes engagement website. Publicity was initiated through a letter drop to addresses in

the vicinity. The event was hosted by the client team, including representation from Barnet Homes, Architects, Landscape Architects, Transport Consultants, Planning and Engagement Consultants.

- 5.12.3 Feedback from the initial consultations led to design development by the project team taking account of comments received. On 1 and 8 February 2023 a second round of public exhibitions were held. More detailed floor plans, elevations and computer generated images were presented, demonstrating the approach of “you said” and “we did”.
- 5.12.4 In addition to local residents, the project team has engaged directly and held individual briefings with a number of key stakeholders. These stakeholders included Ward Councillors, Whittings Hill Primary School, The Barnet Society, and Barnet Residents Association.
- 5.12.5 The Barnet Society recently wrote a positive article on their website in support of the proposals: <https://www.barnetsociety.org.uk/typical-wait-ages-for-a-decent-modern-housing-scheme-and-two-come-along-at-once>
- 5.12.6 Within the council the project team has engaged with with the Planners, and also the Town Centre Team. Overall, feedback has been positive with supportive comments received from many stakeholders to date.

5.13 Environmental Impact

- 5.13.1 The energy strategy for the two schemes aims at reaching beyond the current national, regional and local policy by targeting net zero developments.
- 5.13.2 The brief to promote ultra-low energy demand, has been achieved primarily through passive design, using highly insulated building fabric and low air permeability. This is combined with carbon free space heating and hot water through the use of air source heat pumps, in tandem with mechanical ventilation and heat recovery units. Furthermore, renewable energy has been embraced through the specification of photovoltaic roof panels.
- 5.13.3 In terms of the predicted Energy Performance Certificate these homes will achieve, they are designed to achieve category “A” or strong “B”.
- 5.13.4 Surveys conducted by the project team concluded that development of both sites have a positive impact of biodiversity, but less than the required ten percent improvement threshold required. At the Whittings Road site the team is working with the Planners to find an off-site solution. One proposal under consideration is working with the adjacent Whittings Hill Primary School to explore enhancing the biodiversity on the boundary of their playing field, which borders the rear of the site. The school has ambitions to become a Forest School, so this will hopefully help them achieve this objective. Similarly at the Moxon Street site, solutions to the shortfall in achieving the biodiversity net gain are under discussion with the council’s ecology team, with options including off-site improvement and / or a financial contribution to improvements elsewhere in the ward.

6. Background papers

Policy & Resources Committee, Business Planning 2021 to 2025 and Budget Management 2020/21, 24 September 2020 [see Appendix B – Capital Programme]

<https://barnet.moderngov.co.uk/documents/s60231/Business%20Planning%202021%20to%202025%20and%20Budget%20Management%20202021.pdf>

Housing & Growth Committee, Mixed Tenure Housing Programme, 17 September 2018

<https://barnet.moderngov.co.uk/documents/s48466/Mixed%20tenure%20housing%20programme.pdf>

Housing & Growth Committee, Outline Business Case for 2010 Hermitage Lane, 17 September 2018

<https://barnet.moderngov.co.uk/documents/s48470/Outline%20Business%20Case%20for%202-10%20Hermitage%20Lane.pdf>

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Outline Business Case: Whittings Road and Moxon Street Development Sites

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1. Introduction

In 2015, Re. acting on behalf of Barnet Council, secured resolution to grant planning consent for five mixed tenure sites. Re. was a joint venture formed by Barnet Council and Capita to deliver regeneration. However, these sites did not progress to delivery and in 2018, it was agreed that; one of the sites would be disposed of, one delivered for affordable housing using GLA grant by Barnet Homes and three transferred to The Barnet Group to bring forward as mixed tenure options. This included Hermitage Lane which is now complete as well as sites at Whittings Road and Moxon Street, both on general fund land.

The Barnet Group (TBG), which includes Barnet Homes and Opendoor Homes, is acting as development agent on behalf of Barnet Council. The Barnet Group and its subsidiaries are wholly owned by the council.

The council approved that TBG take forward proposals for Whittings Road and Moxon Street. The Hermitage Lane delivery model may represent a feasible delivery model for the council, subject to agreement on land value and financial viability. It also needs to be demonstrably more advantageous than other options such as direct delivery through the Housing Revenue Account (HRA), or disposal.

In 2022, the TBG New Build team appointed Peter Barber Architects to deliver Royal Institute of British Architect's (RIBA) plan of works stage 3 Planning designs for both sites. The team is also supported by Potter Raper as employer's agent, JLL's planning consultancy and Staton Cohen landscape architects. A budget of £1.27m was secured from Barnet Council to deliver this work.

Both sites will be submitted to planning together. The target tenure mix is 50:50 private:affordable policy compliant across both sites, including 12no. affordable 3 and 4-bed homes and at least 10% wheelchair accessible. This helps meet the council's 1,000 affordable homes target and is in line with the needs of TBG's Housing Options service greatest need. The homes have been designed to a high quality and target net zero carbon, they will achieve Energy Performance Certificate category "A" or strong "B".

The local community has been consulted as well as local interest and stakeholder groups. Feedback has been positive and supportive of the designs, aspirations for affordable homes and how the consultation has been conducted. The scheme design has been positively amended and impacted by stakeholder feedback.

Opendoor Homes successfully bid for a grant allocation from the Greater London Authority's Affordable Housing programme 2021-2026 for the Whittings Road and Moxon Street sites. An allocation of £3.79m has been approved.

This outline business case (OBC) seeks approval to submit planning applications for the sites and, subject to planning approval, to procure a private sector partner to support delivery of the schemes. The outcome of the tender and further detail of the development agreement structure will then be presented to the Housing & Growth Committee as part of the full business case.

2. Project definition

2.1 Aim

The Whitings Road and Moxon Street project seeks to bring forward these two general fund sites for planning approval and ultimately development to provide 56 new policy complaint homes.

The Whitings Road and Moxon Street project has a number of aims that support the council's key targets, including:

- Contribute towards the council's commitment for 1,000 affordable homes, including larger family accommodation and wheelchair accessible homes to meet the greatest need
- Build high-quality housing in compliance with local planning policy
- Build 50% affordable homes across the two sites
- Target net zero carbon and minimum of EPC B
- Build homes that help to eliminate fuel poverty and improve energy efficiency
- Build schemes that deliver low and medium rise streetscape design-led housing
- Work with the local community in developing the design of new housing
- Maximising the development potential of the sites
- Delivering a lower risk, mixed tenure scheme that retains the freehold of the asset within the wider LBB 'family'
- Provide a range of housing options to Barnet residents including market sale, affordable rent and shared ownership
- Provide a capital receipt to the Council for the land, subject to viability
- Optimise the use of scarce land resources and improve the local physical environment
- Attain greater control of outcomes
- Manage and maintain the whole of the scheme on completion
- Optimise the use of and deploy the resources and capacity of organisations within The Barnet Group.

It is envisaged that the two sites will be delivered through a development agreement with a private sector partner, following the formula of the successful Hermitage Lane project. This is explained further in section 3.3.

2.2 Design intent

The design process has focussed on delivering high-quality sites that will significantly improve the street scene and provide attractive developments that will maximise sales values of the market sale units and provide a policy compliant mix of affordable housing units.

The scheme has been designed in accordance with local, regional and national planning policy. The design has evolved and augmented during the pre-application planning process by way of interaction with council officers as well as local consultation.

Build quality will be achieved through a detailed set of employers requirements, monitoring of the build process by an Employer's Agent and employing a Clerk of Works including

Mechanical and Engineering Clerk of Works to check any equipment going into the build schemes.

2.2.1 Whitings Road, EN5

The Whitings Road site is adjacent to Whitings Road Primary School, just inside the High Barnet ward boundary. It is on general fund land and is 0.71ha in size. The school was originally situated on the site but when a new school building was constructed, it was agreed that the site could be used for residential development. The site was then cleared and has been empty and overgrown since.

The site is a short walk to Barnet Hospital and other local schools. It is also a short bus ride to High Barnet station on the Northern line, or a 25 minute walk.

The proposed scheme includes the construction of 35 new homes, mainly 3 and 4-bed houses including 4no. that are fully wheelchair accessible, around a communal garden.

The proposed accommodation schedule is as follows:

1-bed	5
2-bed	3
3-bed	15
4-bed	12
Total	35
M4(3) wheelchair accessible homes (included in above)	1 x 1-bed 2 x 2-bed 1 x 3-bed
Parking spaces	33

There will be close to 100% parking on site for the scheme, given the site's PTAL rating and distance from local public transport networks.

The site currently does not meet the biodiversity net gain target of 10% and the team is working with the Planners to find an off-site solution. The team are working with the school to explore enhancing the biodiversity on the boundary of their playing field, which borders the rear of the site. The school have been receptive to this proposal and the team are keen to work with their "Eco Warriors", a committee of students across year groups, to design the proposal.



CGI of the completed scheme



Proposed site layout

2.2.2 Moxon Street, EN5

The Moxon Street site sits just off the High Road in High Barnet, a short walk from the Northern line tube. It is on general fund land. This is one of the most desirable residential areas in the borough, with a thriving high street and close to travel networks and good schools.

Part of the site is within the Wood Street Conservation Area. Adjacent the site is a Grade II listed cottage and a cottage listed as a local heritage asset.

The site is currently, partially occupied, in the southern portion, by Checkalow, a tile showroom and distributor, whose commercial lease does not expire until April 2025 with no break clause. The team have worked closely with Checkalow and if alternative premises can be identified, they may agree to vacating earlier than that.

The proposed scheme includes 21 mews houses, set in an L-shape around the existing heritage cottages. Part of the existing Checkalow building will be retained and refurbished. The scheme will include 7no. 1-beds and 14no. 2-beds, including 2no. fully wheelchair accessible homes.

The proposed accommodation schedule is as follows:

1-bed	7
2-bed	14
Total	21
M4(3) wheelchair accessible homes (included in above)	1 x 1-bed 1 x 2-bed
Parking spaces	0

All of the homes will have their own front door onto the mews or Moxon Street. The scheme will be car free, given the site's access to good public transport. This has been supported by Planners and the local community.

The existing commercial space will be replaced but at a reduced amount, in agreement with the council's Economic Development Team and Local Planning Authority, given the high number of commercial spaces along the high road. Barnet Council is likely to retain ownership of this commercial space as part of the consideration for the scheme. The council's Economic Development Team will work closely to support the letting of the completed commercial space, including exploring the potential for the scheme to support the council's emerging Arts and Culture Strategy. It is also possible that Checkalow, the existing commercial tenant, may return upon completion to occupy some or all of the commercial space.



CGI of the completed scheme



Proposed site layout

2.3 Tenure mix

Whitings Road

The current proposed tenure mix for Whitings Road, subject to further viability testing, is as follows:

	1b2p	1b2p WC	2b4p	2b4p WC	3b4p	3b5p	3b6p	3b6p WC	4b8p	Total
Social rent			1	2	1			1	6	11
Shared ownership	4	1					4			9
Private sale						4	5		6	15
										35

Given the site's proximity to the hospital, schools and green space, the site lends itself to affordable rent, shared ownership and private sale. This could be targeted at local keyworkers. There is significant demand for larger family-sized affordable rent homes in the borough which this site is suited to provide.

Moxon Street

The current proposed tenure mix for Moxon Street, subject to further viability testing, is as follows:

		Shared ownership	Private sale	Total
1b2p	House	6		6
1b2p	Maisonette	1		1
2b3p	Flat	1	2	3
2b4p	House		9	9
2b4p	Flat		2	2
Number of homes		8	13	21

The tenure mix proposed is based on the rationale that the site would lend itself well to private sale and shared ownership, targeting first time buyers or local private downsizers as well as maximising values to support a cross subsidy financing model.

Across both sites

The sites will be submitted to planning together with the current proposed tenure split across both sites shown in the table below:

Tenure	Whitings Road		Moxon Street		Combined	
	Homes	%	Homes	%	Homes	%
Social rent	11	31%	0	0%	11	20%
Shared ownership	9	26%	8	38%	17	30%
Open market sale	15	43%	13	62%	28	50%
Total	35	100%	21	100%	56	100%

This shows that the sites combined achieve the target of 50:50 private to affordable tenures.

2.4 Sustainability

The design team been encouraged to follow the recommendations of the RIBA 2030 Challenge to achieve an 'exemplary' sustainable design.

2.4.1 Net Zero Carbon aspirations

The energy strategy for the two schemes aims at reaching beyond the current national, regional and local policy by targeting net zero developments.

The brief to promote ultra-low energy demand, has been achieved primarily through passive design, using highly insulated building fabric and low air permeability. This is combined with carbon free space heating and hot water through the use of air source heat pumps, in tandem with mechanical ventilation and heat recovery units. Furthermore, renewable energy has been embraced through the specification of photovoltaic roof panels.

In terms of the predicted Energy Performance Certificate these homes will achieve, they are designed to achieve category “A” or strong “B”.

2.4.2 Barnet’s Sustainability Strategy

The aspiration of Barnet’s Sustainability Strategy is to build new social housing to a minimum EPC of ‘B’ adopting sustainable methods. All new build commissions are planned for net zero carbon emissions by 2025, with this achieved by 2030.

The Sustainability Strategy identifies that 58% of emission within Barnet come from stationary energy sources, namely buildings, two-thirds of which relate to residential buildings. With an average EPC rating of ‘D’, the retrofitting of the existing housing stock will be the key challenge in the borough.

Sustainable development for new housing in Barnet is guided by the National Planning Policy Framework (NPPF) and the new London Plan 2021, alongside the council’s existing Local Plan and emerging draft Local Plan.

These principles and policies are further supported by building regulations that collectively set the ground rules for energy efficiency.

Barnet Homes closely monitors the evolving building regulations, in particular, the recently introduced Future Homes Standard, ensuring its Employer’s Requirements are kept up-to-date to address developments including, Part L (conservation of fuel and power) and F (ventilation), Part O (overheating) and Part S (electric car charging points). These changes are set to reduce carbon emissions of 75-80% compared to the current regulations.

2.4.3 Biodiversity Net Gain

Surveys conducted by the project team concluded that development of both sites have a positive impact of biodiversity, but less than the required ten percent improvement threshold required.

At the Whittings Road site the team is working with the Planners to find an off-site solution. One proposal under consideration is working with the adjacent Whittings Hill Primary School to explore enhancing the biodiversity on the boundary of their playing field, which borders the rear of the site. The school has ambitions to become a Forest School, so this will hopefully help them achieve this objective.

Similarly at the Moxon Street site, solutions to the shortfall in achieving the biodiversity net gain are under discussion with the council’s ecology team, with options including off-site improvement and / or a financial contribution to improvements elsewhere in the ward.

2.5 Local Planning Authority and LBB Highways

The Barnet Group have met with the Local Planning Authority and LBB Highways for two pre-application meetings, in September and November 2022. The sessions were productive and proactive, with helpful suggestions and recommendations made.

Formal pre-application feedback suggests both sites have the support of the Local Planning Authority and that a recommendation for approval is likely to be made to the Strategic Planning Committee, if no material changes are made.

Both the Planners and Highways will be further engaged as the design progresses.

2.6 Legal and land assembly

2.6.1 Whittings Road

The freehold of the Whittings Road site, as shown on the red line boundary drawings, see Appendix 2, is owned by the council. The site was made available, with the rebuilding of Whittings Road Primary School as part of the Primary School Capital Investment Programme in 2019, on adjacent land. The disposal of this community school land was approved by the Secretary of State in 2012.

A discrepancy between the approved disposed land plan and the earlier 2015 [15/03139/FUL] planning application scheme drawing will require an amended consent to be applied for. This is not considered to be a risk for the project.

A review of the Site Constraint Reports did not raise any matters burdening the site from the proposed development presented.

2.6.2 Moxon Street

The freehold of the Moxon Street site, as shown on the red line boundary drawings, see Appendix 4, is owned by the council. The council has let the southern portion of the site to a tile merchant, Checkalow Ltd. This lease expires in April 2025. Development cannot commence until this tenant has vacated.

The northern portion of the site, fronting Tapster Street, is used by a second-hand car dealer, on a short lease.

A review of the Site Constraint Reports did not raise any matters burdening the site from the proposed development presented.

3. Rationale

This Outline Business Case (OBC) sets out the rationale for bringing forward the sites at Whittings Road and Moxon Street for policy compliant mixed-tenure schemes, delivered through a development partnership.

This OBC has been prepared using the agreed standards and format for business cases, as set out in the HM Treasury Green Book business case methodology.

The agreed format is the Five Case Model, which comprises the following key components:

- the **strategic case** section – this sets out the strategic context, together with the

supporting investment objectives for the scheme;

- the **economic case** section – this demonstrates that the council has selected a preferred way forward which best meets the existing and future needs of the council, and is likely to optimise value for money (VFM) based on optimum delivery solution;
- the **commercial case** section - this defines what the potential development solution will look like;
- the **financial case** section – this highlights the proposed funding and solution for delivering the project;
- the **management case** section – this demonstrates that the scheme is achievable and can be delivered successfully in accordance with accepted best practice.

The purpose of this section is to explain how the scope of the proposed project fits within the existing Barnet Council strategies and provides a compelling case for the delivery of the Whitings Road and Moxon Street project.

3.1 The Strategic Case

3.1.1 LBB context

Barnet has the second largest population of any London Borough with 389,300 residents (Census 2021). This figure is expected to grow to 452,000 by 2036. With a third of the Borough designated green belt, Barnet Council has to be innovative in how new homes can be built in the Borough.

The council has an important role to play in delivering Government targets for housing growth over the coming years. To deliver an increase in housing completions requires the council and wider public sector to increase its own pipeline of housing delivery. To that end the council is reviewing its assets to consider all suitable sites for redevelopment potential.

3.1.2 Business strategies

Corporate Plan 2023 – 2026, Housing Strategy and the Growth Strategy 2020-2030

Delivering more affordable homes in the borough is a priority of the council, as set out in the Corporate Plan 2023 – 2026, Housing Strategy and the Growth Strategy. Since May 2022, this has become a council priority.

A new Housing Strategy is currently being prepared and providing the right homes in the right places and more affordable homes is a key ambition. The schemes will support the ambition to deliver 1000 homes at 50% of market rent or lower. Work is underway to convert current delivery plans to ensure they contribute to starting on site with 1,000 affordable social rent homes over the next 4 years.

The new Corporate Plan is built around a council that cares for people, our places, and the planet. Under the People priority, it aims to be family friendly, tackle inequality, and support health and independence. Under the Place priority, it aims to ensure safe, attractive neighbourhoods, quality affordable homes, sustainable growth, and thriving town centres and make Barnet a fun place to visit. Under the Planet priority, it aims to focus on the council's journey to net zero, local environment, and green spaces.

The council is currently also preparing a new Homelessness and Rough Sleeping Strategy.

Health and Wellbeing Strategy 2021-2025

The Health and Wellbeing Strategy 2021 to 2025 recognises that the condition of and access to local housing has an important role in the quality of life and health of both individuals and communities.

London Plan 2021

See the following link for the new London Plan 2021: <https://www.london.gov.uk/what-we-do/planning/london-plan/new-london-plan/london-plan-2021>

New draft Local Plan

The council is reviewing and updating the Borough's Local Plan. The Local Plan sets out a vision for how Barnet will change as a place over the next 15 years and forms a strategy which emphasises the Borough's attractiveness as a place to live, work and visit. The emerging Plan is expected to be adopted in spring 2022.

There are four key aims in the emerging Local Plan:

- Emphasise housing, jobs, infrastructure and place-making opportunities at Brent Cross (North, Town & West) and New Southgate
- Make Colindale a more sustainable place where the car is no longer dominant
- Revitalise major thoroughfares such as the A5 as corridors for sustainable growth, ensuring that they connect with their suburban surroundings
- Emphasise growth opportunities in Barnet's Town Centres as part of high street recovery and greater neighbourhood living

Investment objectives

The investment objectives for this project are as follows:

(1) Delivering more homes that people can afford

Subject to financial viability, the project aims to meet the council's target of 50% affordable homes which will be let at social rents. In addition, in a relatively high value area of the Borough, there will be shared ownership homes where first-time buyers can purchase just 25% of their home.

(2) Safe and secure homes

The new homes will meet high design standards including the Mayor's Design Guide, current planning guidance and will achieve secure by design which is signed off by local police.

Barnet Homes will be responsible for the ongoing maintenance and management of the scheme which should ensure that the homes are well run and serviced.

(3) Promoting independence

By moving Barnet families from temporary or unsuitable accommodation into an affordable new home, the council provides a springboard from which that family can thrive. These homes will be spacious, light and well-insulated to ensure they are affordable to run as well as to rent.

(4) Tackling homelessness and rough sleeping in Barnet

The council needs to increase housing supply throughout the Borough in order to meet housing demand. The Whittings Road and Moxon Street sites will provide more affordable housing, including larger-family homes and at least 10% wheelchair accessible homes. The project will also offer opportunities for Barnet residents to get on the home ownership ladder.

3.2 The Economic Case

3.2.1 Critical Success Factors

The key Critical Success Factors (CSFs) for the Whittings Road and Moxon Street project are identified as follows:

1. Increasing the provision of affordable and private accommodation in the Borough.
2. Reducing the number of families in temporary accommodation.
3. Delivering a financially viable and successful mixed tenure housing development scheme.
4. Making effective commercial use of council-owned land and buildings.
5. Providing a capital/and or revenue receipt to the Council whilst maintaining the freehold of the site within the Barnet “family”.

3.2.2 Market Activity

The housing and construction sector is feeling the pressure of a number of macroeconomic conditions including high interest rates, high levels of inflation and high mortgage rates. It is also projected that house prices will fall in 2023. These issues will need to be closely monitored in the next stage of the project.

The GLA’s Quarterly London Housing Market Report (January 2023) noted a number of key points:

- According to Rightmove, the average asking price in London was £668,000 in January 2023, up 6% from a year before but down from a peak of £696,000 in October 2022.
- RICS figures show that demand for new homes in London is falling faster than the availability of homes for sale, pointing towards falls in house prices and transaction volumes in the coming months.
- Average mortgage interest rates jumped after the September ‘mini-Budget’ but peaked in October/November and are starting to come down again, albeit more slowly than they increased.
- Consumer confidence has fallen sharply in London, although less so than in the rest of the UK.

However, Savills Research forecast that subject to mortgage markets settling down, and the Bank of England base rate gradually reducing as inflation cools down, there should be a marked improvement in mortgage affordability. Combined with nominal price falls of -10% in 2023 (-12.6% adjusted for inflation), that would gradually bring more buyers into the market

and allow a return to modest house price growth from 2024 onwards, with a more pronounced rebound in 2026.

In October 2022, the Barnet Post reported that over the past year, the average sale price of a property in Barnet rose by £52,000. Buyers paid 10.1% more than the average price in London (£553,000) in August for a property in Barnet. Across London, property prices are higher than those across the UK, where the average cost £296,000. In Barnet, detached houses increased in value in the past year on average by 8.4% and flats by 8.2%.

Shared Ownership market commentary

Across Greater London, it is widely considered that there is a chronic undersupply of affordable housing. Over the last three years, the average London Borough has delivered 21% of new homes as Affordable Housing. Barnet is below this average at circa 18% [source Greater London Authority]. The Mayor of London has set a strategic target of 50% of all new homes to be affordable homes, with individual sites expected to contribute 35% affordable housing as a minimum. The gap between these figures is expected to be made up by Registered Providers (“RPs”), who will deliver a large number of wholly affordable housing schemes (or at the very least schemes with >50% Affordable Housing).

The London Borough of Barnet has set a target of 50% affordable housing on sites. It is clear from the data that over the last three years this target has not been met, in fact, only half of the 40% has been met.

In June 2022, Social Housing published a report on shared ownership demand. London was down by 16 per cent overall in its sales and Outer London saw a 19 per cent decline in sales, compared with a 19 per cent increase in 2019-20. Inner London shared ownership sales, which in 2021 declined by six per cent, continued on a downward trajectory, dropping by a further 10 per cent. David Jubb, director of Greater London development at JLL, said that competition from Help to Buy was probably a driving factor in the decline.

It was forecast that shared ownership sales will drop off further during the 2021-22 period as people rush to take advantage of Help to Buy before it comes to an end in March 2023. However, beyond that JLL predict “an incredibly strong bounceback” in shared ownership sales, assuming the government does not introduce a replacement scheme for Help to Buy that could rival shared ownership.

At the time of writing, only 3 shared ownership properties were available for sale within 1 mile of EN5.

3.3 The Commercial Case

3.3.1 Council-led development

The Outline Business Case proposes the development of sites at Whittings Road and Moxon Street to deliver two policy compliant schemes, with 56 new homes in total and commercial re-provision at Moxon Street. These sites are owned by the council so this project represents council-led development of two high-quality residential schemes.

3.3.2 Proposed development structure

It is envisaged that the two sites will be delivered through a development agreement with a private sector partner, following the formula of the successful Hermitage Lane project. That arrangement follows these key principles:

- Barnet Council secures planning consent via The Barnet Group – this adds value to the sites
- Developer partner procured by The Barnet Group
- Developer partner provides working capital to deliver the scheme, takes both build cost and sales risk on market sale and provides a capital receipt to Barnet Council for land value; the land receipt could be a mixture of capital and a longer-term revenue contribution subject to negotiation
- Opendoor Homes, a subsidiary of The Barnet Group, purchases the discounted affordable rent homes and takes sales risk on any shared ownership
- Freehold to Opendoor Homes after final sale
- Overage agreement if priority return achieved

The successful Hermitage Lane project was conceived by TBG as an innovative and alternative way to deliver more new homes in addition to the direct delivery programmes via the housing Revenue Account (HRA), deploying the skills and capacity of the wider Barnet Group. It also enables the limited capacity to support development in the HRA to be “ring fenced” to support the delivery of high priority schemes such as the regeneration of Grahame Park North East.

Following approval of the outline business case and subject to a resolution to grant planning consent being granted, The Barnet Group will procure a private sector partner on the basis of a contractual development agreement. The development partner will provide post-planning development manager and construction services.

In this model, the two parties (i.e. Opendoor Homes and a private sector developer) do not form a separate legal entity and the governance arrangements are set out in a development agreement.

Further information on the project’s financial viability is included in section 3.4.5.

Benefits for the council and other parties

If the formula of the Hermitage Lane project is followed, there are a number of benefits to the council and its subsidiaries:

Barnet Council	Opendoor Homes	Developer partner
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Lower risk mixed tenure delivery • No deployment of working capital or existing HRA capacity • Contribution to 1,000 homes manifesto pledge 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Low risk and low cost mixed tenure delivery • Growth • Meeting ODH charitable & LBB strategic objectives • Commercial expertise from development partner 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Access to consented land in London without purchase costs or land banking • Contracting profit • Development profit

<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Policy compliant scheme • Temporary accommodation cost avoidance currently c£3.6k p.p.p.a. • Land receipt and potential long term revenue contribution • Assets retained within LBB wider family for future financial leveraging • Commercial expertise from development partner 		
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3.4 The Financial Case

The Financial case considers the budgetary, financial and affordability impact of this project.

3.4.1 Budget for pre-contract stages

In September 2020, the Policy & Resources Committee approved a budget of £1.27m from the general fund to bring three mixed tenure sites forward to planning submission stage, including Whitings Road and Moxon Street.

The updated planning stage budget is as follows:

	Spend to OBC	Est spend to FBC	Total
Whitings Road	£631,000	£496,000	£1,127,000
Moxon Street	£344,000	£289,000	£633,000
Site 3	N/A	N/A	N/A
Total	£975,000	£785,000	£1,760,000

The spend to achieve Outline Business Case stage for Whitings Road and Moxon Street has been 25% higher than originally proposed. However, the sites are developing 25% more homes than originally proposed. There is £295,000 remaining in this budget.

The remaining third site will be subject to a separate outline business case.

Additional capital funding of **£485,000** from the general fund is required for the post-planning and pre-contract stage, for professional services support to tender and set up the development agreement for delivery to Full Business Case stage. This includes a development fee for The Barnet Group acting as development agent for the council. This is subject to Policy & Resources Committee approval in April 2023.

It is envisaged that the pre-contract costs are recovered through the development agreement model, subject to financial viability.

3.4.2 Estimated total scheme cost

[Exempt]

3.4.3 GLA grant allocation

Opendoor Homes successfully bid for a grant allocation from the Greater London Authority's Affordable Housing programme 2021-2026 for the Whitings Road and Moxon Street sites. This is summarised as follows:

Site	Total units	Shared ownership	Social rent	Total GLA grant approved £
Whitings Road	33	23	10	2,980,000
Moxon Street	15	15	0	814,995
				3,794,995

The number of units and the tenure splits/types have been adjusted since the bid application was made and will be updated as part of the Full Business Case.

The grant requires a start on site by March 2026.

3.4.5 Financial viability and appraisal

As explained in section 3.3.2, it is envisaged that the two sites will be delivered together through a development agreement with a private sector partner, following the formula of the Hermitage Lane project.

The property development sector has been significantly affected by wider economic conditions with rising construction inflation and declining house prices. This makes development ever more challenging.

Barnet Homes appointed Beacon Partnerships to assist in assessing the financial viability of both sites, with a range of scenarios tested, the findings of which are summarised in the consolidated appraisals in the Exempt report.

Consolidated appraisal for Whittings Road and Moxon Street:

[Exempt]

Potential mitigations

To help improve the project's financial viability, the council can consider a number of options including different funding streams, reviewing rent levels, reviewing the target for net zero and altering the design.

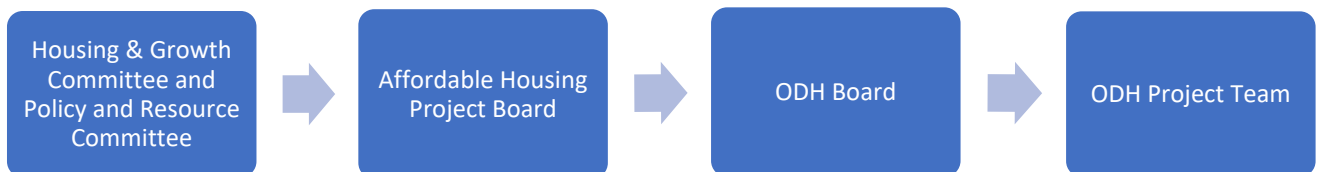
3.5 The Management Case

The management case provides the outline plan for programme management, governance, risk management and benefits realisation that will be required to ensure successful delivery. The project will follow the corporate project management guidelines, specifically around governance, reporting and risk management.

3.5.1 Programme management and reporting

The scheme will contribute to Barnet Council's Housing and Growth Programme, which comprises a portfolio of projects for the delivery of growth requirements across the Borough.

Broad programme management arrangements are summarised below:



The council's change to a Cabinet structure will mean that the project is reported to Cabinet, not Housing & Growth Committee in the future.

Stage	Outline Business Case	Full Business Case	Delivery and start on site
	Gateway 1	Gateway 2	
Key dates	March 2023	Q1 2024/25	Q1 2024/25

Milestones	<p>Actions completed:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • RIBA stage 3 planning design • Technical due diligence started • Soft market testing started • Financial appraisal and viability modelling 	<p>Actions to be completed:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Planning consent granted • Procurement of private sector partner 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Work starts on site at Whittings Road • Subject to vacant possession of Moxon Street
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3.5.2 Target programme and key milestones

3.5.3 Project management arrangements

The project is being managed in line with LBB's project management toolkit and gateway reviews have been held at the completion of each work stage.

The Affordable Housing Project Board oversee the development of this programme and monitor progress towards its completion, resolving any issues to ensure a successful outcome. The Affordable Housing Board meets monthly and comprises of representatives of Barnet Council and ODH with co-optees who have a vested interest or who may have a significant impact on the project invited to attend, as required.

The Affordable Housing Development Board is responsible for:

- Managing the project budget;
- Monitoring progress of the scheme against agreed targets
- Setting programme targets, including timescales;
- Overseeing engagement with key stakeholders;
- Providing guidance to delivery teams.

The membership comprises the following:

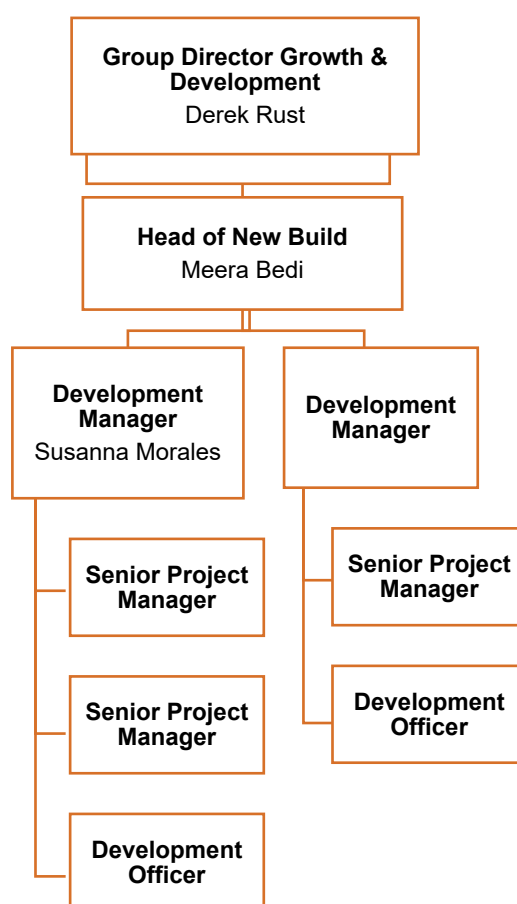
- Susan Curran - Head of Housing & Regeneration, LBB
- Sangita Mistry - Finance Manager, LBB
- Derek Rust – Director Growth & Development, The Barnet Group
- Meera Bedi - Head of New Build, The Barnet Group
- Susanna Morales – Group Development Manager, The Barnet Group

The project is overseen by the Head of New Build at The Barnet Group who is responsible for the overall progress and direction of the project, including ensuring the project management protocols are fully adhered to, and documentation are produced and updated,

as well as managing the internal supply chain and ensuring the team scope and outputs are fully coordinated.

Should the site be transferred to Opendoor Homes, the Opendoor Homes Board are experienced individuals with expertise in social housing, development and finance and oversee the day to day operation of Opendoor Homes. It is a registered provider with the Regulator of Social Housing and a Charitable Community Benefit Society registered with the Financial Conduct Authority.

The Barnet Group development team structure is shown below:



4. Options

There are four potential options identified at this stage. The next stage of work will focus on refining the best delivery option for the council.

- **Option 1** – Do nothing
- **Option 2** – Dispose of the sites, with the benefit of a planning consent
- **Option 3** – Develop the sites as mixed tenure as part of a development partnership

- **Option 4** – Develop the sites as affordable housing only

Option 1 – Do nothing

This option retains the status quo, whereby the sites are not developed.

Advantages	Disadvantages
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • No development risk for the council • Loss of GLA grant 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • The council would fail to meet strategic objectives of delivering new homes • No capital or revenue receipt to the council • No improvement to the street scene

Option 2 – Dispose of the site, with the benefit of a planning consent

This option sees the council dispose of the sites, with the benefit of resolution to grant planning consent.

If financial viability poses too great a challenge to Opendoor Homes or Barnet Council, then selling the sites with the benefit of planning consents could form an exit strategy as a last resort.

Advantages	Disadvantages
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • No development risk for the council • Quick and inexpensive to put in place • No procurement required • Land receipts for the value of the sites 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • The council would fail to meet strategic objectives of delivering new homes and other council priorities • Purchaser may seek an alternative planning consent / land use • Purchaser may seek to reduce the number of affordable homes on the site • Does not prevent landbanking and no assurance of delivery • Resources required to manage disposal •

Option 3 – Develop the sites as mixed tenure as part of a development partnership

This option sees the council deliver the scheme via Opendoor Homes with a develop partner.

Advantages	Disadvantages
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • The schemes are delivered and a significant contribution to new housing targets achieved • Creates a mixed community and positive “place” • A tried and tested model • Strategic growth achieved • Retain an asset within the Barnet ‘family’ that can be leveraged in the future to deliver more housing • Policy compliant affordable housing 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Potentially a limited ability to adapt to any changing requirements as to what is delivered on the relevant land; or in future • A fully regulated procurement is necessary – likely Competitive Dialogue or possibly Competitive Procedure with Negotiation

<p>provided</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Development capital from the development partner to help fund the construction • Nominations rights to the affordable rent dwellings • Council and ODH control / influence over the development • Capital receipt paid to the council • Can share in the success of the scheme through overage • The council can control the timing, pace and quality of delivery on the land through imposing long stop dates, quality requirements etc in development agreement • Lower level of development risk for the council 	
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Option 4 – Develop the site as affordable housing only

This option sees the council deliver the scheme for affordable housing only.

Advantages	Disadvantages
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • The schemes are delivered and a significant contribution to new affordable housing targets achieved • Strategic growth achieved • Retain an asset within the Barnet 'family' • Council control / influence over the development • Minimises profit leakage to the private sector 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Not viable as it would rely on the HRA to fund the schemes, which does not currently have the capacity to support the scheme. • It would not make the most of some of the commercial opportunities that the sites afford in respect of values •

It is recommended that **Option 3** is taken forward.

This option allows The Barnet Group to deliver mixed tenure residential schemes which will provide 56 new homes, thereby contributing to the council's strategic growth objectives.

The financial arrangements for this option provide for a development partner to provide the development funding and take the sales risk on the sale of the market sale units.

The council will receive an immediate capital receipt for the land.

The council will receive nomination rights in perpetuity on the affordable rent homes.

The sites are currently vacant and in the case of Whitings Road, not generating any income / benefits to the council. Approving the development proposals will allow work to commence to transform the sites and improve the street scene for local residents.

The sites are close to other Barnet Council housing stock therefore efficiencies in the provision of housing and maintenance services will be achieved through both being managed and maintained by Barnet Homes.

5. Expected Benefits

Benefit Type	Description of the benefit	Who will benefit	Expected benefit value	Financial year that the benefit will be realised	Benefit Owner	How will the benefit be measured	Baseline value (£, % etc) and date
Benefit 1: Financial cashable Cost avoidance	A financial saving will be made through avoided costs, where Temporary Accommodation is not required for 11 households	Council	£39,600 per annum	2025/26 onwards	HRA	Measured by comparing the cost per year to provide Temporary Accommodation (currently £3,600 per property per year)	Cost of Temporary Accommodation 2022/23
Benefit 2: Financial cashable Council tax revenue	Council tax revenue from the 56 new dwellings.	Council	£75,639 per annum	2025/26 onwards	Council	Calculated on an annual basis using current council tax rates [band D]	Using Council tax rates 2022/23 rates
Benefit 3: Financial cashable Wheelchair cost avoidance savings	A financial saving will be made through avoided costs, where Temporary Accommodation for General Needs Wheelchair Users is not required for 6 households	Council	£131,952 per annum	2025/26 onwards	HRA	Measured by comparing the cost per year to provide Temporary Accommodation	Cost of Temporary Accommodation 2019/20
Benefit 4: Non-financial	Maintain the supply of social housing provision	Council / those in housing need	Provides occupation for 11 households	2025/26 onwards	HRA	Measure occupancy rates	N/A

Strategic objective	within the borough through the use of right to buy receipts to contribute towards the construction of replacement homes.						
Benefit 5: Non-financial Strategic objective	Improvements to the existing street scene	Residents / local community	Expected increase in customer satisfaction	2025/26 onwards	All	Measure resident satisfaction	N/A
Benefit 6: Social value: improved health, life long learning employment and training opportunities	Building contracts will provide employment and training opportunities. New homes will provide a stable environment, conducive to good health and personal development.	Measure number of additional apprenticeships created by the scheme, and use of local suppliers representing benefits to the wider local economy.	Apprenticeships data (including transition to full time employment) and information on use of local suppliers to be provided by contractor.	2023 onwards		Baseline to be provided by contractor based on existing apprenticeship levels.	
Benefit 7: Financial and Non Financial	S106 & CiL contributions	Council and local residents / community	c. £750,000	2025/26 onwards	Council	Number of apprenticeships / employment opportunities provided	N/A
Benefit 8: Land receipt	There may be a land receipt as part of the development model	Council	TBC	2024/25	Council	Cashable benefit	N/A
Benefit 9: Supporting high	The scheme will help improve	Council	TBC	2024/25	Council	Cashable benefit	N/A

street economy	High Barnet high road and provide commerca l rental income, including potential to support the council's emerging Arts & Communiti es Strategy						
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6. Summary of Key Risks

A risk assessment has been undertaken and involved the following distinct elements:

- Identifying all the possible business and service risks associated with each option;
- Assessing the impact and probability for each option;
- Calculating a risk score.

This is in line with the LBB corporate Risk Management Strategy, which uses the following matrix score risks:

	Score:		PROBABILITY				
			1	2	3	4	5
			Rare	Unlikely	Possible	Likely	Almost certain
I M P A C T	5	Catastrophic	5	10	15	20	25
	4	Major	4	8	12	16	20
	3	Moderate	3	6	9	12	15
	2	Minor	2	4	6	8	10
	1	Negligible	1	2	3	4	5

Risk	Probability	Impact	Total	Actions to mitigate	Consequence	Current status
Design						
That the design is not fit for purpose	1	3	3	Peter Barber Architects were appointed, who have proven track record in the borough	Changes to the design would need to be made post-contract, causing cost increases and risk to programme.	<p>A highly-qualified and experienced design team were appointed for the planning stage.</p> <p>The appointed construction consultant has reviewed the design to ensure buildability.</p> <p>An experienced developer partner will be procured.</p>
Title matters and rights						
That title matters or rights prevent or delay development, including Rights of Light	3	4	12	All title matters being reviewed by legal representatives. A detailed RoL report has been obtained and specialist advice is being obtained together to provide a robust strategy.	A delay in resolving title matters and rights could delay the contractors from starting on site and attract prolongation costs.	<p>Will be fully reviewed by specialists on behalf of TBG.</p> <p>Secretary of State consent to the amendment of the boundary at the Whittings Road site will be submitted.</p>
Site assembly						
Vacant possession of site and site fully secured	1	2	2	The Whittings Road site is vacant and secure. The Moxon Street site will be vacant by April 2025, if not	Potential delay the project from starting on site, attracting prolongation costs from the contractor if we are in contract.	Regular monitoring by TBG and proactive engagement with Checkalow.

				earlier by mutual agreement.		
Cost						
That there are unforeseen costs arising during the project and a subsequent budget shortfall	3	3	9	A client contingency will be included in the project budget.	If the budget is exceeded.	A contingency allowance will be included in the proposed budget. The proposed delivery model should help mitigate rising costs once in contract.
Market conditions						
That the scheme becomes financially unviable due to wider market pressures	4	3	12	Regular financial appraisal and cost monitoring	The project would be undeliverable as currently intended	The council could dispose of the sites with the benefit of a planning consent. Alternative delivery options could be explored. Regular financial appraisal and cost monitoring. Use right to buy receipts instead of GLA grant on the larger family homes at Whitings Road and charge LAR or BAR. Work with the developer partner to review the efficiency of how the buildings are constructed and make improvements if necessary including reducing the net zero specification if necessary. Alter unit mix as there are a lot of larger oversized homes at Whitings Road. Change tenure so that it is not 50:50 Consider London Living Rent or other tenures. Assume house prices will recover by the time the built products come to market.
Sales risk on market sale and shared ownership units	3	2	6	Sales risk on market sale units will be with the developer partner.	Project does not achieve projected returns	Regular valuation advice being obtained and market conditions monitored. Specialist support to be engaged.

				ODH has minor exposure as only small number of shared ownership units		
Wider pressure on the construction sector due to construction inflation and high interest rates	3	3	9	Complete financial due diligence of the developer partner will be carried out	Contractors and developers are facing financial uncertainty	Financial due diligence will be completed
Construction						
That site conditions cause delay or cost increase	3	3	9	A number of surveys and investigations have taken place.	There could be unforeseen site conditions or issues with statutory bodies that delay the project or cause cost increase.	A further review will be carried out before starting on site. The proposed delivery model should help mitigate rising costs once in contract.
Stakeholder engagement						
That stakeholders are not engaged throughout project delivery	2	3	6	TBG have established a good relationship with the local community and stakeholder groups.	Damage to LBB / ODH reputation	Engagement will continue throughout the process. The developer partner will have a dedicated point of contact for the local community.

7. Approach to equalities and Equalities Impact Assessment

An Equality Impact Analysis (EqIA) is contained in Appendix 6. The EqIA has been prepared to accompany the Outline Business Case and ahead of planning submission. The purpose of this tool is to analyse, from the perspective of existing resident, the likely effect of the proposal to build new homes at Whitings Road and Moxon Street, in terms of equality duties the council is required to promote.

These include documenting the effect on the equality strands: age, disability, gender, race / ethnicity, religion or belief, sexual orientation, or gender reassignment. In this way a systematic approach is taken to ensuring there is no potential for discrimination or adverse impact. Furthermore, all opportunities to promote equality have been taken.

The EqIA assessment identified that a few groups are impacted negatively by the delivery of the project, primarily due to disruption during the construction period. However, it is assessed that these are short term impacts only and that they are outweighed by the longer-term benefits of the project. The needs and requirements of the pupils and wider school community at Whitings Hill Primary School, has received specific focus to ensure any potential impact has been minimised.

There are clear mitigations for the short-term negative impacts, including a communications plan and appointment of a Resident Liaison Officer, which in the longer-term will help to establish good relationships and build trust with the community.

8. Approach to consultation and stakeholder engagement

The project team have undertaken a wide ranging and comprehensive consultation, reaching out to engage with all stakeholders for both sites.

Initial public exhibitions were held on 5 and 7 December for Whitings Road and Moxon Street, respectively, at local venues, where plans were presented on large format presentation board. At the same time electronic versions were made available on Barnet Homes engagement website. Publicity was initiated through a letter drop to addresses in the vicinity. The event was hosted by the client team, including representation from Barnet Homes, Architects, Landscape Architects, Transport Consultants, Planning and Engagement Consultants.

Feedback from the initial consultations led to design development by the project team taking account of comments received. On 1 and 8 February a second round of public exhibitions were held. More detailed floor plans, elevations and computer generated images were presented, demonstrating the approach of “you said” and “we did”.

In addition to local resident, the project team has engaged directly and held individual briefings with a number of key stakeholders. These stakeholders included Ward Councillors, Whitings Hill Primary School, The Barnet Society, and Barnet Residents Association.

The Barnet Society recently wrote a positive article on their website in support of the proposals: <https://www.barnetsociety.org.uk/typical-wait-ages-for-a-decent-modern-housing-scheme-and-two-come-along-at-once>

Within the council the project team has engaged with with the Planners, and also the Town Centre Team. Overall, feedback has been positive with supportive comments received from many stakerholder to date.

9. Project Assurance

Deliverable / Product	Quality Criteria	Author	Reviewers	Acceptor
Construction of 56 new homes	Meets London space standards and local Planning criteria	Council / ODH	ODH Development Team	ODH Development Team
Improved street scene for local residents	High quality residential development	ODH / HRL	ODH Development Team	ODH Development Team

10. Dependencies

The project is subject to the following dependencies that will be carefully monitored and managed throughout the lifespan of the scheme.

Scheme dependencies are summarised in the table below.

Dependent on	Nature of dependency
Government funding	Funding from the GLA grant funding for the affordable homes.
Planning consent	Resolution to grant planning consent obtained, then discharge of planning conditions and non material amendments.
Highways	Reliance on the necessary highways applications being made and accepted as required.
Consultation and community engagement	Usual consultation requirements will need to be adhered to, alongside gaining local community involvement and engagement.
Member engagement	Members engagement required throughout the process.

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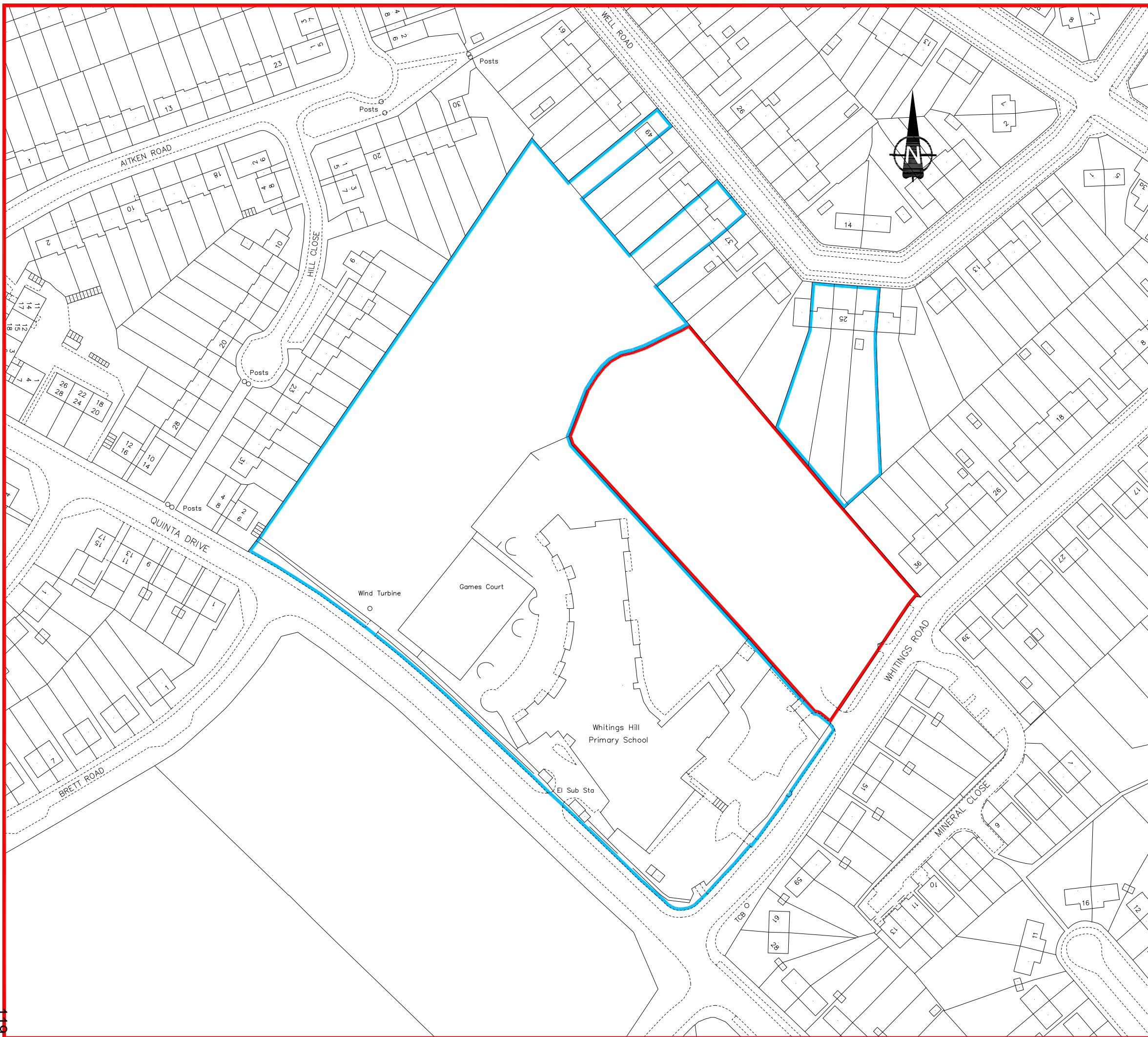
Approvals:

By signing this document, the signatories below are confirming that they have fully reviewed the Outline Business Case for the Whittings Road and Moxon Street project and confirm their acceptance of the completed document.

Name	Role	Signature	Date	Version

Enter the names and roles of the people who need to sign this document in order to show agreement with the business case's proposal, with space for them to sign it

You should speak to your Head of Finance about any capital project you are proposing to undertake. They will help you to complete certain sections of the business case.



NOTES:

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Revision and Date	Description	Initial
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SCHEME:
**LAND AT WHITINGS ROAD,
BARNET**

TITLE:
LOCATION PLAN

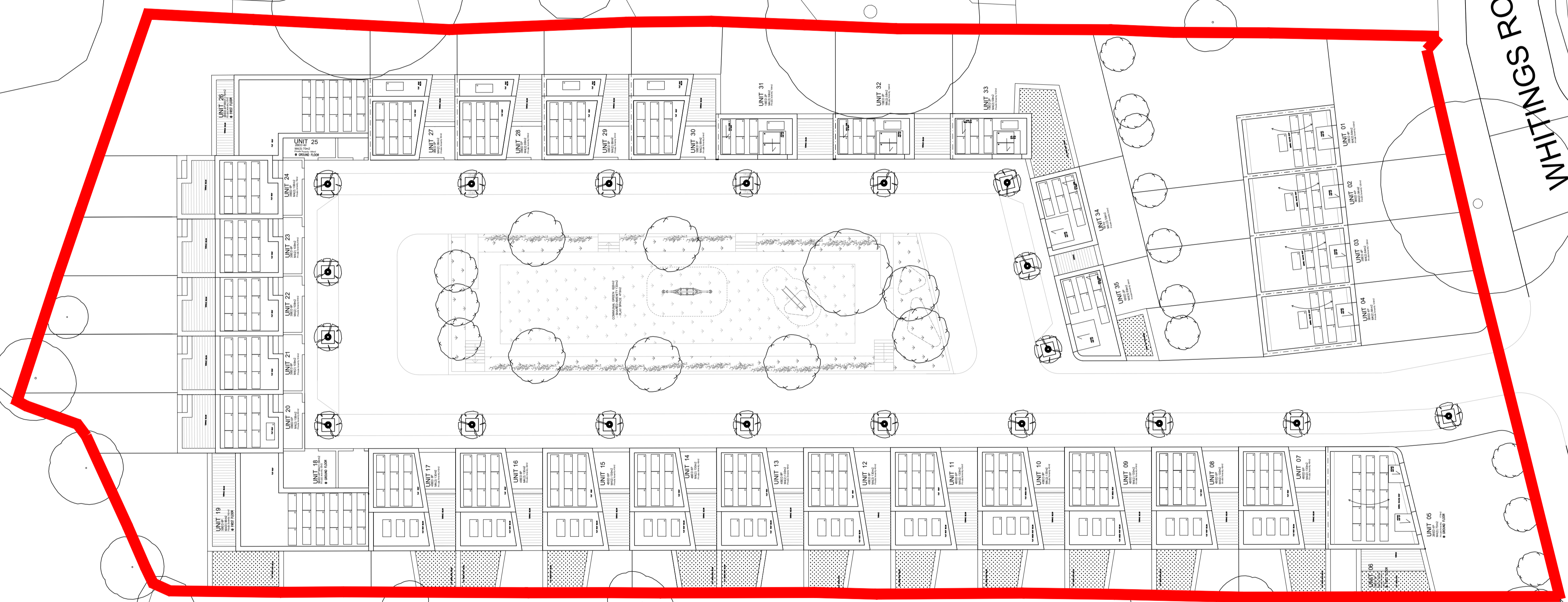
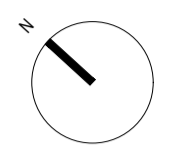
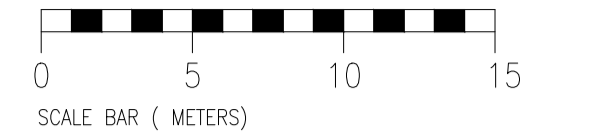
Scales:	1:1250	Date:	05/05/15
Initiated:	J.E.	Drawn:	K.E.B.
		Checked:	J.E.

DRAWING NO:
24198/3

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DRAWING FOR PLANNING PURPOSES. DO NOT USE FOR CONSTRUCTION.
INTERNAL LAYOUTS, WALLON DESIGN AND EXTERNAL DOOR SWING INDICATIVE.

- NOTES
1. EXISTING SITE FOOTPRINT TAKEN FROM TOPO SURVEY WITH SURROUNDINGS APPROXIMATE FROM OS. DO NOT SCALE OFF THIS DRAWING, EXCEPT FROM THE SCALE BAR FOR PLANNING PURPOSES.
 2. RED LINE INDICATES APPLICATION BOUNDARY AND ASSUMED BARNET HOMES' OWNERSHIP BOUNDARY. TICS BY BARNET HOMES.
 3. GROUND LEVELS INDICATIVE- APPROXIMATED FROM A SMALL NUMBER OF SPOT LEVELS ON TOPO SURVEY.
 3. INFORM ARCHITECT OF ANY DISCREPANCIES



REV	DATE	DESCRIPTION	DRN	CHK
P01	06.03.22	PLANNING	JL	AB

PETER BARBER ARCHITECTS
173 Kings Cross Road LONDON WC1X 9BZ
e: info@peterbarberarchitects.com
t: 020 7833 4499

CLIENT
BARNET HOMES
PROJECT
WHITTINGS ROAD

DRAWING TITLE
PROPOSED SITE PLAN

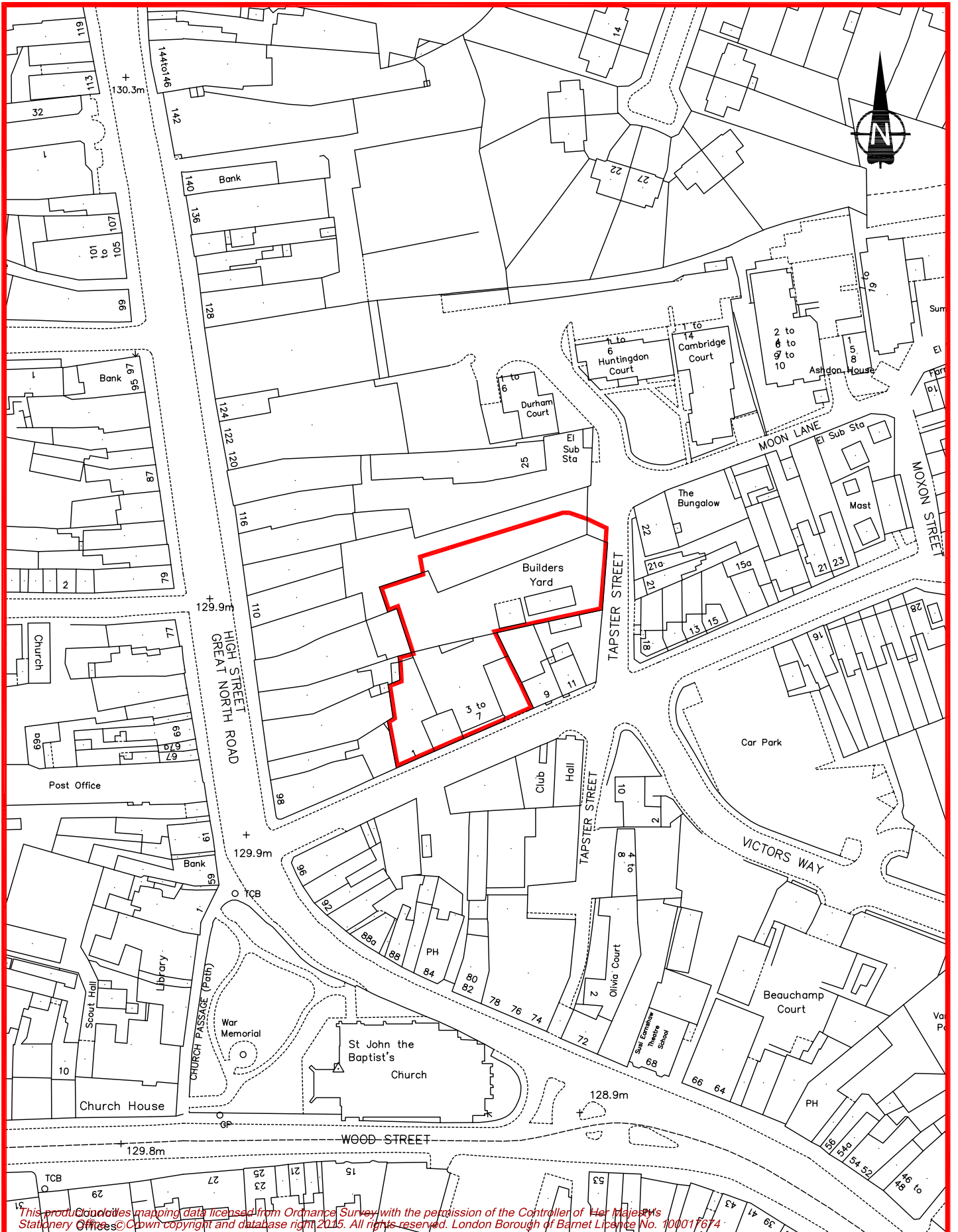
SCALE 1:250 A1 SHEET

STATUS
PRELIMINARY

DRAWING NO
WH_P_95

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Initiated by	SCHEME: FORMER DEPOT TAPSTER STREET, BARNET	Lesley Meeks, Assistant Director of CSG	
Drawn by K.E.B.	TITLE: SITE PLAN	London Borough of Barnet, Barnet House, 1255 High Road, Whetstone, London, N20 0EJ Tel. 020 8359 2000	DRAWING No. <div style="text-align: right; font-size: 1.2em; font-weight: bold;">24524/3 123</div>
Checked by	Scales 1:1250		
Date 14/10/15			

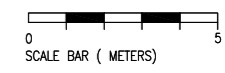
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DRAWING FOR PLANNING PURPOSES. DO NOT USE FOR CONSTRUCTION
INTERNAL LAYOUTS, MULLION DESIGN AND EXTERNAL DOOR SWING INDICATIVE

NOTES

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3. INFORM ARCHITECT OF ANY DISCREPANCIES



P01	06.03.23	PLANNING	AB	PH
REV	DATE	DESCRIPTION	DRN	CHK

PETER BARBER ARCHITECTS

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e: info@peterbarbararchitects.com
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CLIENT
BARNET HOMES
PROJECT
MOXON STREET

DRAWING TITLE
PROPOSED SITE PLAN

SCALE 1:200 AZ SHEET

STATUS
PRELIMINARY

DRAWING NO
MX_P_095 REV
P01

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Equalities Impact Assessment (EqIA)

WHITINGS ROAD & MOXON STREET OBC

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 EqlA

Title of proposal ⁵	Whitings Road & Moxon Street Development Project
Name and job title of completing officer	Philip Goldstone, Senior Project Manager, Barnet Homes
Head of service area responsible	Meera Bedi, Head of New Build Development, Barnet Homes
Equalities Champion supporting the EqlA	Rosie Evangelou
Performance Management rep	N/A
HR rep (for employment related issues)	N/A
Representative (s) from external stakeholders	Deborah Beckford, Senior Community Engagement Officer, Barnet Homes

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 type="checkbox"/>
Budget Saving <input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	Other <input checked="" type="checkbox"/>
If budget saving, please specify value below: The estimated total revenue benefit inclusive of savings to Barnet Council is £247,000 per annum. This is due to temporary accommodation cost avoidance, council tax revenue and cost saving to providing fully wheelchair accessible homes.	If other please specify below: New Build development project on behalf of the London Borough of Barnet.

Please outline in no more than 3 paragraphs⁶:

Barnet Homes has identified two potential residential developments at Whitings Road and Moxon Street, in the High Barnet Ward, EN5, that will deliver up to 56 new homes affordable, of mixed tenure, including homes at London Affordable Rent.

The Whitings Road site is adjacent to Whitings Road Primary School, just inside the High Barnet ward boundary. The proposed scheme includes the construction of 35 new homes, mainly 3 and 4-bed houses including 4no. that are fully wheelchair accessible, around a communal garden. The Moxon Street site sits just off the High Road in High Barnet, a short walk from the Northern line tube. The proposed scheme includes 21 mews houses, set in an L-shape around the existing heritage cottages. The scheme will include 7no. 1-beds and 14no. 2-beds, including 2no. fully wheelchair accessible homes.

These two mixed tenure schemes, will, in part, help the Council to mitigate further pressures on the general fund in meeting increasing temporary accommodation costs and to maximise value of existing assets. The ability to construct new homes will also enable those who require housing within the borough to be housed in accommodation which is fit for purpose.

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

	What does the data tell you⁷? <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 you⁸? <i>Provide a summary of relevant consultation and engagement including surveys and other research with stakeholders, newspaper articles correspondence etc.</i>
Protected group		

<p style="text-align: center;">Age⁹</p>	<p>Site logistics may affect elderly people and those with reduced mobility.</p> <table border="1"> <thead> <tr> <th>Age group</th> <th>Male</th> <th>Female</th> </tr> </thead> <tbody> <tr><td>0-4</td><td>12,800</td><td>12,700</td></tr> <tr><td>5-9</td><td>13,800</td><td>13,500</td></tr> <tr><td>10-14</td><td>12,800</td><td>12,100</td></tr> <tr><td>15-19</td><td>10,900</td><td>10,200</td></tr> <tr><td>20-24</td><td>12,200</td><td>11,300</td></tr> <tr><td>25-29</td><td>15,600</td><td>14,700</td></tr> <tr><td>30-34</td><td>16,600</td><td>16,000</td></tr> <tr><td>35-39</td><td>16,200</td><td>15,900</td></tr> <tr><td>40-44</td><td>14,200</td><td>14,200</td></tr> <tr><td>45-49</td><td>13,500</td><td>13,800</td></tr> <tr><td>50-54</td><td>12,400</td><td>13,100</td></tr> <tr><td>55-59</td><td>10,500</td><td>11,200</td></tr> <tr><td>60-64</td><td>8,700</td><td>9,200</td></tr> <tr><td>65-69</td><td>7,400</td><td>8,300</td></tr> <tr><td>70-74</td><td>6,600</td><td>7,600</td></tr> <tr><td>75-79</td><td>4,300</td><td>5,500</td></tr> <tr><td>80-84</td><td>3,500</td><td>4,400</td></tr> <tr><td>85-89</td><td>2,100</td><td>3,200</td></tr> <tr><td>90+</td><td>1,200</td><td>2,300</td></tr> <tr><td>Total</td><td>195,300</td><td>199,100</td></tr> </tbody> </table>	Age group	Male	Female	0-4	12,800	12,700	5-9	13,800	13,500	10-14	12,800	12,100	15-19	10,900	10,200	20-24	12,200	11,300	25-29	15,600	14,700	30-34	16,600	16,000	35-39	16,200	15,900	40-44	14,200	14,200	45-49	13,500	13,800	50-54	12,400	13,100	55-59	10,500	11,200	60-64	8,700	9,200	65-69	7,400	8,300	70-74	6,600	7,600	75-79	4,300	5,500	80-84	3,500	4,400	85-89	2,100	3,200	90+	1,200	2,300	Total	195,300	199,100	<p>Consultation took place in December 2022 and February 2023. Residents were invited to comment on how the scheme would affect them.</p> <p>Generally, residents were concerned about the disruptive impact on the area during the construction period. We have identified mitigations to put in place as listed in Section 7 below. No individual concerns which cannot be mitigated against were identified.</p>
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<p style="text-align: center;">Disability¹⁰</p>	<p>Site logistics may affect elderly people and those with reduced mobility.</p> <p>There are a small number of residents with a learning disability (7,276 in 2018) and a significant number with a physical disability (23,735 in 2018).</p> <p>Whitings Hill Primary School sits adjacent to the Whitings Road development site, where the school makes provision for pupils and staff with disabilities.</p>	<p>Consultation took place in December 2022 and February 2023. Residents were invited to comment on how the scheme would affect them.</p> <p>Generally, residents were concerned about the disruptive impact on the area during the construction period. We have identified mitigations to put in place as listed in Section 7 below. No individual concerns which cannot be mitigated against were identified.</p>																																																															

		Engagement with Whitings Hill Primary School has taken place to discuss the need for measures to mitigate and minimise the impact of the construction works on the school. Noise and vibration is a particular measure to address by the development team and main contractor.
Gender reassignment¹¹	No foreseen impacts.	No concerns raised by stakeholders
Marriage and Civil Partnership¹²	No foreseen impacts.	No concerns raised by stakeholders at consultation. However, more to be surveyed by the RLO of contractor.
Pregnancy and Maternity¹³	Site logistics may affect pregnant people and those with young children due to an impact on access around the estate.	<p>Consultation took place in December 2022 and February 2023. Residents were invited to comment on how the scheme would affect them.</p> <p>Generally, residents were concerned about the disruptive impact on the area during the construction period. We have identified mitigations to put in place as listed in Section 7 below. No individual concerns which cannot be mitigated against were identified.</p>
Race/ Ethnicity¹⁴	<p>May be affected in terms of communications and language barrier.</p> <p>The population is ethnically diverse and between 2018 and 2030, the population of Barnet is set to become more ethnically diverse. The table below shows that in 2018, the largest ethnic category in Barnet is White British, accounting for 40% of the borough population.</p>	None identified at consultation. However, this is to be surveyed once by the Resident Liaison Officer once the Contractor takes possession of the site.

	<table border="1"> <thead> <tr> <th>Ethnic Group</th> <th>No. of persons (2018)</th> <th>% of population (2018)</th> </tr> </thead> <tbody> <tr><td>White British</td><td>158,900</td><td>40.0%</td></tr> <tr><td>Other White</td><td>72,300</td><td>18.2%</td></tr> <tr><td>Other Asian</td><td>30,500</td><td>7.7%</td></tr> <tr><td>Indian</td><td>30,200</td><td>7.6%</td></tr> <tr><td>Black African</td><td>23,200</td><td>5.9%</td></tr> <tr><td>Other Ethnic Group</td><td>16,100</td><td>4.1%</td></tr> <tr><td>Chinese</td><td>10,500</td><td>2.6%</td></tr> <tr><td>White Irish</td><td>8,900</td><td>2.2%</td></tr> <tr><td>White & Asian</td><td>7,100</td><td>1.8%</td></tr> <tr><td>Arab</td><td>7,000</td><td>1.8%</td></tr> <tr><td>Other Mixed</td><td>6,700</td><td>1.7%</td></tr> <tr><td>Pakistani</td><td>6,400</td><td>1.6%</td></tr> <tr><td>Black Caribbean</td><td>4,900</td><td>1.2%</td></tr> <tr><td>Other Black</td><td>4,500</td><td>1.1%</td></tr> <tr><td>White & Black African</td><td>3,900</td><td>1.0%</td></tr> <tr><td>White & Black Caribbean</td><td>3,500</td><td>0.9%</td></tr> <tr><td>Bangladeshi</td><td>2,500</td><td>0.6%</td></tr> </tbody> </table>	Ethnic Group	No. of persons (2018)	% of population (2018)	White British	158,900	40.0%	Other White	72,300	18.2%	Other Asian	30,500	7.7%	Indian	30,200	7.6%	Black African	23,200	5.9%	Other Ethnic Group	16,100	4.1%	Chinese	10,500	2.6%	White Irish	8,900	2.2%	White & Asian	7,100	1.8%	Arab	7,000	1.8%	Other Mixed	6,700	1.7%	Pakistani	6,400	1.6%	Black Caribbean	4,900	1.2%	Other Black	4,500	1.1%	White & Black African	3,900	1.0%	White & Black Caribbean	3,500	0.9%	Bangladeshi	2,500	0.6%	
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Religion or belief¹⁵	<p>No foreseen impacts.</p> <p>There is a range of beliefs among the population, with the largest groups being Christian (38.6%), Jewish (22.6%) and No Religion (20.5%). The chart below shows the different beliefs in Barnet by percentage in 2017.</p>	<p>No concerns raised by stakeholders at consultation. However, more to be surveyed by the RLO of contractor.</p>																																																						

	<p>A pie chart illustrating the religious distribution of respondents. The largest group is Christian at 38.6%, followed by Muslim at 22.6%, No Religion at 20.5%, Hindu at 4.8%, Any Other Religion at 3.2%, Sikh at 1.2%, and both Jewish and Buddhist at 1.1% each.</p> <table border="1"> <thead> <tr> <th>Religion</th> <th>Percentage</th> </tr> </thead> <tbody> <tr> <td>Christian</td> <td>38.6%</td> </tr> <tr> <td>Jewish</td> <td>1.1%</td> </tr> <tr> <td>No Religion</td> <td>20.5%</td> </tr> <tr> <td>Muslim</td> <td>22.6%</td> </tr> <tr> <td>Hindu</td> <td>4.8%</td> </tr> <tr> <td>Any Other Religion</td> <td>3.2%</td> </tr> <tr> <td>Sikh</td> <td>1.2%</td> </tr> <tr> <td>Buddhist</td> <td>1.1%</td> </tr> </tbody> </table>	Religion	Percentage	Christian	38.6%	Jewish	1.1%	No Religion	20.5%	Muslim	22.6%	Hindu	4.8%	Any Other Religion	3.2%	Sikh	1.2%	Buddhist	1.1%	
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<p>Sex¹⁶</p>	<p>No foreseen impacts.</p> <p>There is a marginally higher female population (50.5%) than male population (49.5%).</p>	<p>No concerns raised by stakeholders at consultation. However, more to be surveyed by the RLO of contractor.</p>																		
<p>Sexual Orientation¹⁷</p>	<p>No foreseen impacts.</p> <p><u>Ward respondent lives in:</u></p> <p>The table below shows the estimated ward populations in Barnet for 2018. The wards are ranked according to population size, with Colindale (27,000) accounting for 6.8% of the total borough population. In contrast, High Barnet with an estimated population of 15,900 represents only 4.0% of the Barnet population, in 2018.</p>	<p>No concerns raised by stakeholders at consultation. However, more to be surveyed by the RLO of contractor.</p>																		

Other relevant groups¹⁸

Ward name	Ward population	% of borough population
Colindale	27000	6.8%
Childs Hill	22200	5.6%
Mill Hill	21200	5.4%
Golders Green	20600	5.2%
Edgware	20400	5.2%
Burnt Oak	20000	5.1%
West Hendon	20000	5.1%
Hendon	20000	5.1%
Woodhouse	18800	4.8%
Hale	18400	4.7%
Coppetts	17900	4.5%
West Finchley	17600	4.5%
East Finchley	17200	4.4%
Finchley Church End	17100	4.3%
East Barnet	16900	4.3%
Oakleigh	16900	4.3%
Brunswick Park	16800	4.3%
Garden Suburb	16700	4.2%
Totteridge	16500	4.2%
Underhill	16400	4.2%
High Barnet	15900	4.0%

Housing tenure:

The high cost of home ownership in Barnet has led to a tenure shift away from owning a property and towards privately rented accommodation. Over a quarter of households in the borough now rent from a private landlord. Between 2001 and 2016, the use of privately rented accommodation in Barnet rose from 17% to 26% of households.

Receipt of benefits:

No data available. Expected to have an adverse disproportionate effect.

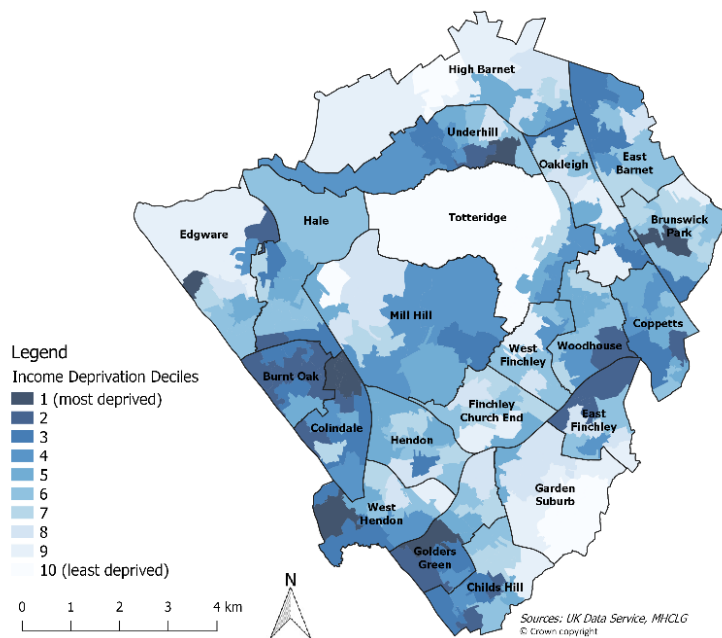
Consultation took place in December 2022 and February 2023. Residents were invited to comment on how the scheme would affect them.

Generally, residents were concerned about the disruptive impact on the area during the construction period. We have identified mitigations to put in place as listed in Section 7 below. No individual concerns which cannot be mitigated against were identified..

Employment status:

For the year to June 2018, the employment rate for working age people in Barnet (aged 16-64 years) was 71.4%, which was the 10th lowest of the London boroughs, but similar to both London (74.2%) and England (75.2%).

The figure below shows the wards localized in the west and south of the borough with a greater overall deprivation have this mirrored by increased levels of income deprivation (shown on the map as darker patches). However, wards such as Brunswick Park, with less deprivation overall, also have small areas within them where income deprivation is pronounced.



4. Assessing impact					
What does the evidence tell you about the impact your proposal may have on groups with protected characteristics ¹⁹ ?					
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>Site logistics may affect elderly people and those with reduced mobility.</p> <p>This will be addressed in the contractor’s risk assessment and health and safety plans. These are reviewed by health and safety consultants.</p> <p>The contractor will provide safe temporary paths and access ways to ensure access, where required.</p> <p>The contractor will be required to sign up to the Considerate Constructors Scheme which monitors and reports on their site practices.</p> <p>Additionally, the contractor will limit loud noise to restricted times, in compliance with planning conditions</p> <p>A Resident Liaison Officer (RLOs) will be provided by the contractor to keep open communication with local residents and stakeholders.</p>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
Disability	<p>Site logistics may affect elderly people and those with reduced mobility.</p> <p>The adjacent Whittings Hill Primary School provides for pupils and staff with disabilities.</p>	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>

	<p>This will be addressed in the contractor's risk assessment and health and safety plans. These are reviewed by health and safety consultants.</p> <p>The contractor will provide safe temporary paths and access ways to ensure access to Whittings Hill Primary School is maintained, where required.</p> <p>The contractor will be required to sign up to the Considerate Constructors Scheme which monitors and reports on their site practices.</p> <p>Additionally, the contractor will limit loud noise to restricted times, in compliance with planning conditions</p> <p>A Resident Liaison Officer (RLOs) will be provided by the contractor to keep open communication with local residents and stakeholders.</p>				
Gender reassignment	No foreseen impacts.	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>
Marriage and Civil Partnership	No foreseen impacts.	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>
Pregnancy and Maternity	<p>Site logistics may affect mobility around highways and paths.</p> <p>This will be addressed in the contractor's risk assessment and health and safety plans. These are reviewed by health and safety consultants.</p> <p>The contractor will provide safe temporary paths and access ways to ensure access on the Whittings Hill Primary School where required.</p> <p>The contractor will be required to sign up to the Considerate Constructors Scheme which monitors and reports on their site practices.</p> <p>Additionally, the contractor will limit loud noise to restricted times, in compliance with planning conditions</p>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>

	A Resident Liaison Officer (RLOs) will be provided by the contractor to keep open communication with local residents and stakeholders.				
Race/ Ethnicity	May be affected in terms of communications and language barrier. Survey residents for language preferences at start of project to ensure translations are provided where necessary.	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
Religion or belief	No foreseen impacts.	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>
Sex	No foreseen impacts.	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>
Sexual Orientation	No foreseen impacts.	<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	

Key groups	Carers				
	People with mental health issues				
	Site logistics may affect access into homes.				
	Site logistics may be noisy and cause distress for some vulnerable residents.				
	This will be addressed in the contractor’s risk assessment and health and safety plans. These are reviewed by health and safety consultants.				
	The contractor will provide safe temporary paths and access ways to ensure access to and from Whitings Hill Primary School, where required.	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
	The contractor will be required to sign up to the Considerate Constructors Scheme which monitors and reports on their site practices.				
Additionally, the contractor will limit loud noise to restricted times, in compliance with planning conditions					
A Resident Liaison Officer (RLOs) will be provided by the contractor to keep open communication with local residents and stakeholders.					

6. Cumulative impact²⁰

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 ²¹ <i>If you are unable to identify measures to mitigate impact, please state so and provide a brief explanation.</i>	Monitoring ²² <i>How will you assess whether these measures are successfully mitigating the impact?</i>	Deadline date	Lead Officer
Age, disability, race	<p>Site logistics may affect access into homes.</p> <p>Site logistics may be noisy and cause distress for some vulnerable residents .</p>	<p>This will be addressed in the contractor’s risk assessment and health and safety plans. These are reviewed by health and safety consultants.</p> <p>The contractor will provide safe temporary paths and access ways to ensure ingress and egress for pedestrians where required.</p> <p>The contractor will be required to sign up to the Considerate Constructors Scheme which monitors and reports on their site practices.</p> <p>Additionally, the contractor will limit loud noise to restricted times, in compliance with planning conditions</p> <p>A Resident Liaison Officer (RLOs) will be provided by the contractor to keep</p>	<p>Monthly progress meetings with fixed agenda items including Health and Safety and resident’s matters.</p>	<p>Ongoing during construction</p>	<p>Project Manager</p>

		open communication with local residents and stakeholders.			
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8. Outcome of the Equalities Impact Assessment (EqIA)²³

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

All items identified with short-term impacts, can be mitigated against by the measures put place.

All long-term impacts and benefits of the new build development are positive for all identified groups with protected characteristics.

Sign-off

9. Sign off and approval by Head of Service / Strategic lead ²⁴	
Name Meera Bedi	Job title Head of New Build – The Barnet Group
<input type="checkbox"/> Tick this box to indicate that you have approved this EqIA	Date of approval:
<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 **Focus of EqIA:** A member of the public should have a good understanding of the proposals being assessed by the EqIA after reading this section. Please use plain English and write any acronyms in full first time - eg: 'Equality Impact Assessment (EqIA)'

This section should explain what you are assessing:

- What are the main aims or purpose of the proposed change?
- Who implements, carries out or delivers the service or function in the proposal? Please state where this is more than one person or group, and where other organisations deliver it under procurement or partnership arrangements.
- How does it fit with other services?
- Who is affected by the service, or by how it is delivered? Who are the external and internal service-users, groups, or communities?
- What outcomes do you want to achieve, why and for whom? E.g.: what do you want to provide, what changes or improvements, and what should the benefits be?
- What do existing or previous inspections of the service tell you?
- What is the reason for the proposed change (financial, service, legal etc)? The Act requires us to make these clear.

⁷ **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?

⁸ 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 advise

⁹ **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.

¹⁰ **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.

¹¹ **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.

¹² **Marriage and Civil Partnership:** consider married people and civil partners.

¹³ **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.

¹⁴ **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.

¹⁵ **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.

¹⁶ **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.

¹⁷ **Sexual Orientation:** The Act protects bisexual, heterosexual, gay and lesbian people.

¹⁸ **Other relevant groups:** You should consider the impact on our service users in other related areas.

¹⁹ **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](#)?

²⁰ **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.

²¹ **Mitigating actions**

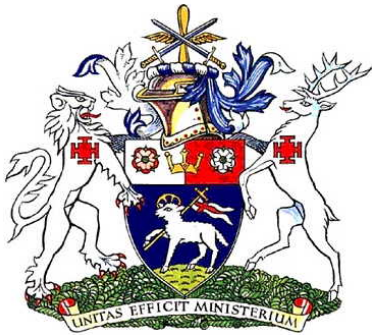
- Consider mitigating actions that specifically address the impacts you've identified and show how they will remove, reduce or avoid any negative impacts
- Explain clearly what any mitigating measures are, and the extent to which you think they will reduce or remove the adverse effect
- Will you need 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.

²² **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.

²³ **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.

²⁴ **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.



Housing and Growth Committee

23 March 2023

Title	Tenancy Strategy
Report of	Chair of the Housing and Growth Committee
Wards	All
Status	Public
Urgent	No
Key	Yes
Enclosures	Appendix 1 – Draft Tenancy Strategy
Officer Contact Details	Cath Shaw, Deputy Chief Executive Officer, cath.shaw@barnet.gov.uk Laura Giles, Head of Strategy and Compliance, Barnet Homes, laura.giles@barnethomes.org

Summary

The council has developed a new draft Tenancy Strategy to take account of changes to the administration's priorities. If approved by the Housing and Growth Committee, the council will undertake a public consultation on the aims of the draft strategy with key stakeholders including registered providers, tenants, and other third parties including local advocacy groups. Cabinet will then be asked to review the responses to the consultation and approve a final version of the Tenancy Strategy.

Officers Recommendations

1. Housing and Growth Committee considers and, subject to any changes, approves the proposed draft Tenancy Strategy in Appendix 1 for consultation.
2. Housing and Growth Committee notes that the results of the consultation be reported to Cabinet in the new municipal year together with officer recommendations and, if appropriate, a revised strategy.

1. WHY THIS REPORT IS NEEDED

Background

- 1.1 The council's current Local Tenancy Strategy dates from 2015. 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:
 - 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 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.
- 1.3 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.
- 1.4 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.
- 1.5 Support for fixed-term tenancies has changed since the council's existing Local Tenancy Strategy was published. In 2016, the Housing and Planning Act 2016 ("**the 2016 Act**") set out to make fixed term tenancies mandatory, however this proposal was not enacted, and the Government's reversal of this policy was confirmed in the green paper 'A New Deal for Social Housing' in 2018. Although this was not repealed in legislation, the green paper emphasised the need for social housing to provide a stable base, stating that since the 2016 Act there had been "a growing recognition of the importance of housing security for those who rent".

Revision of the draft Tenancy Strategy

- 1.6 It is proposed that the Tenancy Strategy is revised to offer secure periodic tenancies to council tenants. 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.
- 1.7 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.

Transition to secure periodic tenancies

- 1.8 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:
- 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.
- 1.9 After seeking legal advice, in order to prevent further tenancy rights being conferred and to minimise the duration of the current flexible tenancies, variation of an existing flexible tenancy is to be undertaken. This involves the cooperation of the tenant(s) who must sign the variation alongside the council. Where the tenant does not sign, their current tenancy will prevail. Following approval of the Tenancy Strategy, a variation exercise will commence. Experience shows that not all flexible tenants will sign the variation and we may be left with a percentage that remain on the current tenancy until it naturally ends and 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 and will likely commence with the introductory to flexible tenancies and those flexible tenancies with the longest remaining duration periods.
- 1.10 The position at 31 March 2023 will be:
- 147 tenancies will naturally convert to secure either because they are introductory tenancies which will convert to secure periodic tenancies, or they are flexible tenancies within the last nine months of their tenancy and they will therefore be granted a secure periodic tenancy.
 - 841 tenancies will need to be varied to prevent them converting to a flexible tenancy.
 - 467 flexible tenancies will need to be varied to a secure periodic tenancy.

2. REASONS FOR RECOMMENDATIONS

- 2.1 The Government's White Paper, The Charter for Social Housing Residents, affirms social rented homes as places where residents can put down roots and build communities. In recognition of this the current administration has pledged that Barnet Council will no longer grant flexible tenancies, and will instead grant secure periodic tenancies to all council tenants.
- 2.2 The original aims of flexible tenancies were to mitigate the risks of anti-social behaviour and to allow tenants to demonstrate their ability to manage their tenancies, giving landlords the ability to take remedial action in the event of a breach, and or to prevent renewal of a

flexible tenancy where it is coming to an end. The reality is that the renewal process for flexible tenancies places a huge pressure on landlords to process reviews and serve the appropriate notices before the tenancy ends.

- 2.3 Where renewal is not being permitted, the tenant is advised to seek alternative accommodation when the tenancy comes to an end, and for the most part this will result in a homeless application. Tenants on flexible tenancies often struggle to stabilise and set down roots even when the tenancy is extended. The current flexible tenancy agreements also do not have the relevant forfeiture clauses, which has hampered the action the council may take to address cases with high levels of rent arrears and/or anti-social behaviour.
- 2.4 We are still in the first “renewal” cycle for the flexible tenancies that started to be issued in 2012; it is therefore difficult to say how effective flexible tenancies have been in helping to make the most effective use of the housing stock, although there is little evidence to suggest that it has had a significant impact. As of 24 February 2023, 2,385 flexible tenancies have been issued, of which 1,916 were lettings and 469 were flexible tenancy renewals. Based on data from 1 October 2017 to 24 February 2023, the majority of flexible tenancies have been renewed, with only 63 non-renewal decisions being made, of which 38 successfully appealed. A total of 4% of flexible tenancy reviews therefore resulted in non-renewal decisions. 15% of the renewals qualified for and were granted a secure tenancy. Additionally, 85 flexible tenancies have become secure tenancies due to the renewal date being missed, with the majority due to the review and approval being completed too late, in addition to 16 lapsed notices, 2 missed sign-ups, and 2 deliberate lapses on regeneration schemes.
- 2.5 The flexible tenancy renewal process is challenging to manage for both tenants and Barnet Homes:
- tenants often become very anxious about whether they will be offered a renewal, and are often reluctant to engage in the process as a result;
 - minor tenancy breaches such as low-level arrears are not a reason to renew, and so create former tenant arrears that can no longer be pursued under the tenancy agreement once renewal occurs.
- 2.6 Variation of flexible tenancies will allow the current tenancy to move to a secure periodic tenancy without inflating former tenant arrears, as the tenancy remains current. If the council were to grant new secure periodic tenancies to all those on flexible tenancies, their current tenancy would end and any arrears would become a former tenant debt, make it more problematic for the council to recover.
- 2.7 In seeking permission to stop granting any new flexible tenancies at the earliest opportunity, we will reduce the numbers of flexible tenancies we will need to vary, thereby reducing some of the administration needed in the variation exercise following approval of the tenancy strategy later in the year.

3. ALTERNATIVE OPTIONS CONSIDERED AND NOT RECOMMENDED

- 3.1 The council could choose to continue to grant flexible tenancies in the circumstances set out in the current Local Tenancy Strategy. This approach is not recommended, as it will

not achieve the benefits set out in section 2 of this paper, and it will not deliver the election manifesto commitment made by the current administration.

3.2 In formulating the tenancy strategy, officers have considered how the council could make best use of stock regarding very large units and heavily adapted properties. Often where households are in occupation for a number of years, their need for these types of properties may diminish. These types of units are in short supply with very few lettings in a 12-month period. The possibility of having long term flexible tenancies of 10 years or over for properties with 3 or 4 bedrooms and/or for properties that require or have significant adaptations was assessed, and in order to inform a recommendation quantitative analysis was undertaken.

3.3 As at 31 December 2022:

- There were 86 applicants on the waiting list waiting to move to smaller properties; only 7 of those were releasing 4 bedroom properties or larger and only 2 of them were releasing an adapted property. The rest were releasing smaller properties (2 bedroom properties) which are not usually in short supply.
- 38 applicants needed 4-bedroom units or larger and a further 7 were being assessed for a large unit.
- 63 applicants needed an adapted unit.
- The council offers downsizing or trade-down incentives for tenants releasing larger or adapted units. Since 2020/21 13 large and 6 adapted units have been released in this way.
- The council also had an active programme of visiting 3- and 4-bedroom units to assess their suitability for adaptations.
- Demand for large and adapted units far exceeds the supply.

3.4 Due to the significant shortage of larger properties and adapted properties, it is believed that the administration involved in managing longer flexible tenancies would pose a problem due to very low numbers of properties and long periods between renewals leading to the workforce becoming de-skilled in managing this tenancy type. Effective management of tenancy data and the 'organisational memory' regarding these households is likely to be compromised over longer review periods, which creates a risk that the flexible tenancies will lapse and become secure tenancies. Based on the data available, it is not believed that even at 10-year intervals these types of housing will be likely to be no longer needed by the occupying household at the point of tenancy review. In consideration of this and in light of the trade-down incentives that are available and the success of these schemes, as well as the potential for the council to review its incentives and undertake targeted campaigns to promote and encourage those who are under-occupying to move to a smaller property, it is not recommended that longer (e.g., 10-year) fixed-term tenancies are granted for larger or heavily adapted properties.

4. POST DECISION IMPLEMENTATION

4.1 The council will deliver a communications strategy to engage with and seek feedback on the draft strategy from residents, private registered providers, and other stakeholders. An

eight-week consultation period will take place during April and May 2023, following which the results will be analysed.

- 4.2 The Tenancy Strategy will be revised, if appropriate, following the outcomes of the consultation and will be presented to the Cabinet for approval in the new municipal year.
- 4.3 If the strategy is approved, Barnet Homes will 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 surrender their flexible tenancy and be granted a secure periodic tenancy.

5. IMPLICATIONS OF DECISION

5.1 Corporate Priorities and Performance

- 5.1.1 The council's new draft Corporate Plan 2023-26 is centred around being a council that cares for people, our places, and the planet. 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.
- 5.1.2 The Housing Strategy 2019 to 2024 sets out how the council and its partners will improve the quality of housing available and deliver the additional housing that is required in the borough due to the growing population. The strategy details delivering more housing that people can afford, including the use of Affordable Rents to provide more homes for rent on council land. A new housing strategy is currently in development and will focus on similar core aims.
- 5.1.3 The Health and Wellbeing Strategy 2021 to 2025 recognises that the condition of and access to local housing has an important role in the quality of life and health of both individuals and communities.
- 5.1.4 The Growth Strategy 2020 to 2030 includes priorities to increase the supply of housing, deliver more homes that people can afford, deliver homes on public sector land, and support our growing older population.
- 5.1.5 Barnet's Joint Strategic Needs Assessment highlights the fact that there is a long-term shift in housing tenure towards renting and away from owner occupancy (either outright or with a mortgage), reflecting a sustained reduction in housing affordability and an imbalance between housing demand and supply.

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

- 5.2.1 There is limited supply of social housing in Barnet. In 2021/22 there were over 2,100 homeless applications and only 625 social housing units available to let. 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.

- 5.2.2 Consultation on the draft Tenancy Strategy will be delivered through existing resources within the council and Barnet Homes, and through continued engagement of the consultants Campbell Tickell, which is funded through existing budgets.
- 5.2.3 Following approval, the strategy will be delivered within the existing budgetary framework within the Housing Revenue Account. At present it is assumed that the additional resource required to undertake the variations for existing flexible tenancies will be met through existing resource in Barnet Homes, however this will be reviewed alongside the potential timescales and will be brought back to Cabinet with the final draft strategy for approval.
- 5.2.4 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. The purpose of ending fixed term tenancies is to provide tenants with a guaranteed security; it will also enable Barnet Homes to focus officer time on tenancy management issues, such as preventing tenancy fraud and undertaking tenancy audits.

5.3 Legal and Constitutional References

5.3.1 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.

5.3.2 A housing authority must have regard to its tenancy strategy in 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).

5.3.3 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).

5.3.4 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.

5.3.5 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.

5.3.6 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.

5.3.7 The council's Constitution (Article 7 – Committees, Forums, Working Groups, and Partnerships) sets out the responsibilities of the Housing and Growth Committee which include:

- (1) Responsibility for:
 - housing (including housing strategy, homelessness, social housing and housing grants, private sector housing and leasing, housing licencing and enforcement, HRA Revenue Account and Capital Programme).

5.4 Insight

5.4.1 No specific insight has been used in this report.

5.5 Social Value

5.5.1 There are no specific social value aspects to this report.

5.6 Risk Management

- 5.6.1 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.
- 5.6.2 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.
- 5.6.3 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 Tenancy Strategy policy hold secure tenancies and therefore are not subject to the review process.
- 5.6.4 There is a 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. 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.

5.7 Equalities and Diversity

- 5.6.1 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.
- 5.7.2 The Equality Act 2010, Section 149 sets out the Public Sector Equality Duty which requires Public Bodies to 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 characteristic and persons who do not share it.
- 5.7.3 The relevant protected characteristics are age, disability, gender reassignment, pregnancy and maternity, race, religion or belief, sex, sexual orientation, and marriage and civil partnership.
- 5.7.4 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:

- a) Remove or minimise disadvantages suffered by persons who share a relevant protected characteristic that are connected to that characteristic.
- b) 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.
- c) 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.

5.7.5 An Equality Impact Assessment will be undertaken after consultation to assess the potential impacts of the Tenancy Strategy and prior to reporting back to the Cabinet.

5.8 Corporate Parenting

5.8.1 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.

5.8.2 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.

5.9 Consultation and Engagement

5.9.1 Subject to approval by the Housing and Growth Committee, a public consultation will take place during April to May 2023. This will include an online survey and inviting comments from residents, the public, private registered providers, partner organisations, and other stakeholders.

6. Environmental Impact

6.1 There are no direct environmental implications from noting the recommendations. Implementing the recommendations in the report will lead to a neutral impact on the council's carbon and ecology impact.

7. BACKGROUND PAPERS

5.10 Relevant previous decisions are listed in the table below:

Item	Decision	Link
Item 10, Housing and Growth Committee, 13 June 2022	Housing Strategy, Homelessness and Rough Sleeping Strategy, and Housing Allocations Scheme: approval to instruct officers to explore the emerging housing allocations priorities of the new administration, and where considered appropriate, review and propose amendments to the Housing Allocations Scheme and Tenancy Strategy.	https://barnet.moderngov.co.uk/documents/s72887/20220613HAG-Housing%20Strategy%20Homelessness%20and%20Rough%20Sleeping%20Strategy%20Housing%20Allocations%20Scheme.pdf
Item 11, Housing Committee, 29 June 2015	Review of Local Tenancy Strategy: approval of changes to the Local Tenancy Strategy	https://barnet.moderngov.co.uk/documents/s24082/Review%20of%20Local%20Tenancy%20Strategy.pdf
Item 6, Cabinet, 4 April 2012	Local Tenancy Strategy: approval of the new Local Tenancy Strategy	https://barnet.moderngov.co.uk/Data/Cabinet/201204041900/Agenda/Document%203.pdf

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Tenancy Strategy | 2023 – 2028



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

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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 is expected to focus 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 is expected to focus 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 Allocations 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 expected to be 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.

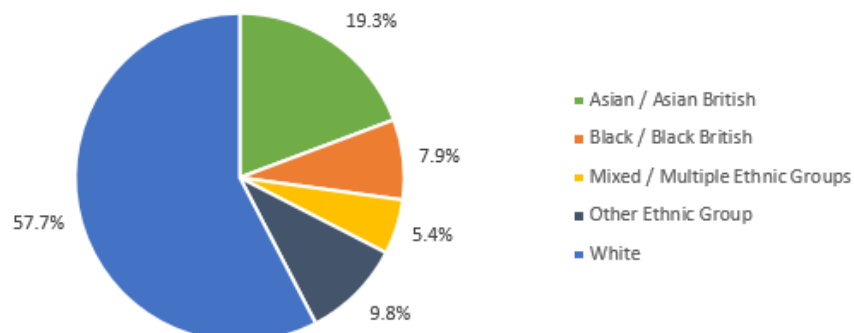
Population Breakdown	Barnet	London	England
Total Population 2021	389,340	8,799,800	56,489,800
Total Population 2022	406,061	9,145,214	57,282,105
Total Population 2023	408,821	9,188,317	57,557,521
Total Population 2024	411,198	9,224,542	57,816,890
Total Population 2025	413,257	9,255,002	58,060,235

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	TBC	TBC	TBC
Total	1,924	1,800	48.3%

- 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 be 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.

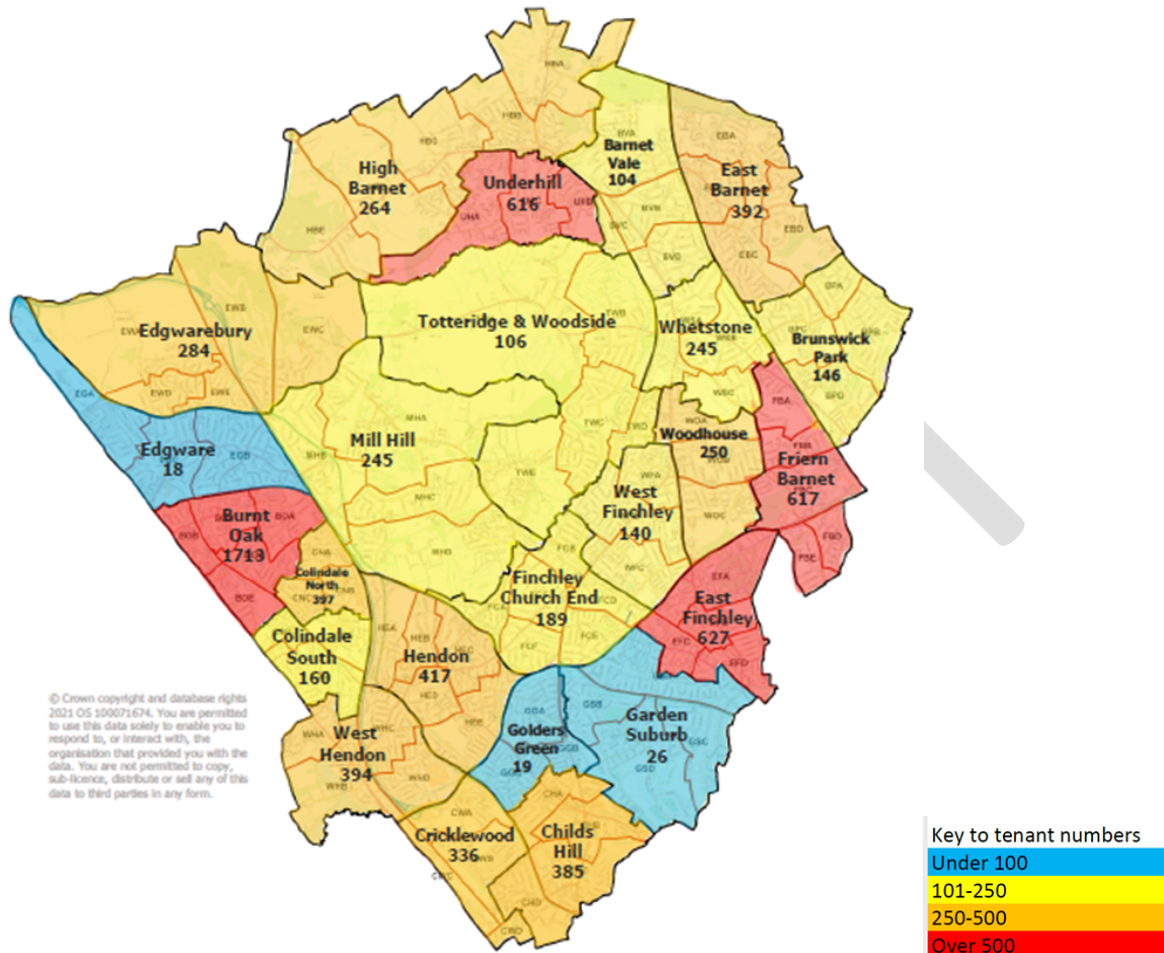
- 8.2 Tenants who claim benefits in under-occupied units are subject to the Spare Room Subsidy (also known as the bedroom tax), which can have a negative impact, making affordability an issue and having a detrimental effect on health and wellbeing. Consequently, moving to a smaller property may be necessary 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 *We are sourcing the data for registered provider stock in the borough which we hope to be able to confirm either verbally at the March 2023 committee or by the final version submitted for approval. The information is not readily available, and an exercise in collation is currently in progress.*
- 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 are sourcing the data on current stock density for registered providers and stock in development. These will be estimates as number may vary once the final build is known. We hope to be able to confirm the numbers by property type, bed size, and tenure mix.*

- 10.5 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.
- 10.6 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.
- 10.7 There is growing evidence that by joining up planning for housing with planning for health and wellbeing, significant benefits both to individuals and communities can be seen, helping 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. *We are working to gather the information on registered provider stock and private rented accommodation.*

Average Rents	Bedsit	1 bed	2 bed	3 bed	4 bed	5 bed	6 bed
Council	£93	£115	£146	£162	£151	£169	£179
Register Provider							
Private Rented							

- 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 *We are consulting with the relevant sections of the council on the models they adopt when testing affordability at the point a scheme is appraisal.*
- 11.7 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. *We are pulling together information on average rents in shared ownerships units in registered provider stock and average equity owned. The council does not have shared ownership units.*

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

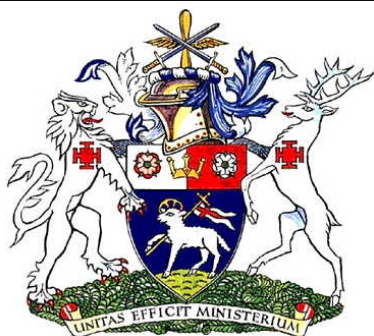
characteristics are age, disability, gender reassignment, marriage and civil partnership, pregnancy and maternity, race, religion or belief, sex and sexual orientation. This strategy complies with the council's Equality, Diversity and Inclusion Policy which sets out our commitments to ensuring in equality 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.

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Housing and Growth Committee

23 March 2023



Title	Housing Strategy
Report of	Chair of the Housing and Growth Committee
Wards	All
Status	Public
Urgent	No
Key	Yes
Enclosures	Appendix 1 – Draft Housing Strategy Appendix 2 – Housing Strategy and Homelessness and Rough Sleeping Strategy Evidence Base
Officer Contact Details	Cath Shaw, Deputy Chief Executive Officer, cath.shaw@barnet.gov.uk Laura Giles, Head of Strategy and Compliance, Barnet Homes, laura.giles@barnethomes.org

Summary

The council has developed a new draft Housing Strategy to take account of changes in the housing sector and wider demographic and economic changes, including rising housing costs, a growing private rented sector, and legislative changes.

If approved by the Housing and Growth Committee, the council will undertake a public consultation on the aims of the draft strategy with key stakeholders including residents and interested third parties including local advocacy groups. Cabinet will then be asked to review the responses to the consultation and approve a final version of the Housing Strategy.

Officers Recommendations

1. Housing and Growth Committee considers and, subject to any changes, approves the proposed draft Housing Strategy at Appendix 1 for consultation.

2. Housing and Growth Committee notes that the results of the consultation be reported to Cabinet in the new municipal year together with officer recommendations and, if appropriate, a revised strategy.

3. Housing and Growth Committee notes the evidence base at Appendix 2.

1. WHY THIS REPORT IS NEEDED

Background

1.1 The council's Housing Strategy dates from 2015, and a number of changes have occurred since then which mean that the council's approach to housing needs to be reviewed and updated. These changes include:

- a change in the council's administration in May 2022; the administration's manifesto included a number of housing-related priorities, including those concerning the supply of affordable housing for rent and for ownership, sustainability, and private tenants' rights;
- the release of the Social Housing White Paper in November 2020, which sets out central government's housing-related priorities;
- the release of other White Papers that have an impact on housing-related priorities, including the Private Rented Sector White Paper (June 2022), Social Care White Paper (December 2021), and Levelling Up White Paper (February 2022);
- new legislation including the Fire Safety Act 2021, the Building Safety Act 2022, the Domestic Abuse Act 2021, the Renters Reform Bill, the Levelling Up and Regeneration Bill, and the Social Housing Regulation Bill;
- updates to key Barnet strategies, some of which are currently being reviewed following the change in administration, or new strategies in development including the Barnet Plan 2021-25, Growth Strategy 2020-30, the Joint Health and Wellbeing Strategy 2021-25, Cost of Living Strategy, Sustainability Strategy, and the Local Plan; and
- the impact of the COVID-19 pandemic and the ongoing rise in cost of living.

1.2 Officers have updated the evidence base (Appendix 2) that supports the Housing Strategy. A new Strategic Housing Market Assessment (SHMA) has not been commissioned due to the timing of the release of the latest Census results; however, a review has been undertaken of the key population information changes. The most significant challenges facing the borough regarding the housing crisis include:

- Short supply of social housing in Barnet, which has the sixth smallest provision in London;
- Increasing homelessness demand post-COVID 19 pandemic;
- Ongoing contraction of the private rented sector due to challenges of affordability as well as increasing demands on private landlords impacting upon viability;
- Lack of affordable housing creating tenancy sustainment challenges;
- Benefit and welfare reforms impact on affordability;
- Increasingly diverse and complex needs within the borough further exacerbating the lack of suitable housing supply;
- Disproportionate impact of homelessness on some groups, including those from a Black / Black British background and those with a disability including mental ill health;

- Significant costs regarding council housing stock of retrofitting to meet sustainability goals, building and fire safety requirements and costs, and property condition including damp and mould challenges;
- Growing private rented sector, and increasing demands on landlords that could impact upon tenancy sustainability and/or ability to meet stretching standards.

1.3 In October 2022, the Housing and Growth Committee considered the above matters and instructed council officers to prepare a new draft Housing Strategy based on 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.**

1.4 Officers have now produced a draft Housing Strategy for the consideration of the Housing and Growth Committee. It is attached at Appendix 1.

2 REASONS FOR RECOMMENDATIONS

2.1 The change in local administration, in addition to the changes in the operating and legislative environment set out in Section 1 of this report and the updated evidence base at Appendix 2, mean that the priorities in the Housing Strategy need to be reviewed and updated. The draft Housing Strategy has been drafted to support the delivery of the recently approved new Corporate Plan for Barnet, and forms a part of the wider transformation programme being delivered by the council.

3 ALTERNATIVE OPTIONS CONSIDERED AND NOT RECOMMENDED

3.1 The Housing and Growth Committee has already instructed officers to draft a new Housing Strategy at the meeting in October 2022, so alternative options have not been considered further. Not preparing a new Housing Strategy was not recommended as the current strategy would not reflect the changes that have occurred since 2019 or the emerging priorities of the current administration.

4 POST DECISION IMPLEMENTATION

4.1 The council will deliver a communications strategy to engage with and seek feedback on the draft strategy from residents and other stakeholders. An eight-week consultation period will take place during April and May 2023, following which the results will be analysed. Steps will be taken to maximise engagement by providing opportunities to engage online in response to a survey on the Engage Barnet platform, in addition to targeted engagement with representative groups to ensure the views of those who may be most vulnerable and least likely to otherwise participate in the consultation are heard. Options for face-to-face engagement are also currently being explored, with a preference for facilitated sessions to be added onto already planned events hosted by the council; opportunities for this are being reviewed.

4.2 The evidence base will be further updated to include 2022/23 year-end data, where relevant. The Housing Strategy will be revised, if appropriate, following the outcomes of

the consultation and will be presented to the Cabinet for consideration and approval in the new municipal year.

5 IMPLICATIONS OF DECISION

5.1 Corporate Priorities and Performance

5.1.1 The council's new draft Corporate Plan 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.

5.1.2 The draft Homelessness and Rough Sleeping Strategy 2023-28 sets out how the council and its partners will prevent homelessness, ensure a sufficient supply of accommodation, and provide support for people who are or have been homeless.

5.1.3 The Health and Wellbeing Strategy 2021 to 2025 recognises that the condition of and access to local housing has an important role in the quality of life and health of both individuals and communities.

5.1.4 The Growth Strategy 2020 to 2030 includes priorities to increase the supply of housing, deliver more homes that people can afford, deliver homes on public sector land, and support our growing older population.

5.1.5 Barnet's Joint Strategic Needs Assessment highlights the fact that there is a long-term shift in housing tenure towards renting and away from owner occupancy (either outright or with a mortgage), reflecting a sustained reduction in housing affordability and an imbalance between housing demand and supply.

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

5.2.1 There is limited supply of social housing in Barnet. In 2021/22 there were over 2,100 homeless applications and only 625 social housing units available to let. 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.

5.2.2 Consultation on the draft Housing Strategy will be delivered through existing resources within the council and Barnet Homes. Additional support may be procured to support and facilitate any face-to-face engagement, which will be funded through existing budgets.

5.2.3 The costs of producing the final draft Housing Strategy will otherwise be met within existing resources through The Barnet Group's strategy function.

5.2.4 Following approval, the strategy will be delivered within the existing budgetary framework within the Housing Revenue Account, and 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, these will be appraised and business cases will be managed to secure their delivery.

5.3 Legal and Constitutional References

5.3.1 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.

5.3.2 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.

5.3.3 The council's Constitution (Article 7 – Committees, Forums, Working Groups, and Partnerships) sets out the responsibilities of the Housing and Growth Committee which include:

- housing (including housing strategy, homelessness, social housing and housing grants, private sector housing and leasing, housing licencing and enforcement, HRA Revenue Account and Capital Programme).

5.4.1 Insight

5.4.1 The Housing Strategy has been informed by the evidence base which includes insight gained through the Healthy Workplan's Homelessness Prevention and Insight Project. The evidence base is attached to this report at Appendix 2, and will be updated as appropriate following year-end 2022/23.

5.5 Social Value

1.1.1 There are no specific social value aspects to this report; however, outcomes that are ultimately delivered through the new Housing Strategy will take into account the delivery of social value through any procurement that is undertaken. It should be noted that the strategy itself will additionally secure wider social, economic, and environmental benefits through delivery of its objectives.

5.6 Risk Management

5.6.1 There is a risk if the Housing Strategy is not updated that the current strategy does not reflect the significant contextual changes summarised at section 1.1 of this report, and that the housing requirements of the borough are not met.

5.7 Equalities and Diversity

5.6.1 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.

5.7.2 The Equality Act 2010, Section 149 sets out the Public Sector Equality Duty which requires Public Bodies to 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 characteristic and persons who do not share it.

5.7.3 The relevant protected characteristics are age, disability, gender reassignment, pregnancy and maternity, race, religion or belief, sex, sexual orientation, and marriage and civil partnership.

5.7.4 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:

- a) Remove or minimise disadvantages suffered by persons who share a relevant protected characteristic that are connected to that characteristic.
- b) 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.
- c) 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.

5.7.5 An Equality Impact Assessment will be undertaken after consultation to assess the potential impacts of the Housing Strategy and prior to reporting back to the Cabinet. Equality impact will also be monitored post-implementation, as required.

5.8 Corporate Parenting

5.8.1 Council housing remains the most affordable housing option for care leavers, and therefore the Housing Strategy is expected to have a direct and positive impact on looked after children and care leavers, and to help ensure they have safe and appropriate accommodation to meet their needs, and access to suitable advice and information. This will include through the proposed themes of delivering the right homes in the right places, and supporting living well by promoting healthy homes and wellbeing.

5.8.2 The strategy will play a key part in helping the council to ensure it, as a corporate parent to all children in care and care leavers, has 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.

5.9 Consultation and Engagement

5.9.1 Small-scale early engagement has taken place on the Housing Strategy in January and February 2023 to seek the opinions of residents. This included delivering a briefing to the Voluntary and Community Environmental Network and seeking their feedback on three key questions, and engagement on the same questions with the Barnet Homes and Opendoor

Homes resident network.

5.9.2 Although the number of participants was relatively small (approximately 40 in total engaged), valuable feedback was provided that has both given some level of reassurance that the emerging themes agreed by the Housing and Growth Committee focused on the right issues for the residents of Barnet, and has ensured the detailed focus within the themes includes matters that are important to residents. The questions asked were:

1. What is important to you about where you live?
2. What do you believe is the biggest issue regarding housing in Barnet?
3. What would you most like or expect to see as a priority in Barnet's Housing Strategy?

5.9.3 For both groups, issues that were felt to be most important included green spaces, safety, and a friendly community. The biggest issue was overwhelmingly felt to be a lack of affordable housing in the borough. The most common suggestions of what residents would like to see in the strategy included building affordable housing, upgrading council stock to ensure it is warm and sustainable / retrofitting, supporting vulnerable residents, and helping homeless people.

5.9.4 Subject to approval by the Housing and Growth Committee, a wider public consultation will take place during April and May 2023. This will include an online survey and inviting comments from partner organisations and other stakeholders, as well as face-to-face engagement wherever it is possible to deliver this.

6. Environmental Impact

6.1 There are no direct environmental implications from noting the recommendations. Implementing the recommendations in the report will lead to a neutral impact on the council's carbon and ecology impact. The draft strategy includes aims that support the delivery of the council's Sustainability Strategy and BarNET Zero campaign.

7. BACKGROUND PAPERS

5.10 Relevant previous decisions are listed in the table below:

Item	Decision	Link
Item 12, Housing and Growth Committee, 25 October 2022	Endorsement of the emerging themes for the Housing Strategy, and instruction to prepare an updated draft strategy for consideration by the Committee	https://barnet.moderngov.co.uk/documents/s74637/Housing%20Strategy%20and%20Homelessness%20and%20Rough%20Sleeping%20Strategy%20-%20Housing%20251022.pdf
Item 10, Housing and Growth Committee, 13 June 2022	Noted proposed timetable for the review of the Housing Strategy and Homelessness and Rough Sleeping Strategy	https://barnet.moderngov.co.uk/ieListDocuments.aspx?CategoryId=696&MId=11083&Ver=4

Item 8, Housing Committee, 1 April 2019	Approved Housing Strategy 2019-2024	https://barnet.moderngov.co.uk/ieListDocuments.aspx?Clid=699&MId=9740&Ver=4
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Housing Strategy | 2023 - 2028



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

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Foreword

(TBC)

Councillor Ross Houston
Chair of the Housing and Growth Committee

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.

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 Barnet's Corporate Plan 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 our Corporate Plan ambitions 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

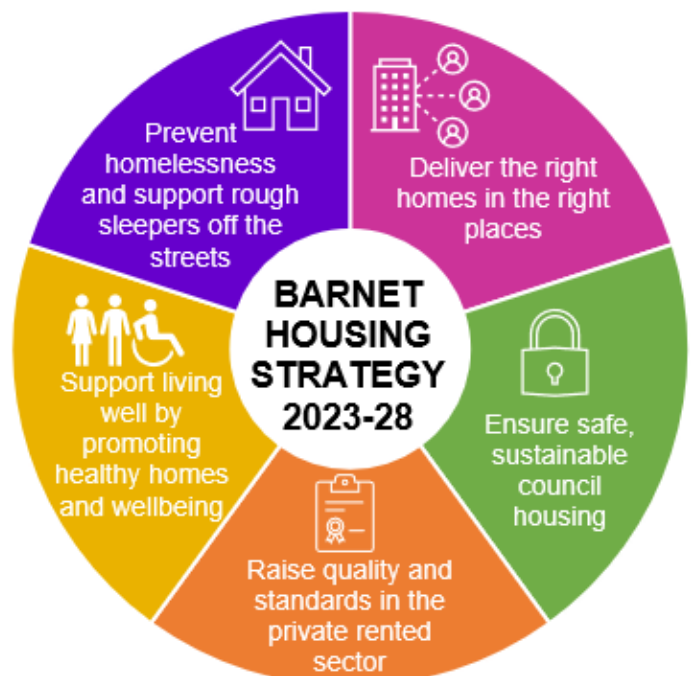
	Studio & 1-bed	2-bed	3-bed	4+ bed
Projected social housing re-lets 2022/23	184	116	48	8
Households in bands 1-4 (excluding long-term temporary accommodation)	528	213	336	149
Time to re-house (years)	2.9	1.8	7.0	18.7
Households in bands 1-4 (including long-term temporary accommodation)	1,195	840	779	261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

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	

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 Allocations 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 be wheelchair adaptable, and we will seek to be more targeted in adaptable properties’ bedroom size and the flexibility of the accommodation.

We will continue to seek other opportunities to deliver new homes, including through our delivery partner Opendoor Homes, such as acquiring homes on the open market or exploring other, innovative solutions.

We will ensure all new builds 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 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 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 access to jobs, green spaces, local businesses, community facilities, and state-of-the-art digital infrastructure, and this will form an important part of our planning processes 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 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 are wheelchair adaptable. 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.

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				

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.

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.

Brent Cross Town – a net zero carbon town by 2030

We have committed to the Brent Cross Town development being a net zero carbon town by 2030 at the latest, including an on-site energy centre and the largest air source heat pump installation in Europe. The planned 6,700 new homes will be built with low-carbon construction, and will have low carbon heating and all energy supplied will come from 100% renewable sources.

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.

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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.

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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.

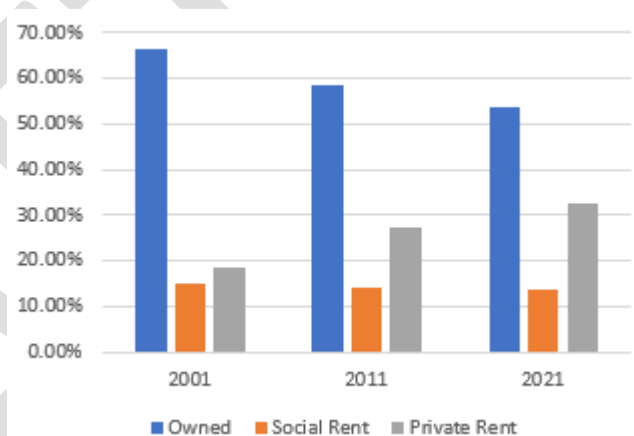
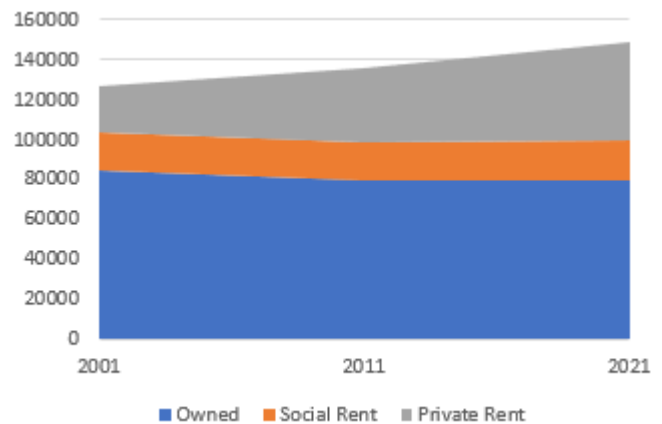
We want to see a stable private rented sector in Barnet with good standards of management and quality, affordable homes for the many residents who live in these homes.

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.

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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.

VERSION CONTROL

Version	Date	Author	Comments
0.1	17/01/23	Laura Giles	
0.2	17/02/23	Laura Giles	Updates following initial review

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Housing Strategy & Homelessness and Rough Sleeping Strategy Evidence Base

February 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

National and Regional Context

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

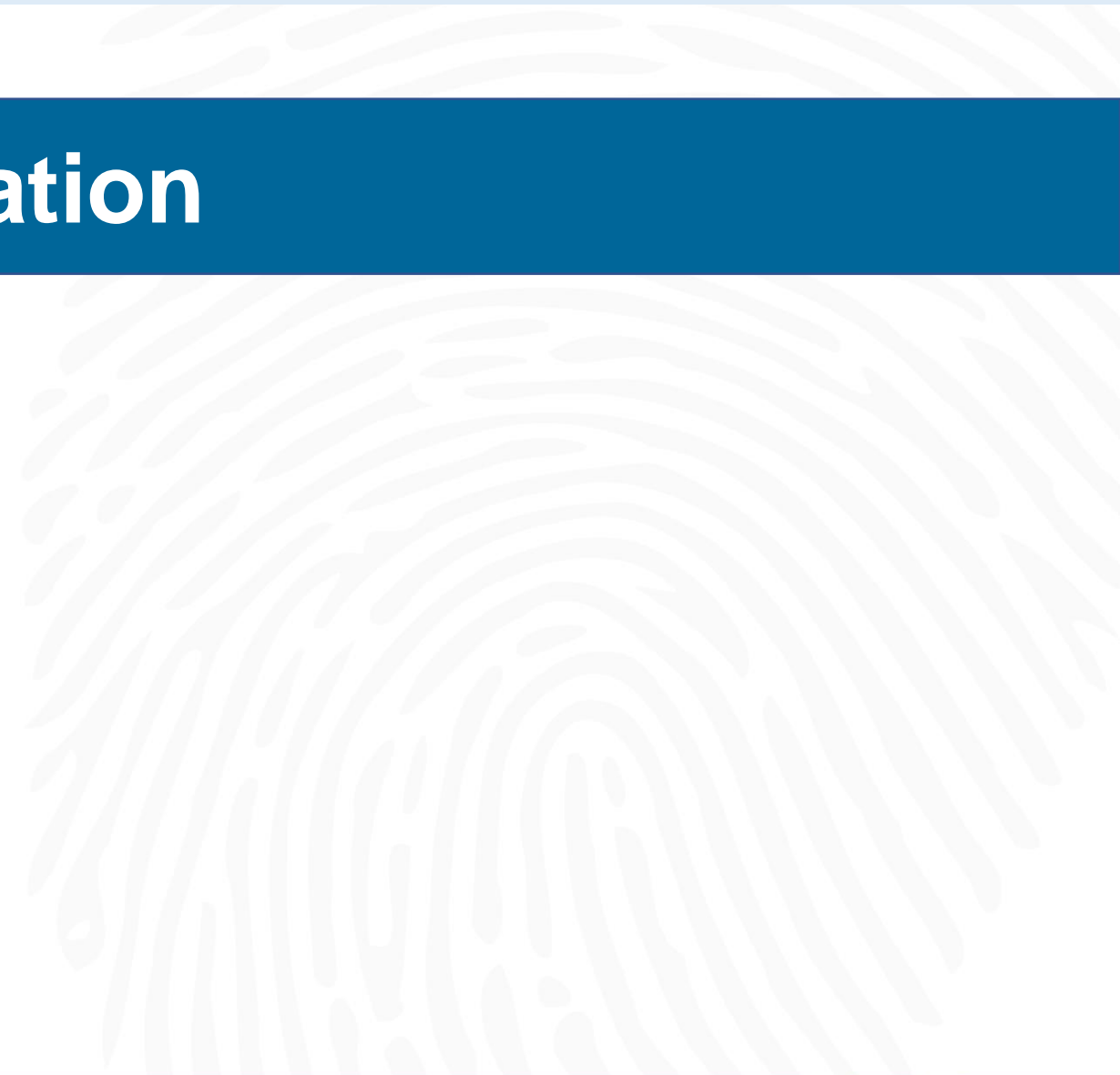
London Housing Strategy

- 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



A large, diverse borough

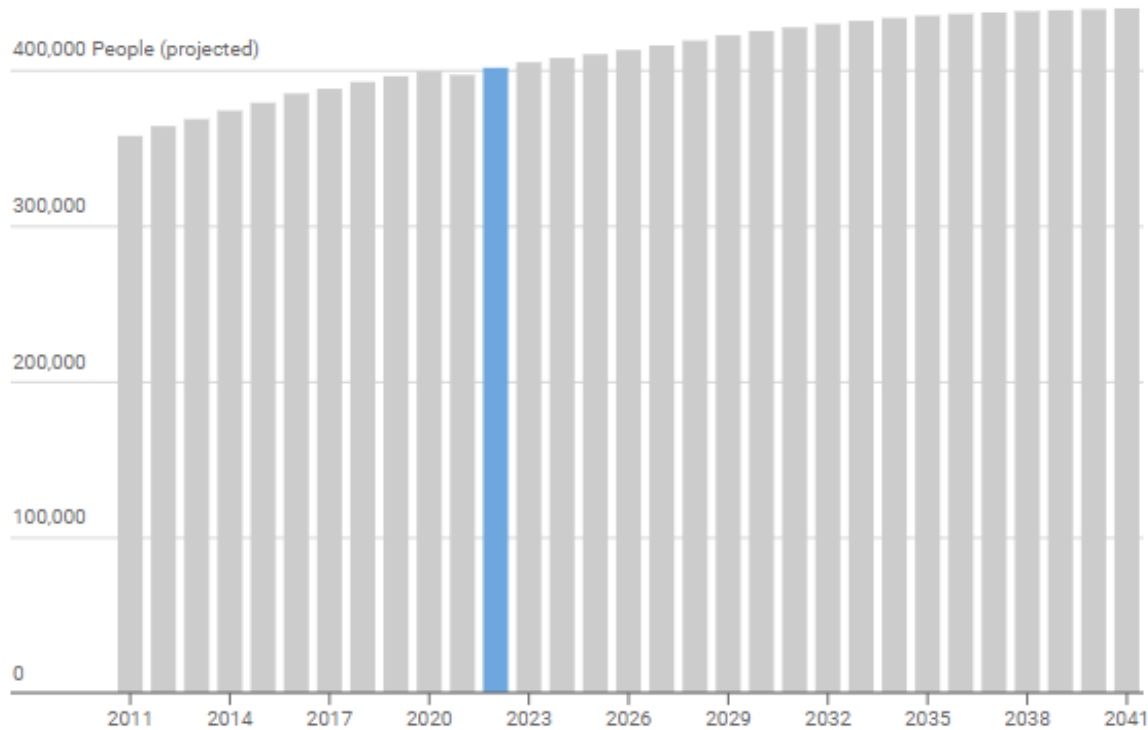


2021 Census – population growth

- 2nd most populated local authority in London
- 17th most populated local authority in England

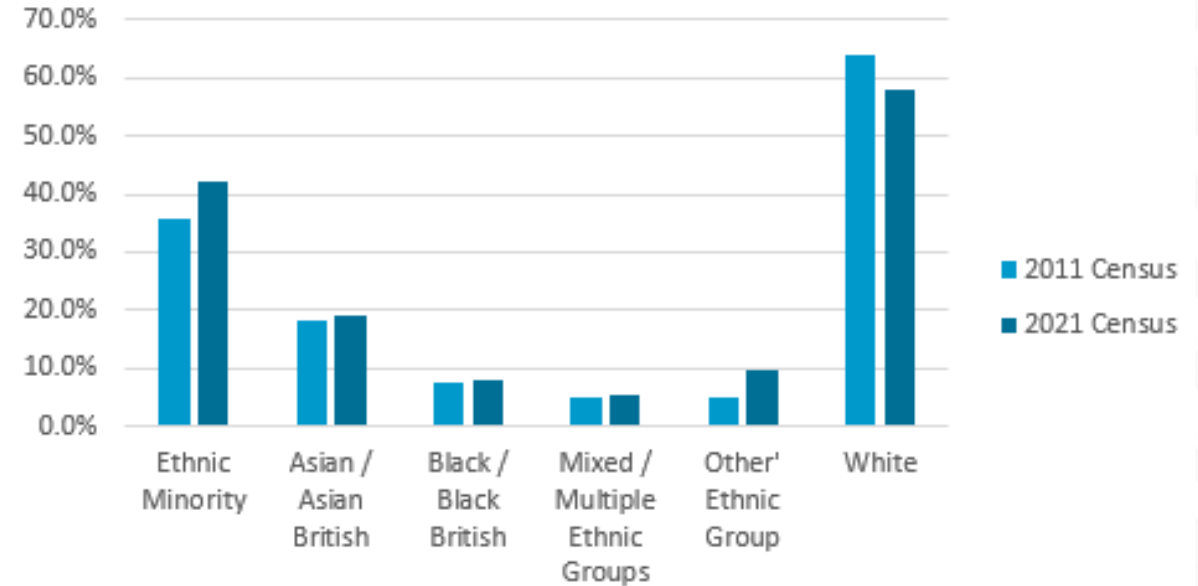
A growing and increasingly diverse population

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%**

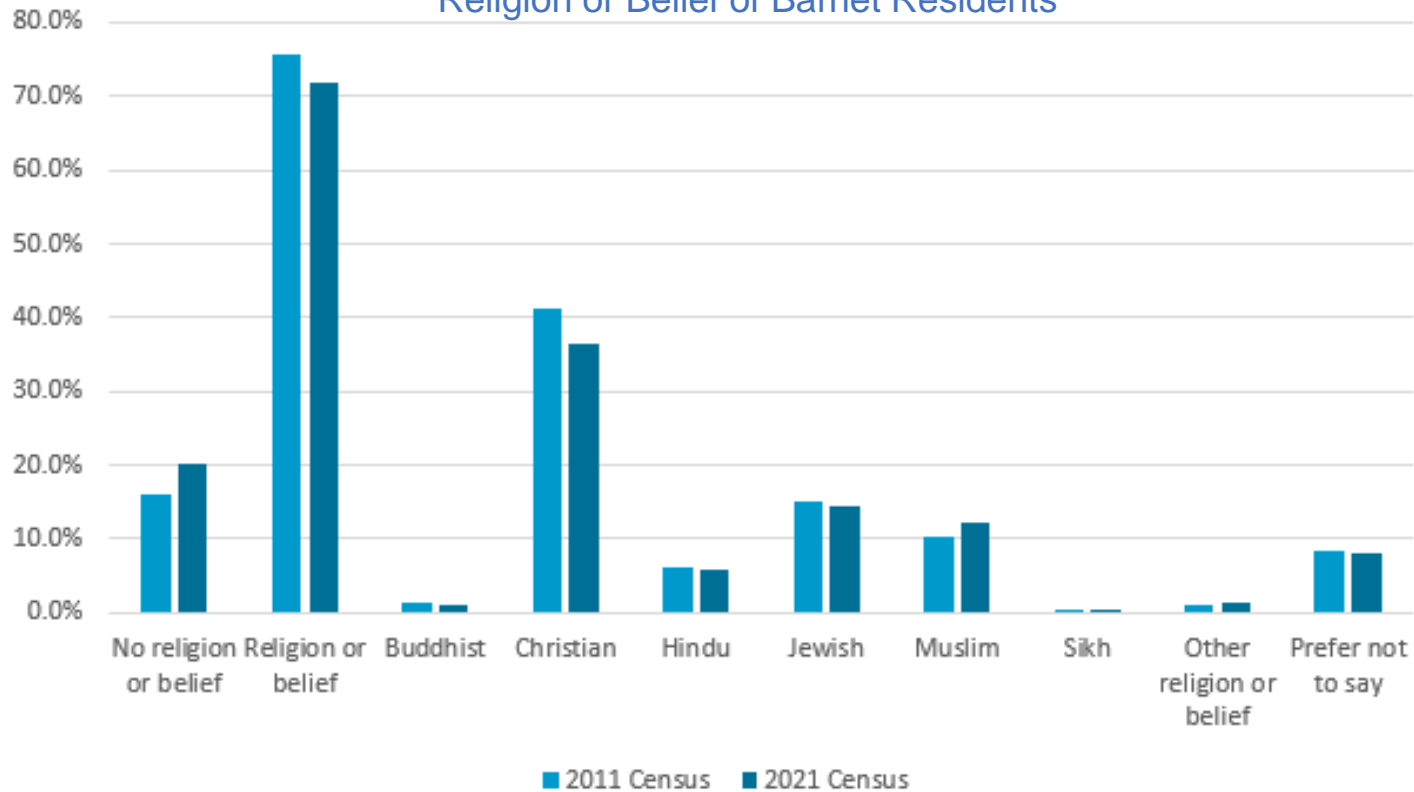
Ethnic Origin of Barnet Residents



- **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.

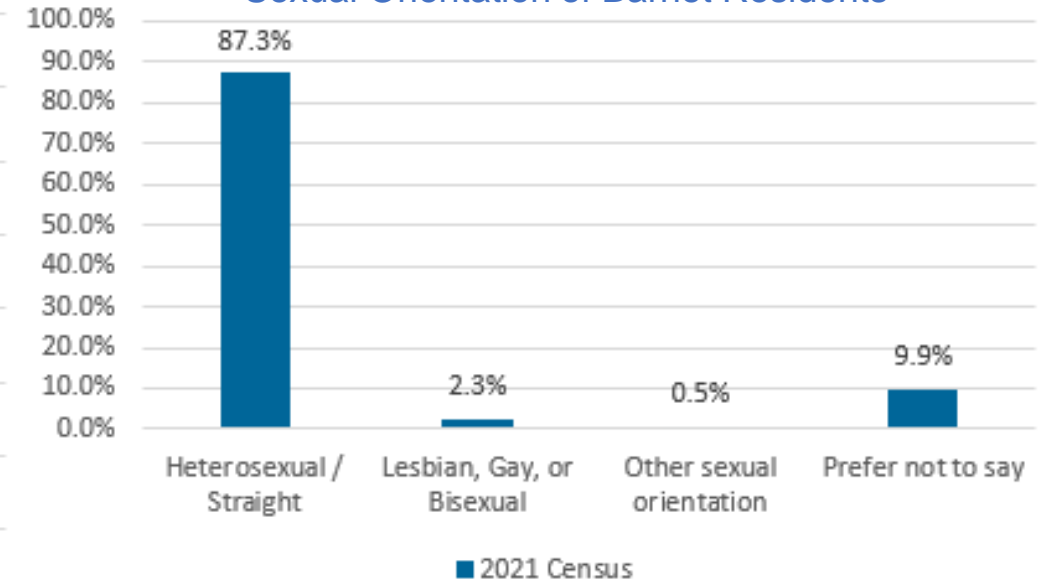
A growing and increasingly diverse population

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%.

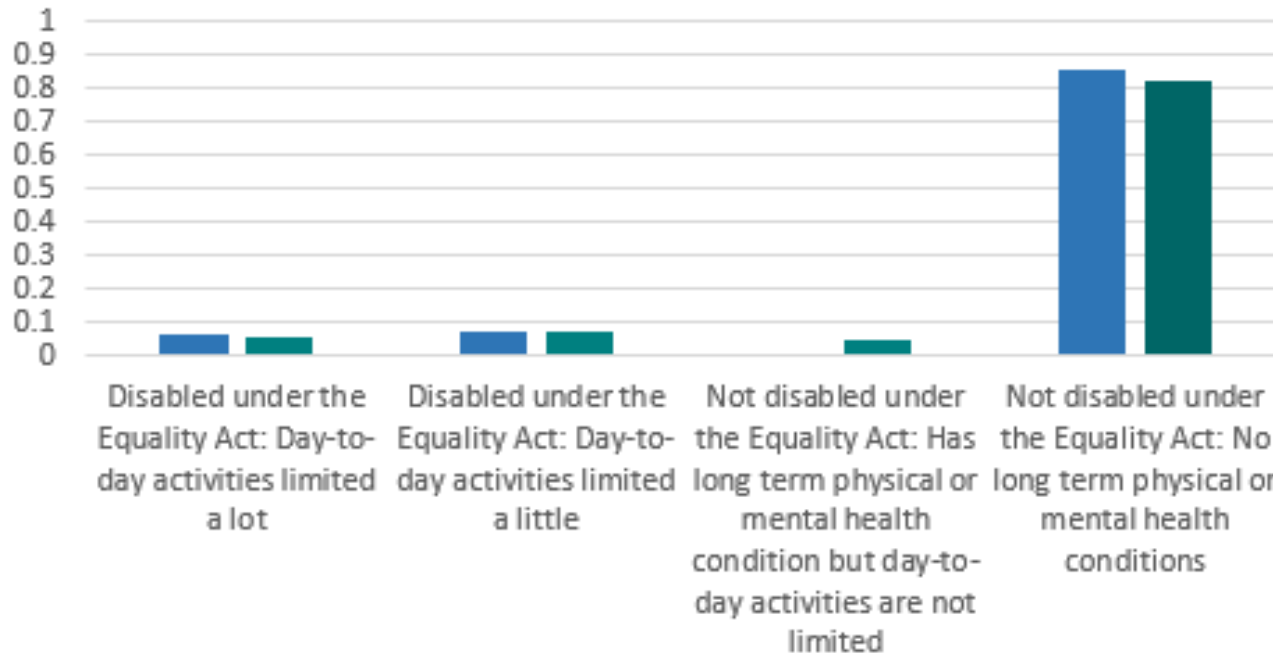
Sexual Orientation of Barnet Residents



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



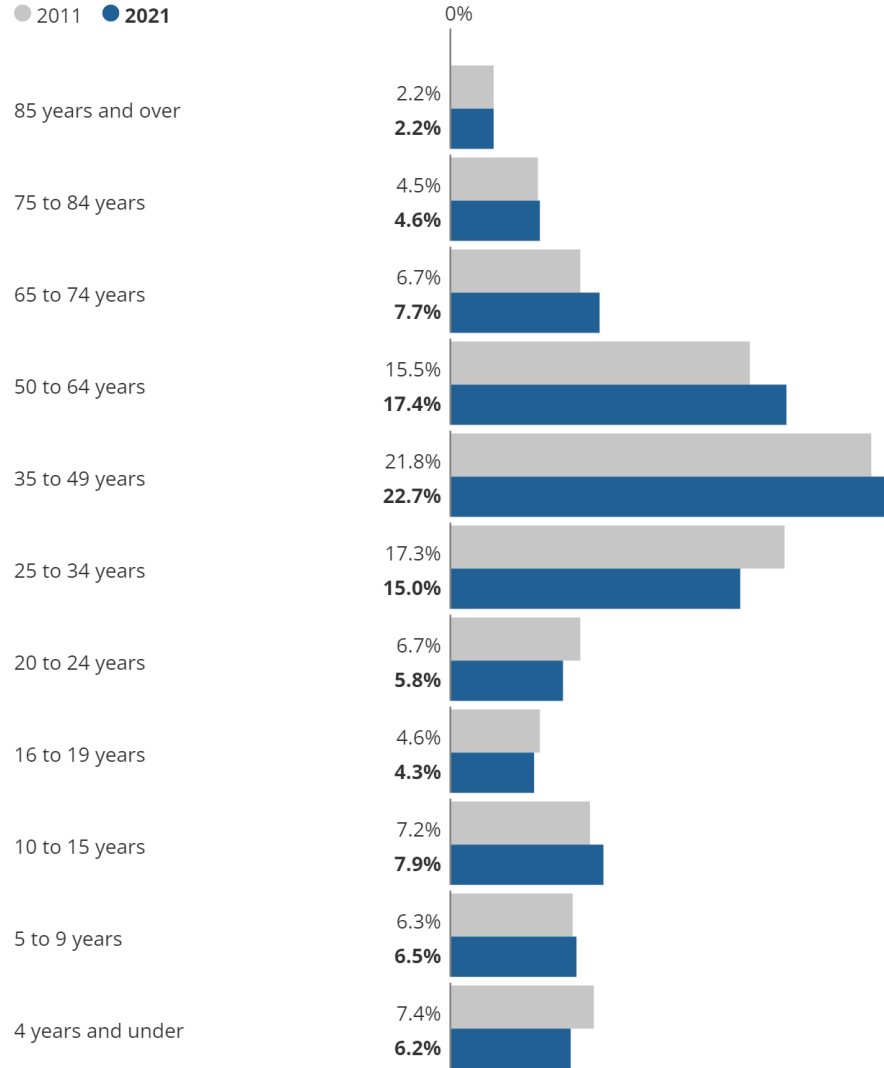
A slight decrease in those who stated they are disabled under the Equality Act 2010 and their day to day activities are limited a lot (**-0.9%** compared to 2011), in those who stated their activities are limited a little (**-0.3%**), and in those who said they are not disabled (**-3.9%**).

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

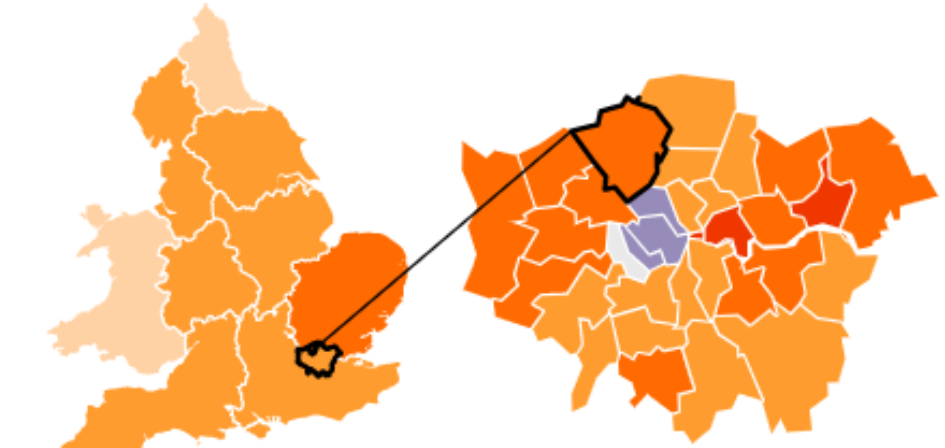
% of residents by age group

● 2011 ● 2021

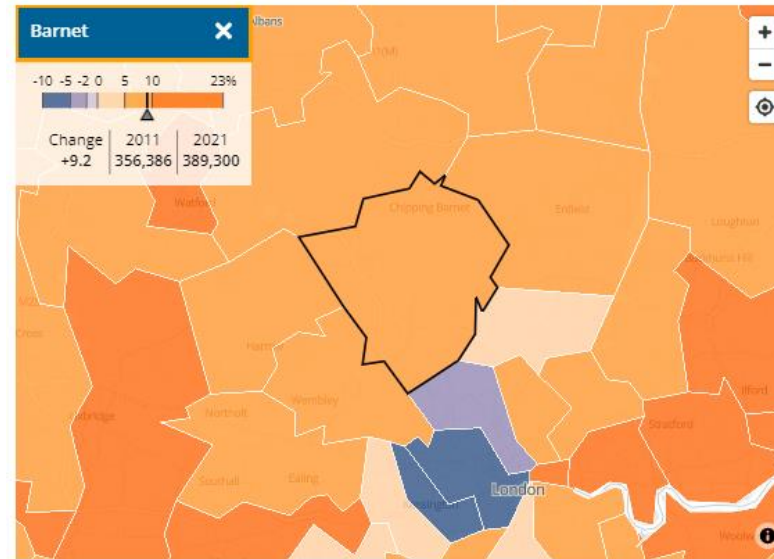


Older age groups increased compared to the 2011 Census (35 to 84). There was a reduction in people younger than 35, with the exception of the group 10-15 years old.

England ▲6.6% London ▲7.7% Barnet ▲9.2%



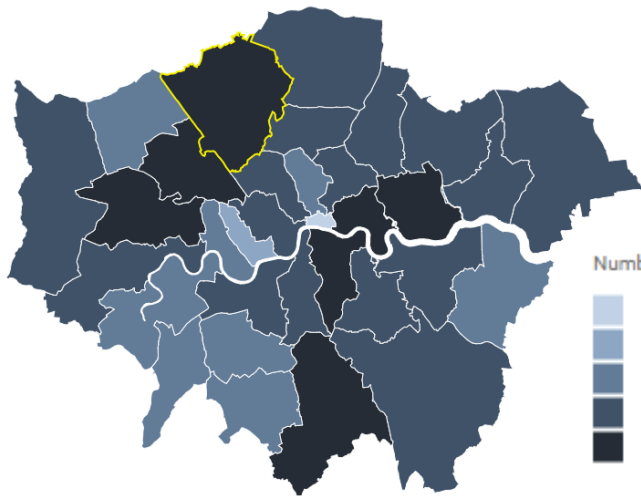
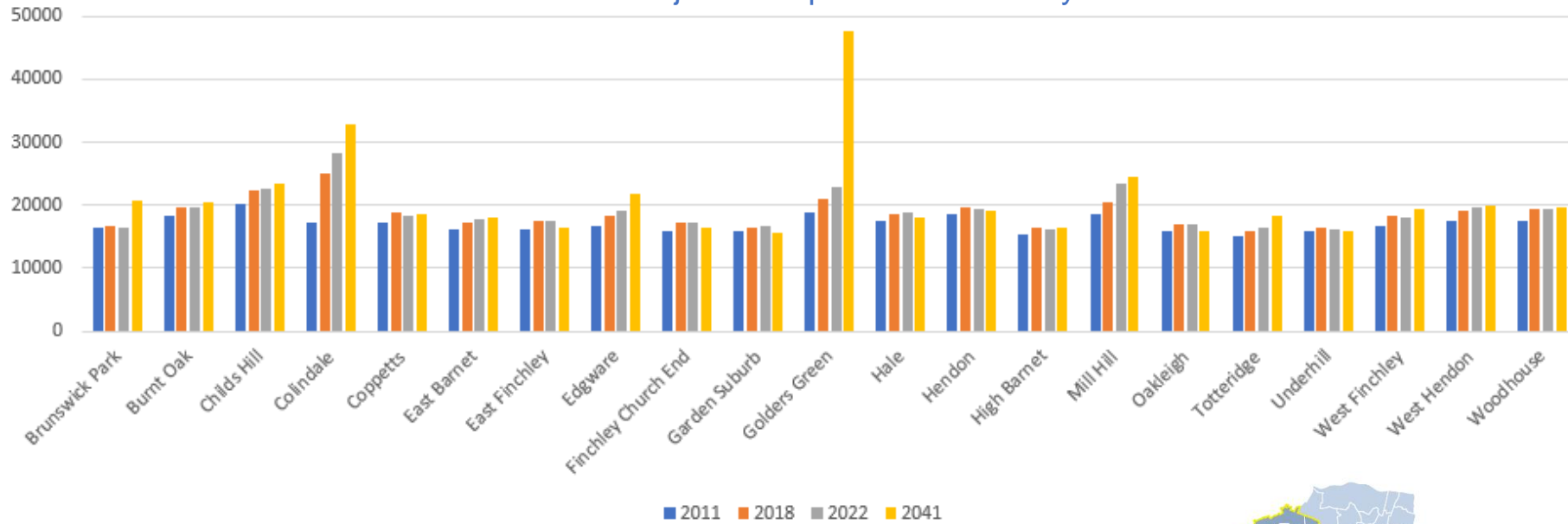
Population growth in England, London, and Barnet



Population growth was higher in Barnet than in England and the London average.

A growing population

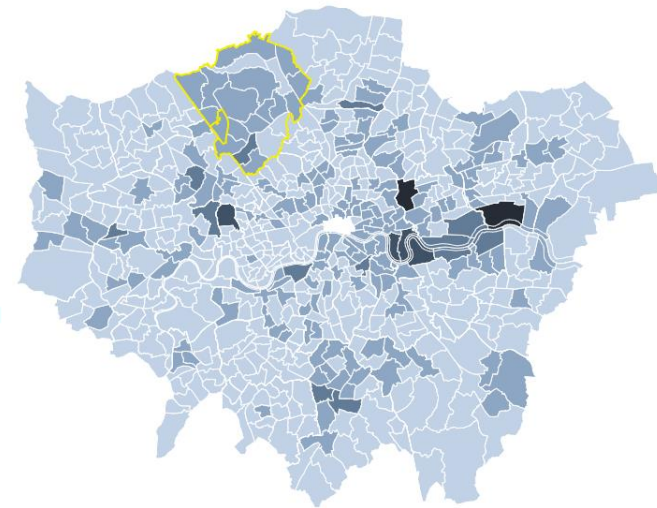
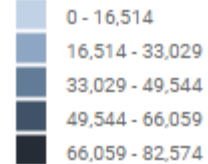
Projected Population Growth by Ward



Number of People in Borough



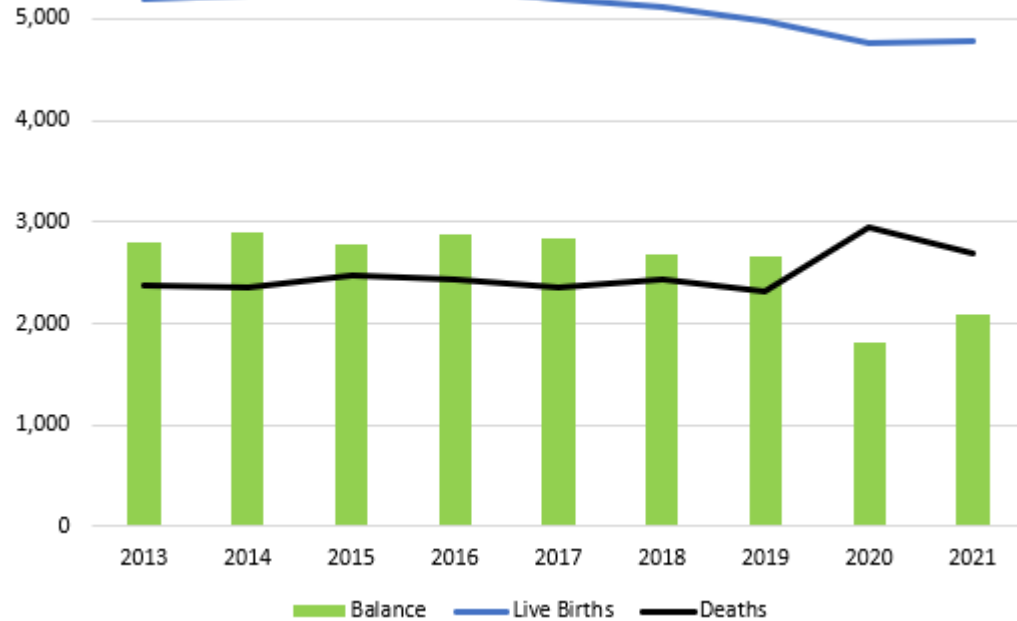
Number of People in Ward



- 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

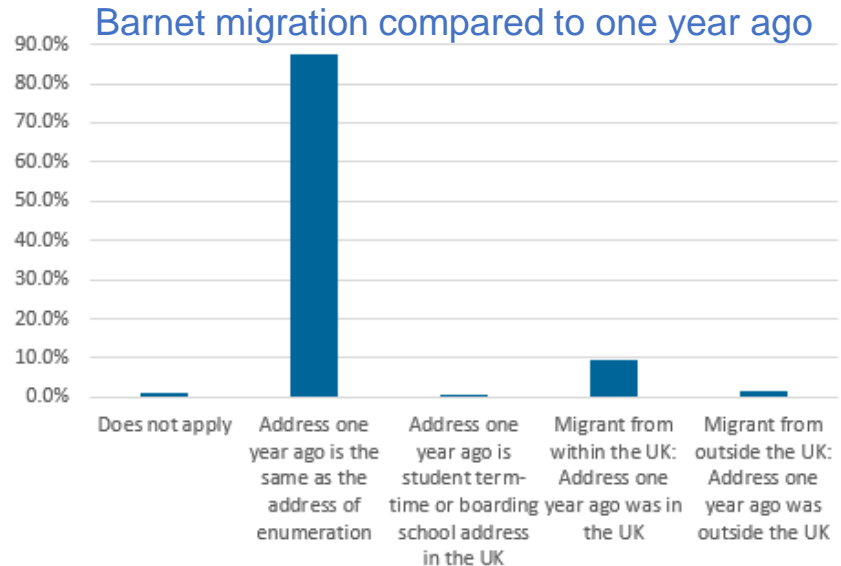
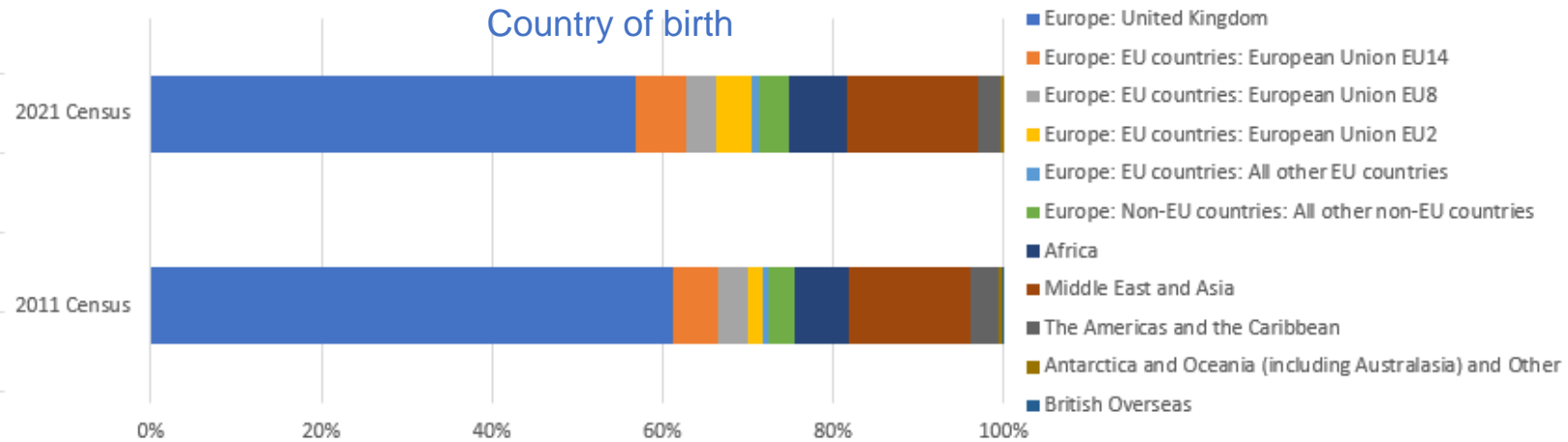
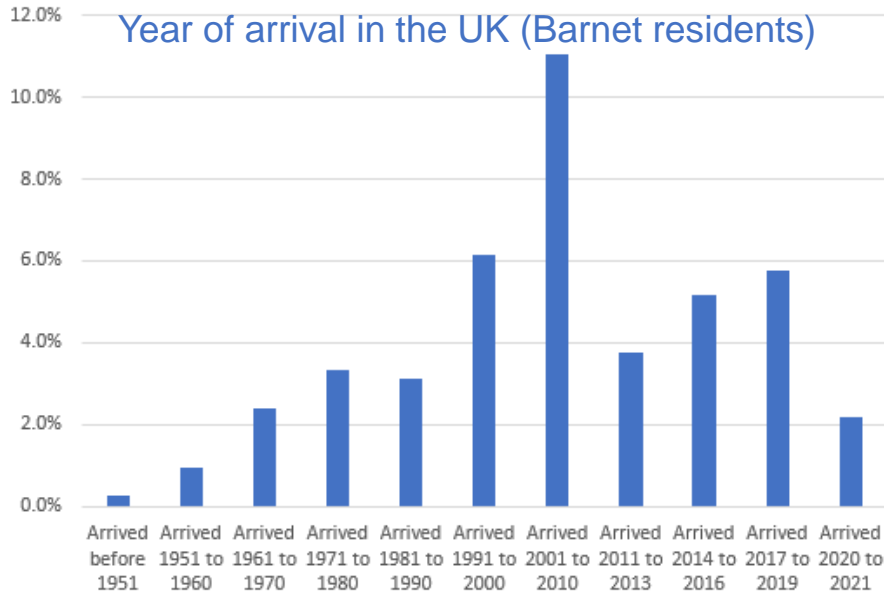


- Net migration (previous 5 years) is about **+1,382** per annum
- International migration (previous 5 years) is about **+4,056** per annum.
- Both are lower than in 2018 (**+2,700** and **+4,600** respectively). We might reasonably expect post-Brexit that there has been a decrease in migration from 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

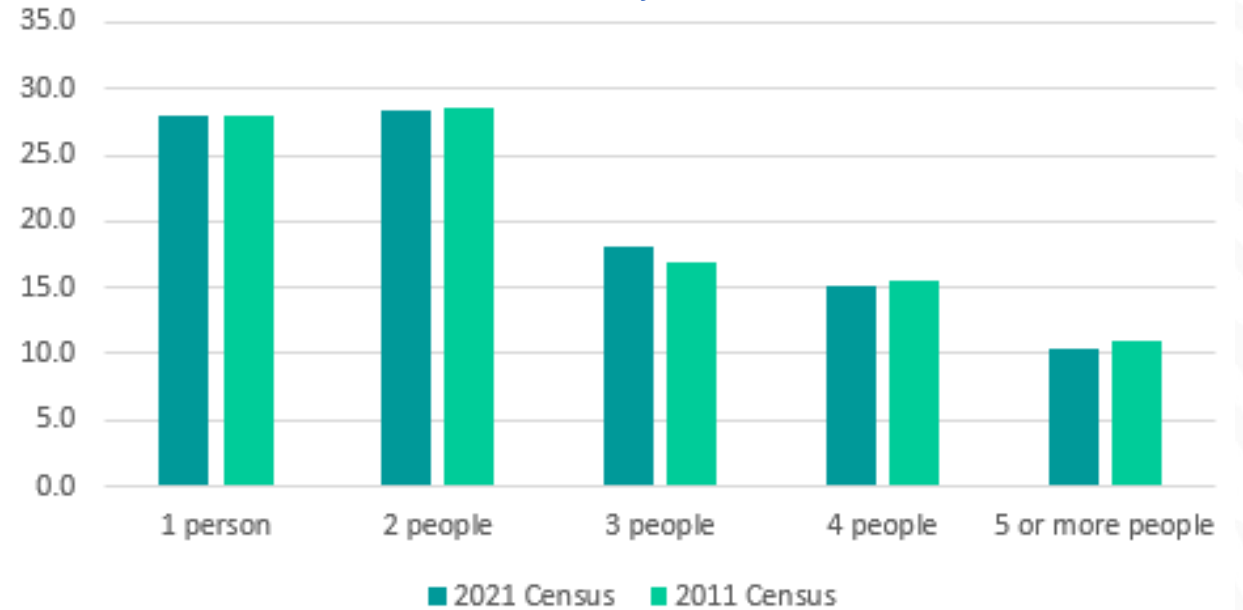


- 58.1% of Barnet residents were born in the UK.
- Migration peaked in 2001-2010, and declined from 2020 when it was likely to be affected by the COVID-19 pandemic and Brexit.
- 87.6% of Barnet residents lived in the same property as a year before the 2021 Census. 9.4% had migrated within the UK, and 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%**).

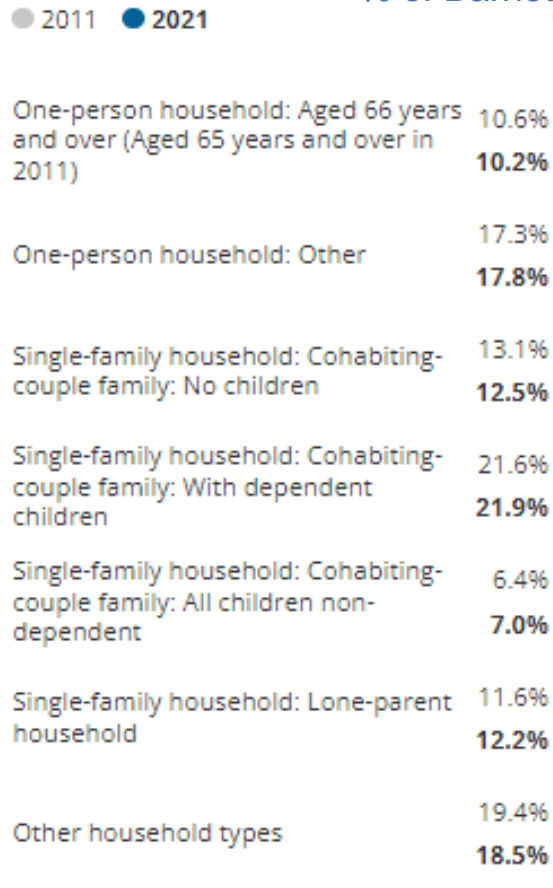
% of Barnet households by household size



- 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).

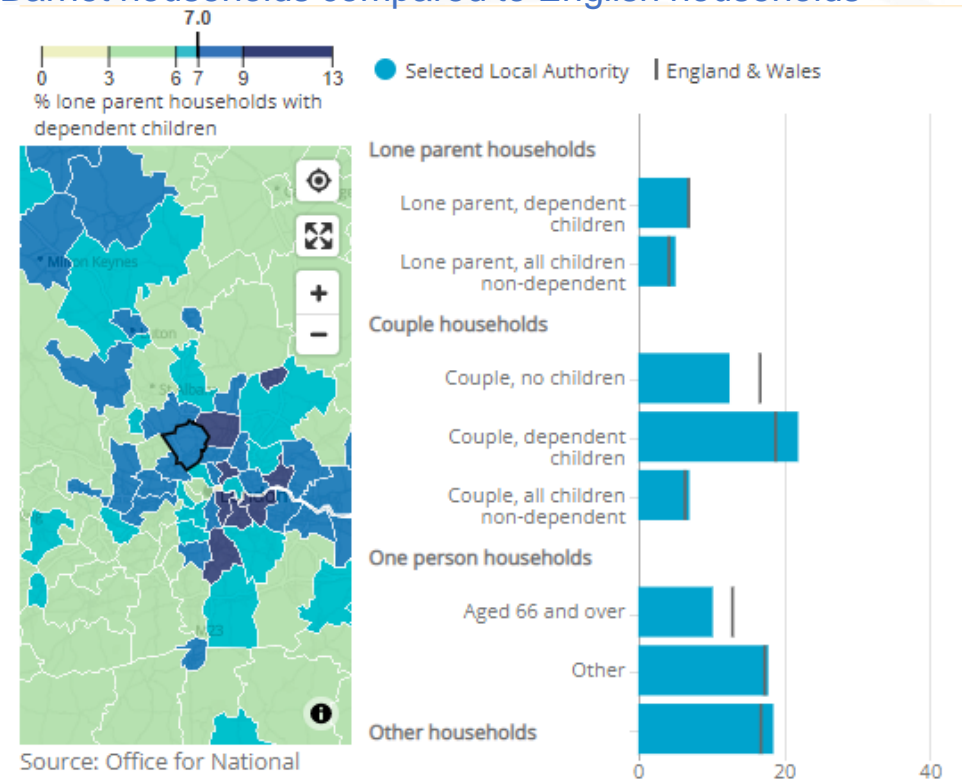
The way people live is changing

% 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



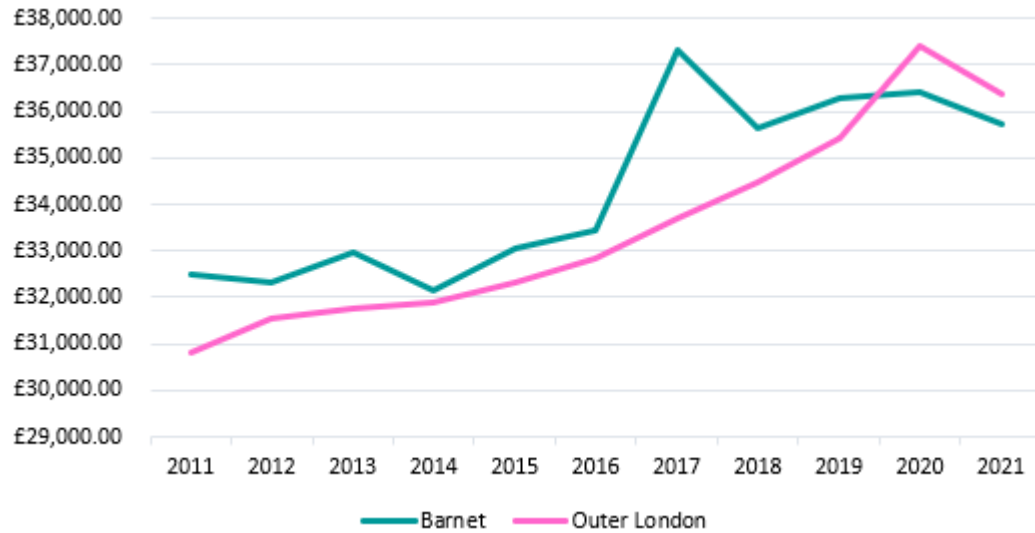
- Compared to the 2011 Census data across England, Barnet had more households with lone parents with dependent and non-dependent children, couples with dependent and non-dependent children, and other households. There were fewer households made up of couples with no children, and those aged 66 and over.

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)

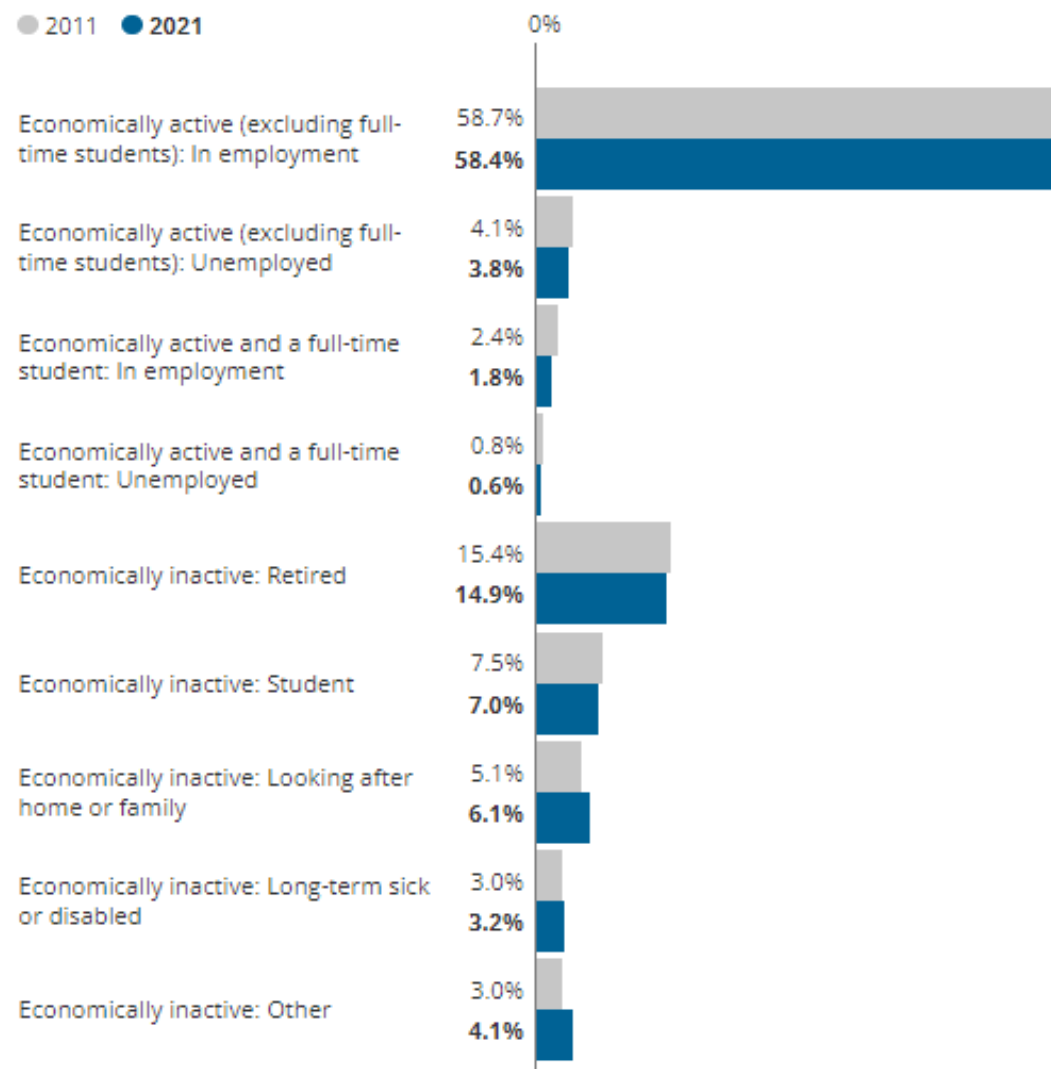
	Barnet	London	Great Britain
Number Of Workless Households	18,600	367,900	2,866,800
Percentage Of Households That Are Workless	15.0	12.2	14.0
Number Of Children In Workless Households	!	171,900	1,249,200
Percentage Of Children Who Are In Households That Are Workless	!	9.5	10.2

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

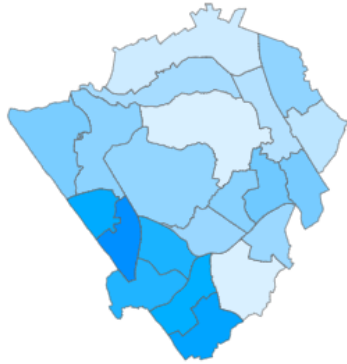
% of Barnet residents aged 16 years and over by economic activity status



- 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.

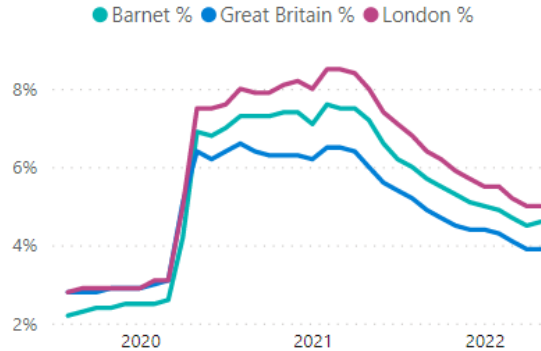
Welfare benefits and welfare reform

11650
Number of Out of Work Benefit Claimants

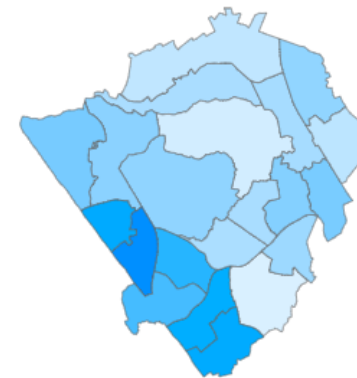


4.6%
% Working Age on Out of Work Benefits

Percent of Working Age on Out of Work Benefits

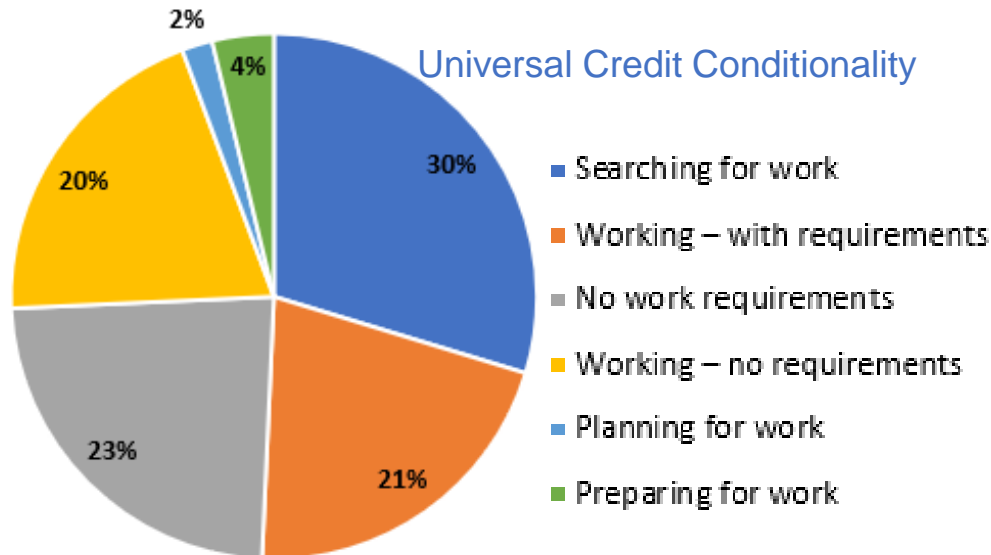
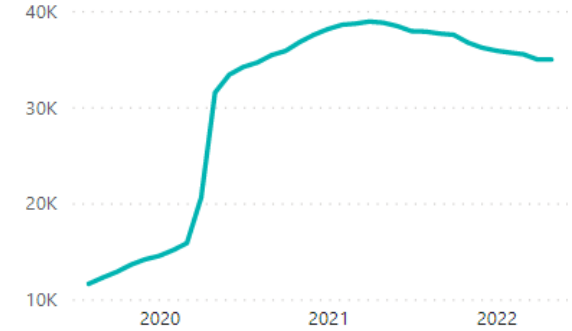


34949
Number of Universal Credit Claimants



9.0%
% Population on Universal Credit

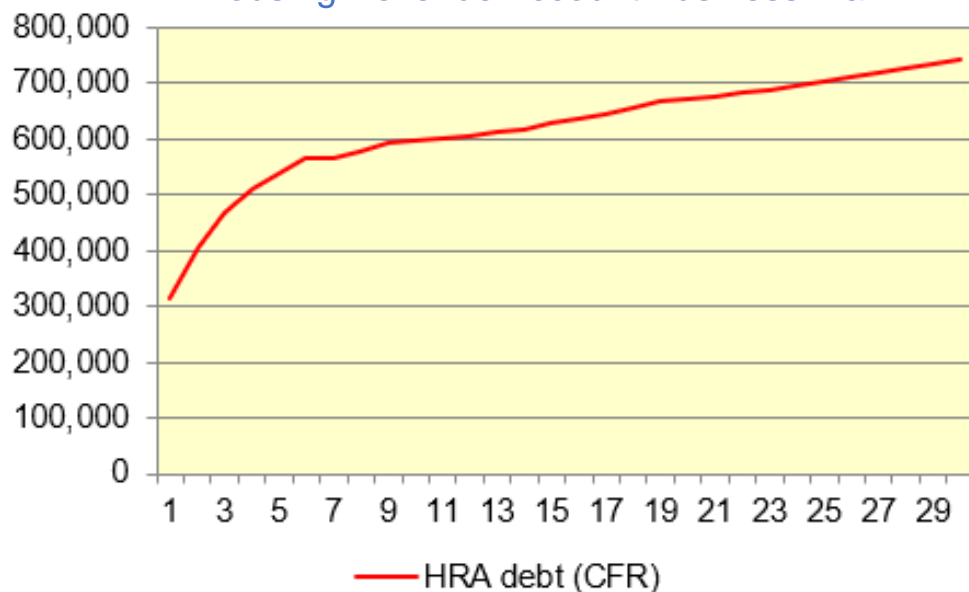
Universal Credit Claimants by Month



- As of March 2020, the number of Out of Work benefits claimants has 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.

Financing the strategy

Housing Revenue Account Business Plan



General Fund Medium Term Financial Strategy

2022/23 approved budget through MTFS	2022/23 Budget (£)	2023/24 (£)	2024/25 (£)	2025/26 (£)	2026/27 (£)
March 2022 Full Council					
Expenditure	31,197,791	30,791,145	29,590,261	29,482,966	29,482,966
Income	-25,854,760	-25,955,760	-26,085,760	-26,099,760	-26,099,760
Net Expenditure	5,343,031	4,835,385	3,504,501	3,383,206	3,383,206
		-507,646	-1,838,530	-1,959,825	-1,959,825

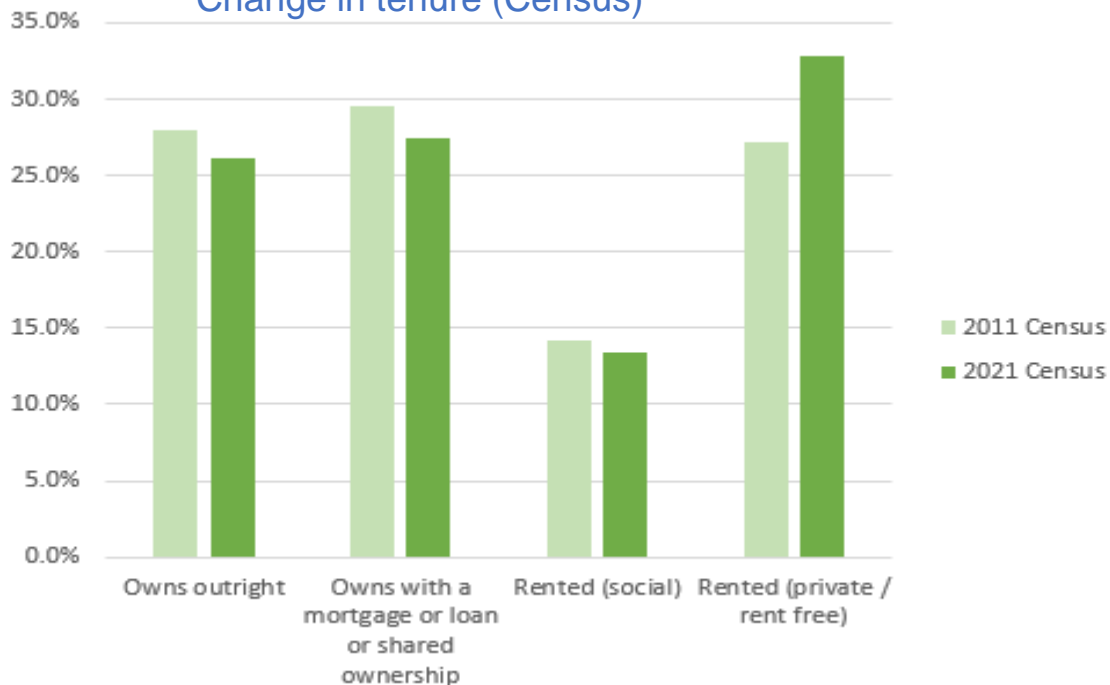
- Housing Revenue Account Business Plan as at February 2022 shows we are operating within minimum reserve levels.
- All fire safety works included in HRA – totally £47.4m.
- General Fund Medium Term Financial Strategy includes future budget savings and pressures.
- Issues that may affect the MTFS include rental income from temporary accommodation (TA), impact of cost of living increases, the capital programme for Opendoor Homes for affordable TA, private sector landlord incentives, and reductions in FHS Grant.

The Housing Market



Tenure shift

Change in tenure (Census)



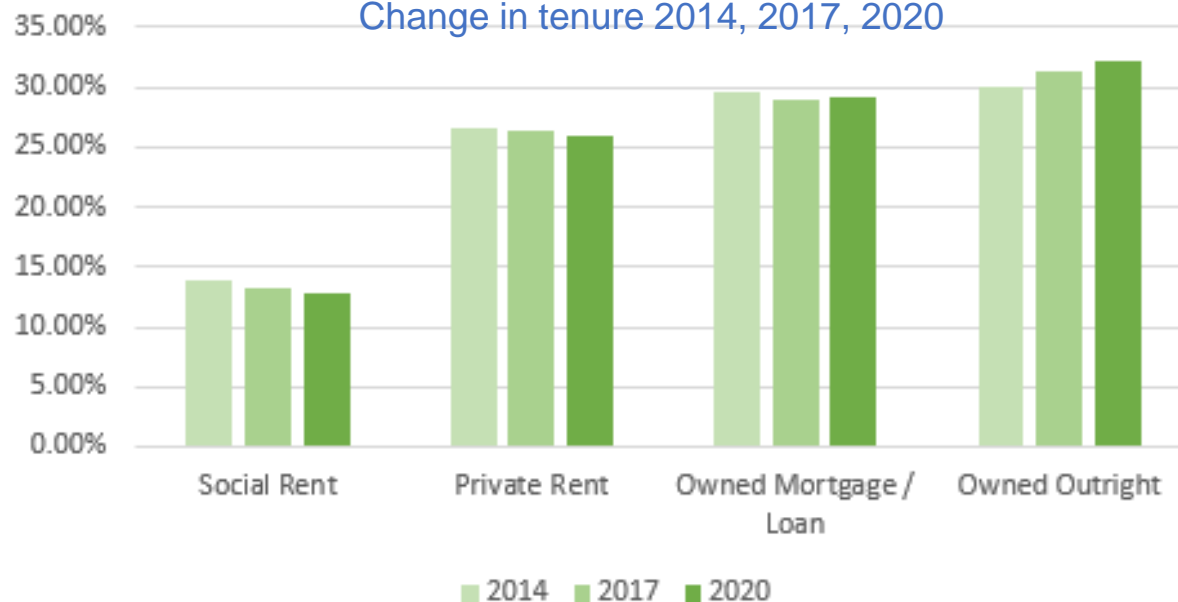
2011 Census showed significant shift in tenure:

- 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%)

Change in tenure 2014, 2017, 2020



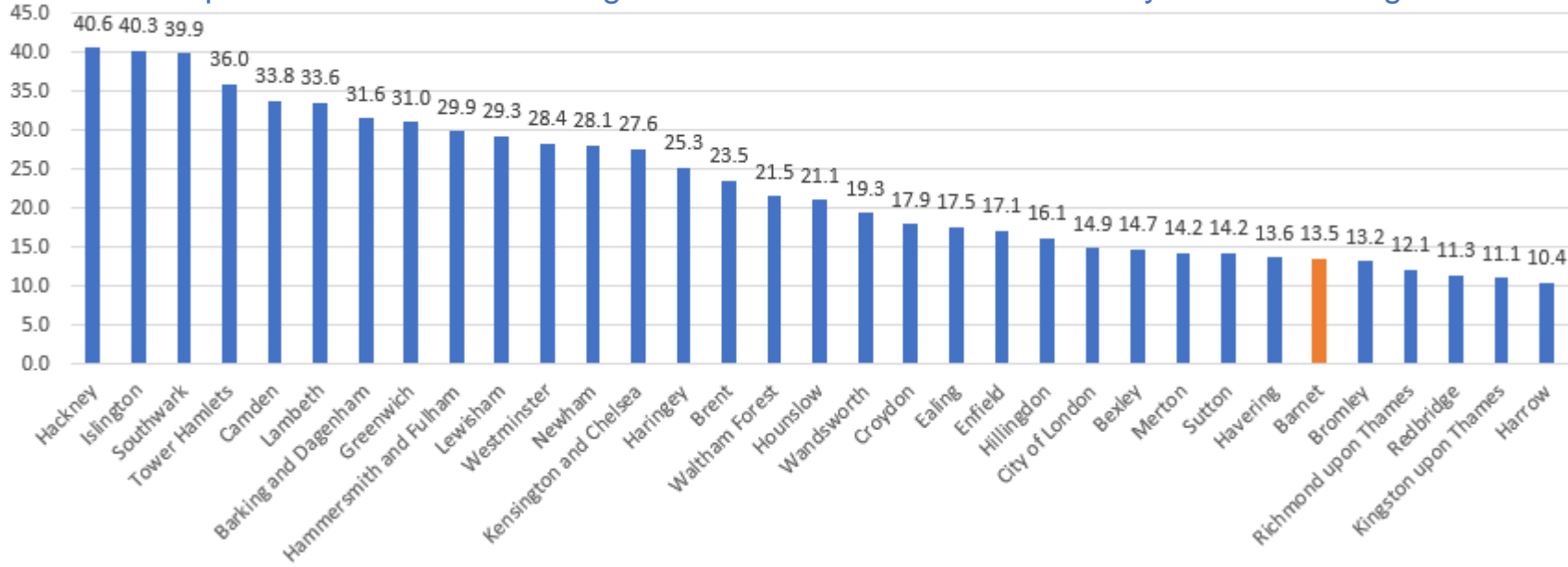
Annual ONS population survey shows a changing picture in the ensuing years. From 2017 to 2020:

- 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%).

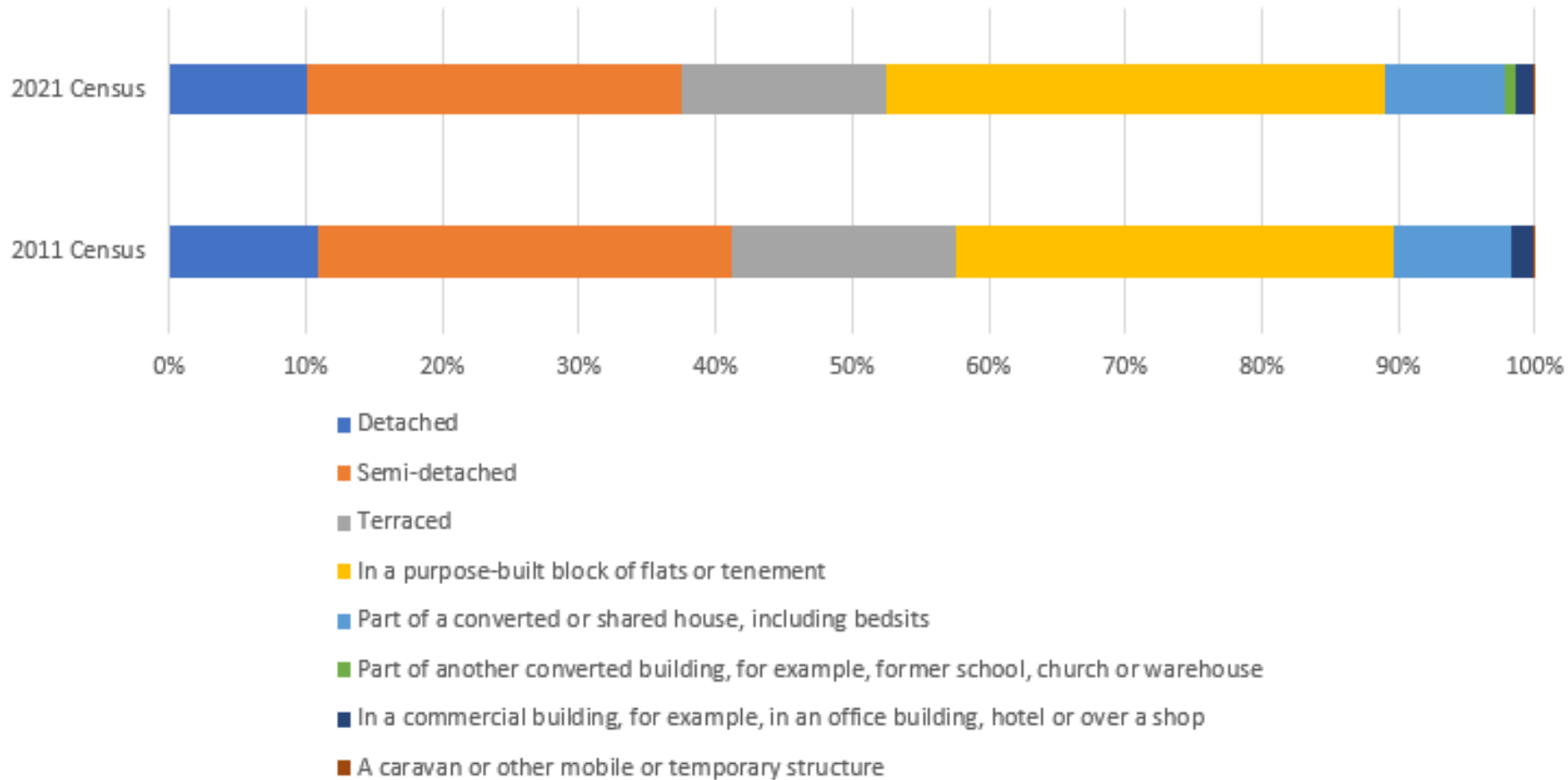
Top 10 Barnet MSOAs with highest proportion of social rented accommodation

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).

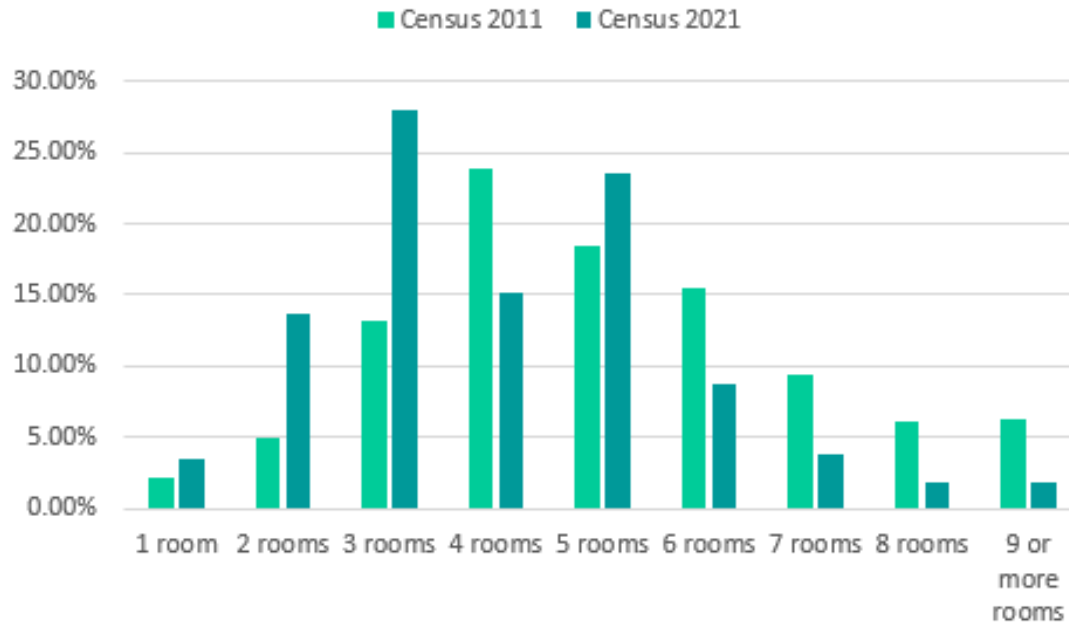
Increase in purpose-built blocks of flats

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.

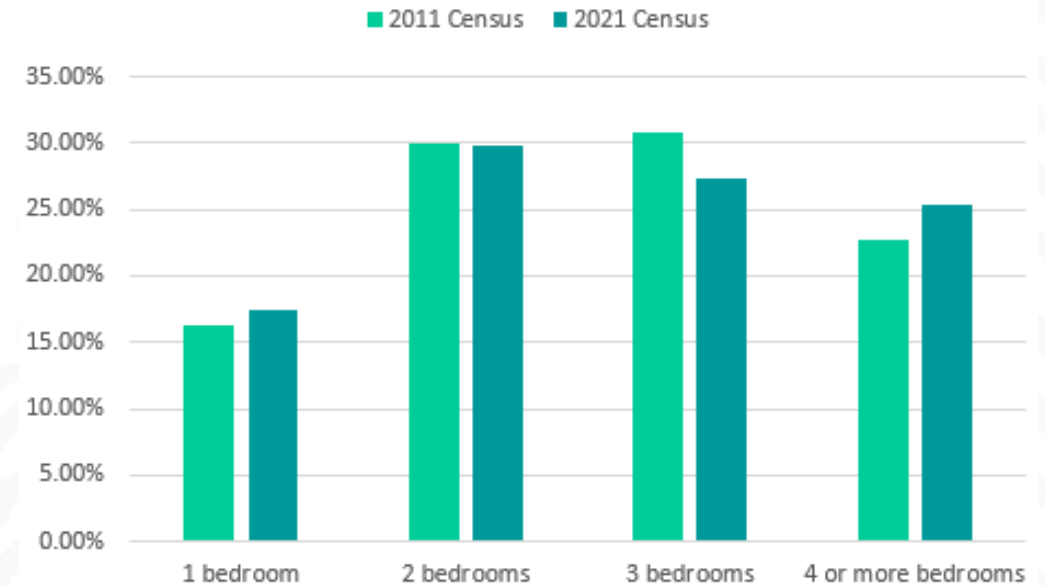
Property sizes

% of Barnet properties by number of rooms



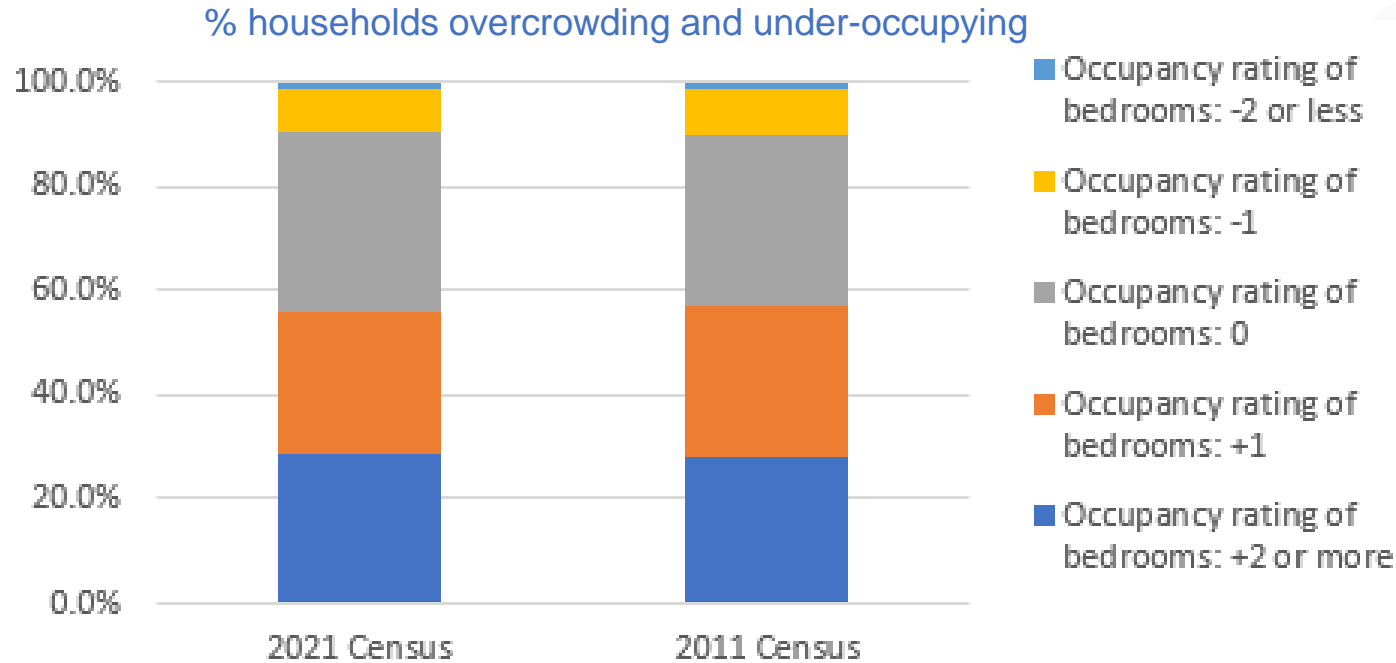
- Compared to 2011, there were fewer larger properties in Barnet, with a particular increase in the number of properties with 2-3 rooms.

% 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

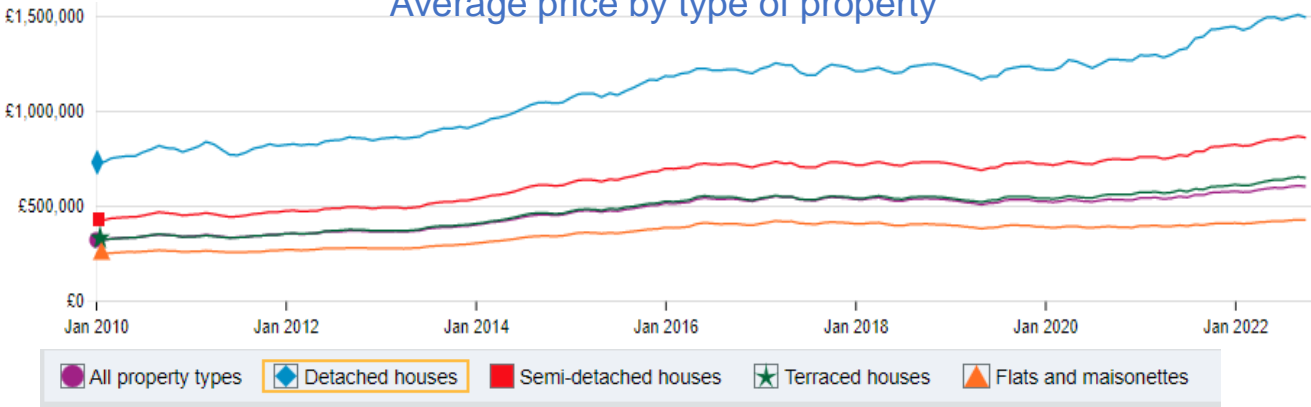


- Overcrowding and underoccupancy in Barnet was broadly comparable in 2011 and 2021.
- Around a fifth of households in Burnt Oak and Watling Park (**20.8%**) and Grahame Park (**19.3%**) were overcrowded. This was about 2.2 times higher than the average % of overcrowded households in Barnet (**9.4%**).

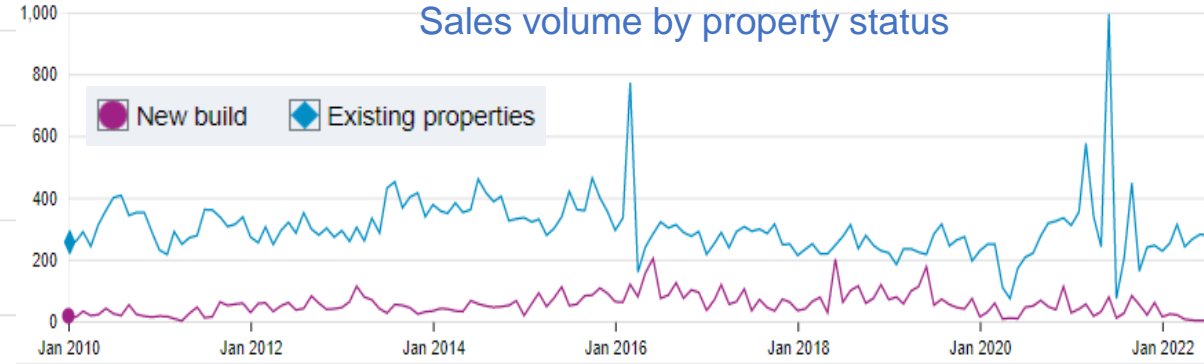
- Slightly fewer households were overcrowded in 2021 (**-0.1%** by 2 bedrooms or fewer and **-0.5%** by 1 bedroom)
- Slightly fewer households were under-occupying by 1 bedroom in 2021 (**-0.9%**)
- Slightly more households were under-occupying by 2 bedrooms or more in 2021 (by **+2.1%**).
- In 2021, 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

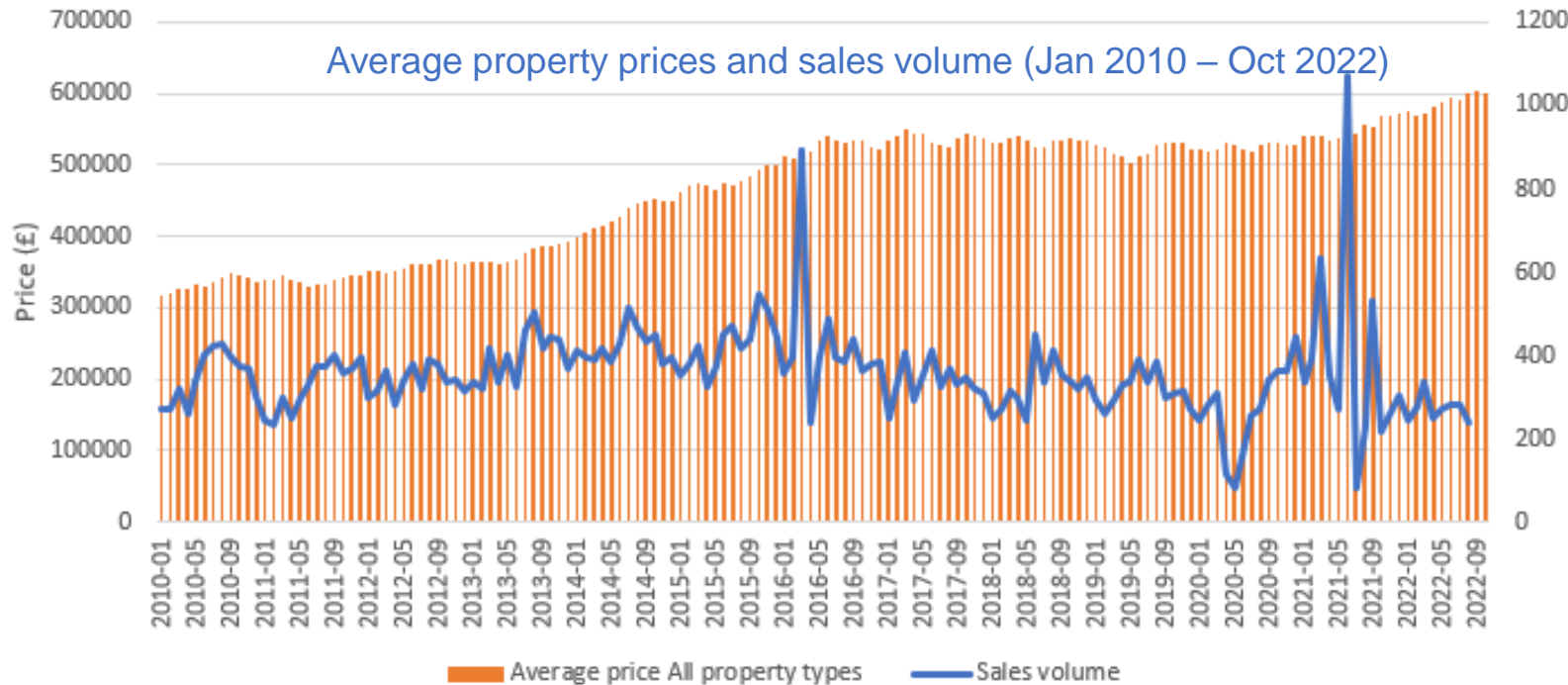
Average price by type of property



Sales volume by property status



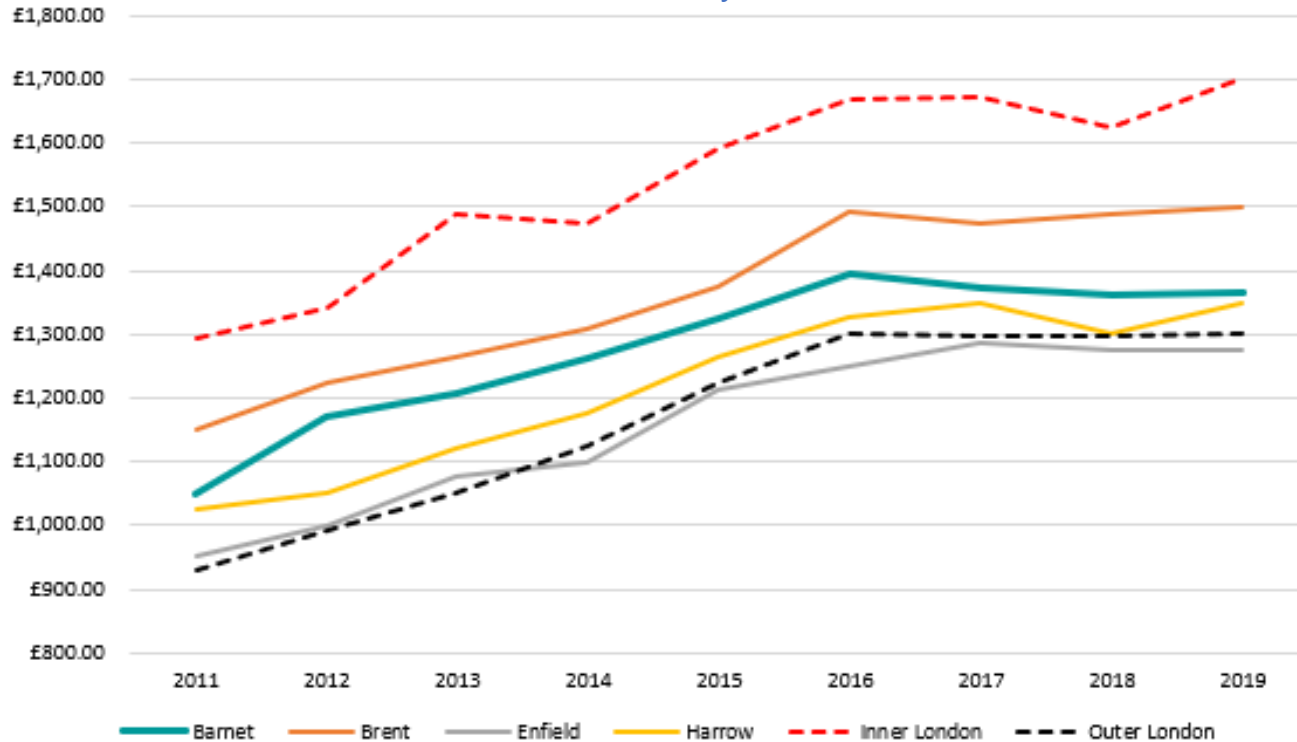
Average property prices and sales volume (Jan 2010 – Oct 2022)



- 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

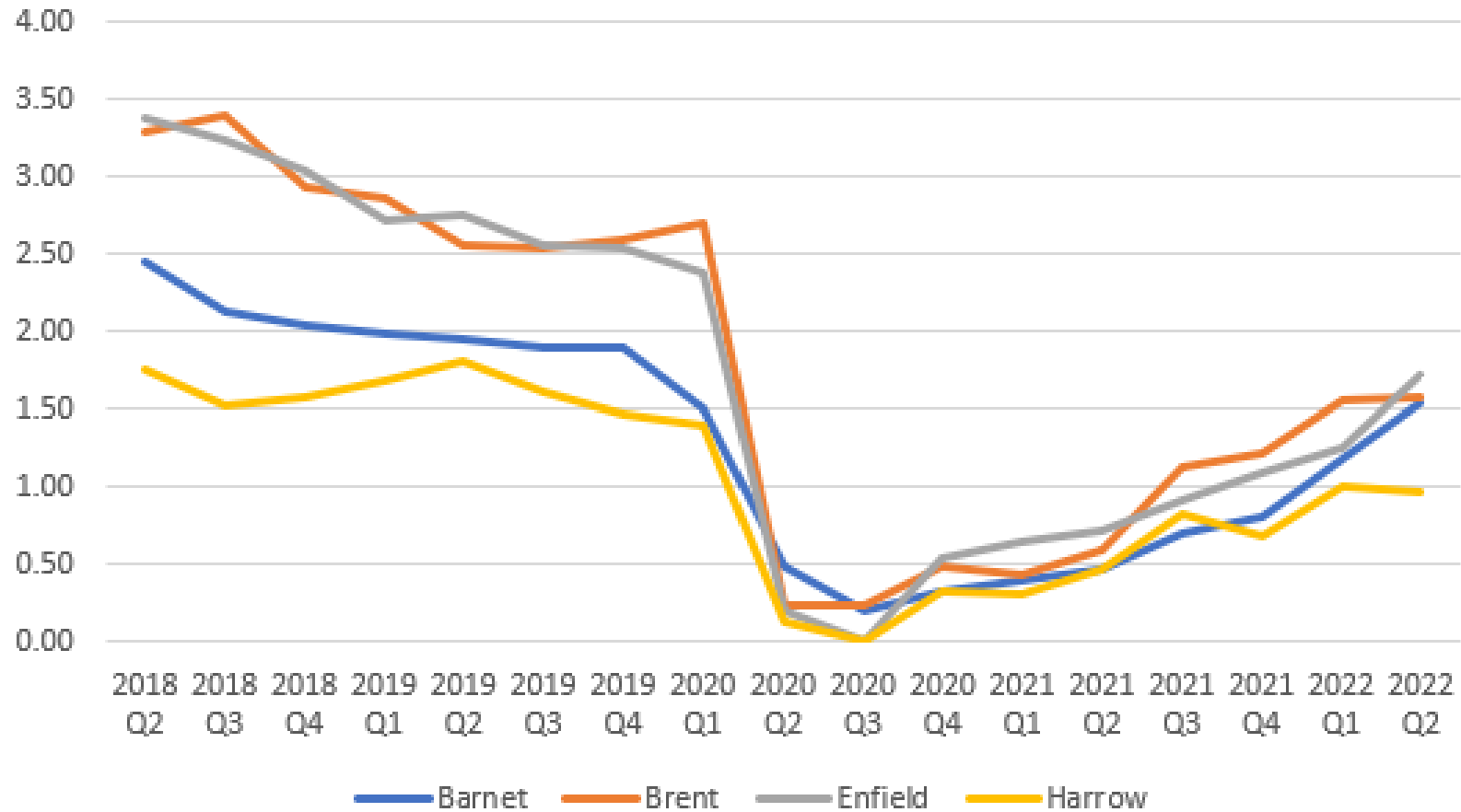


- Median monthly rent in Barnet in 2019 was **£1,365** compared to Outer London's median of **£1,300**.
- Average rental prices decreased by **0.6%** between 2017 and 2019.

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%

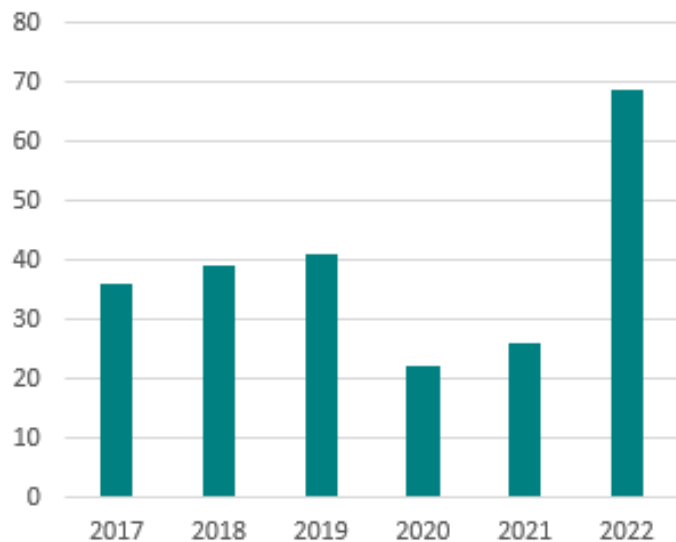
Landlord claims per 1,000 population



- Compared to neighbouring boroughs.
- Includes claims, repossessions, outright orders, and suspended orders, across accelerated landlords, private landlords, and social landlords.

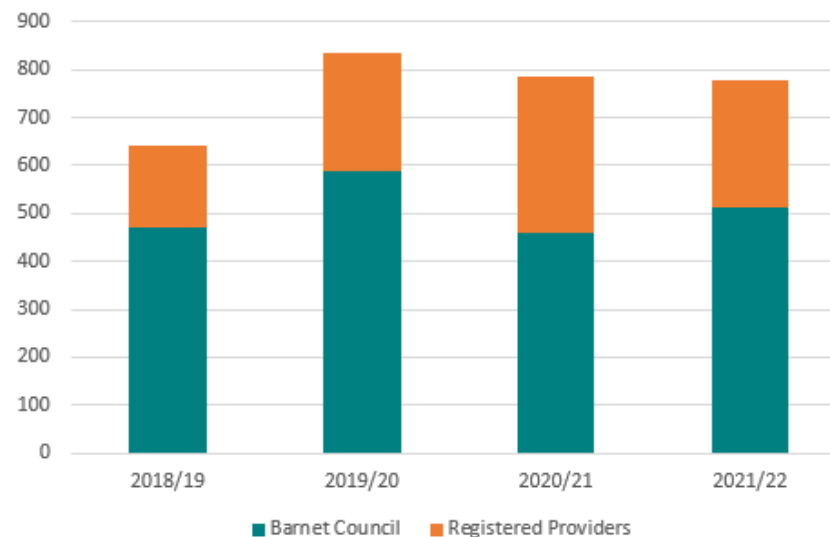
Right to buy and social housing lettings

Council homes sold under the Right to Buy



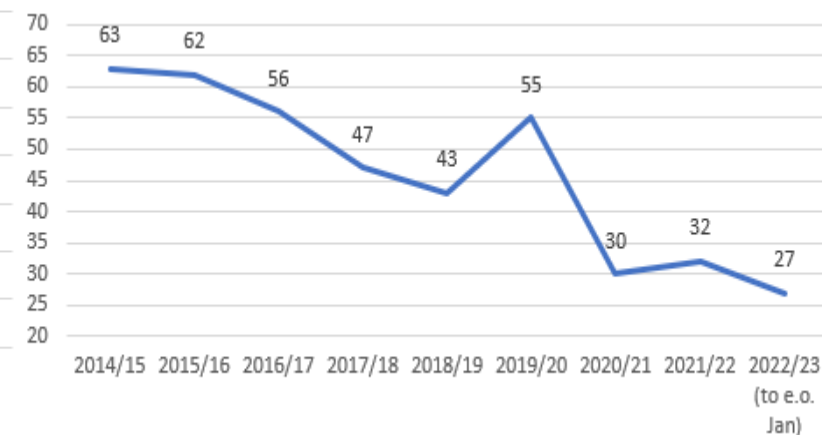
- The number of council homes sold under the Right to Buy increased steadily from 2017-19, but was impacted by the COVID-19 pandemic.
- There was a significant increase in sales in 2022.

Social housing lettings in Barnet



- The number of social housing lettings in Barnet in 2021/22 was lower than the previous two years, with council housing making up **66%** of all lets compared to 58% in 2020/21.

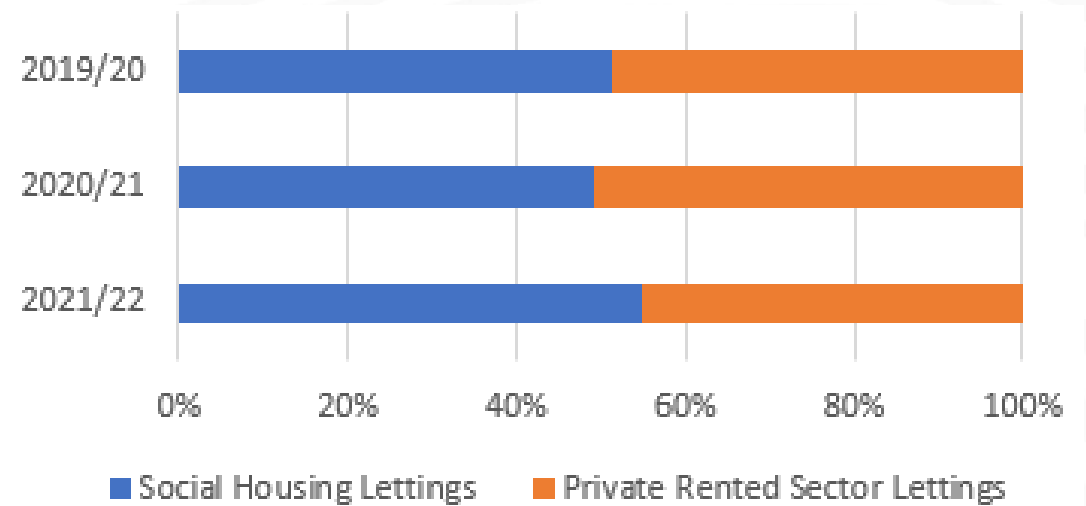
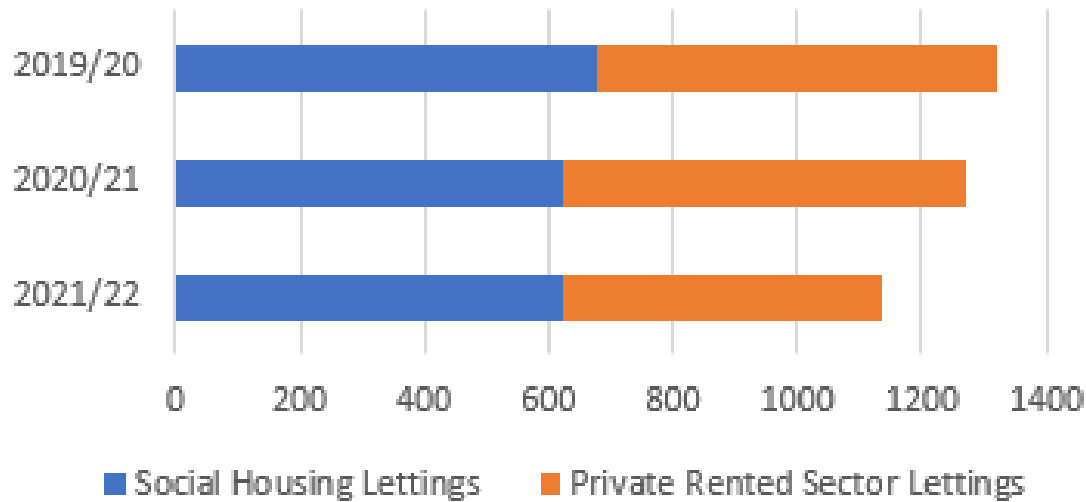
'Trade-downs' in Barnet



- The number of 'trade-downs', where council tenants downsize from a larger property to a smaller one, has also been decreasing.

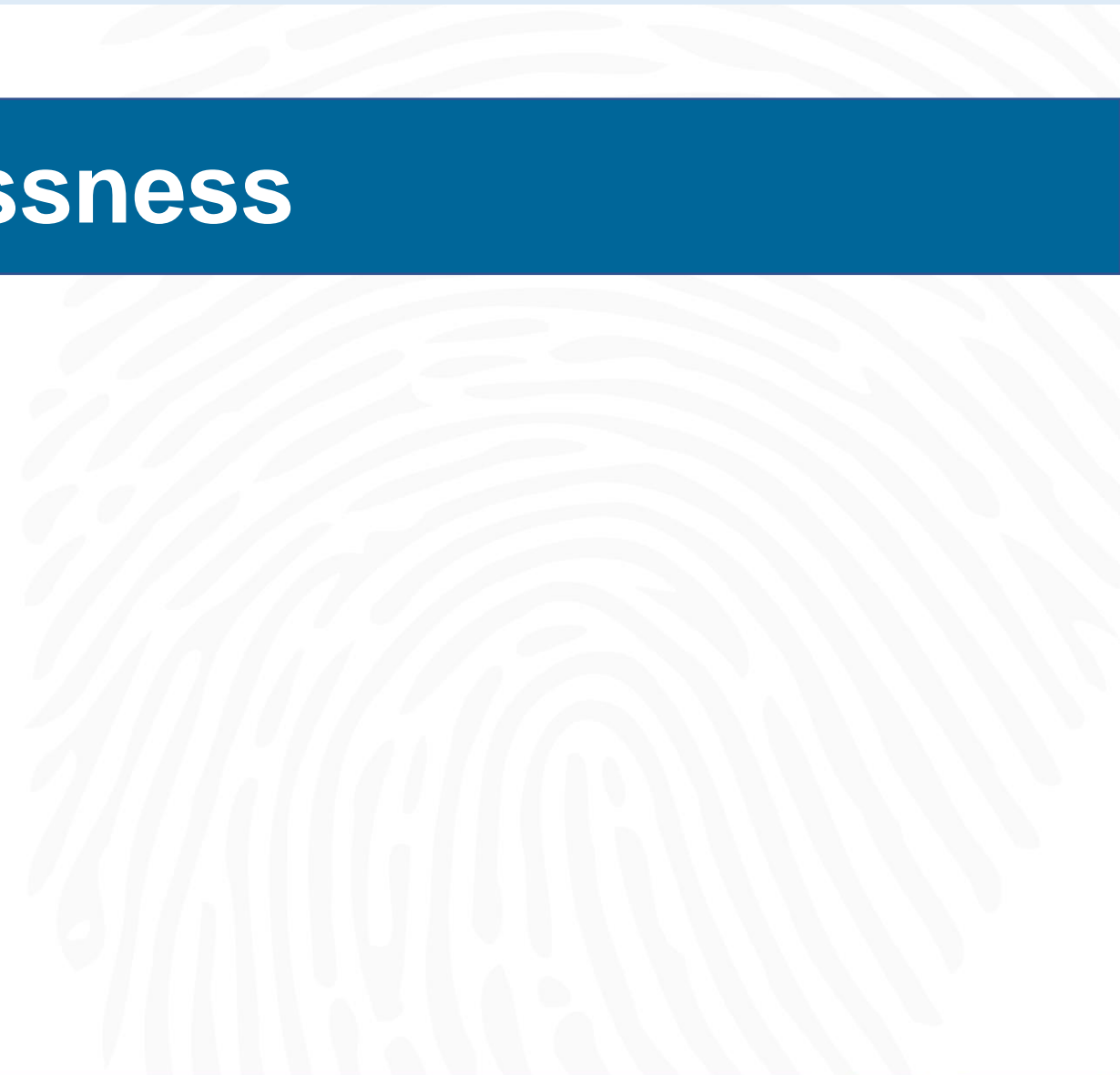
Social housing and private rented sector lettings

Proportion of social housing and private rented sector lettings



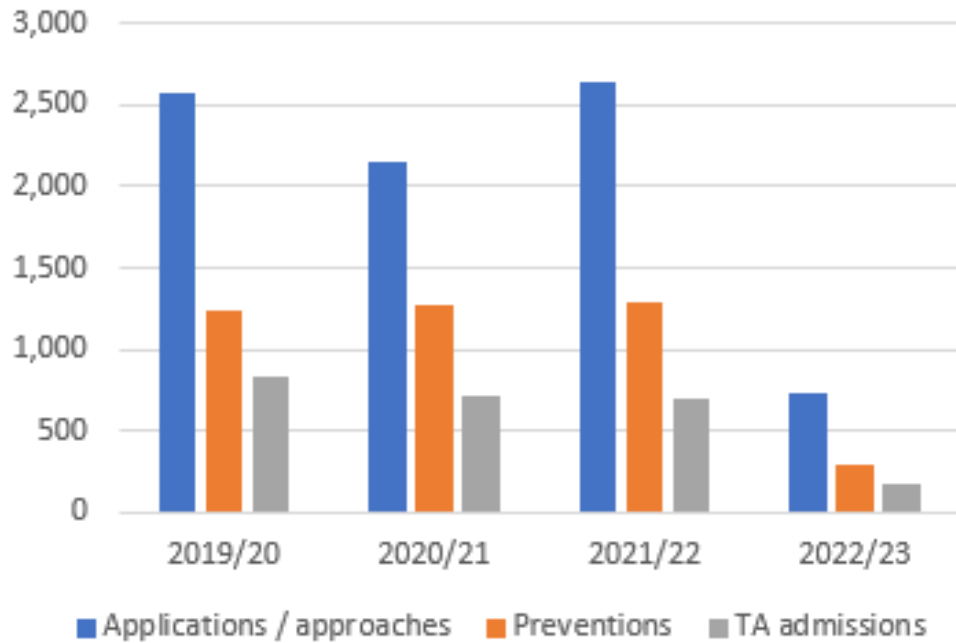
- Barnet has historically had strong access to the private rented sector, which has helped to lower the numbers in temporary accommodation.
- The private rented sector is contracting, and fewer private rented sector lettings are now being made.

Homelessness

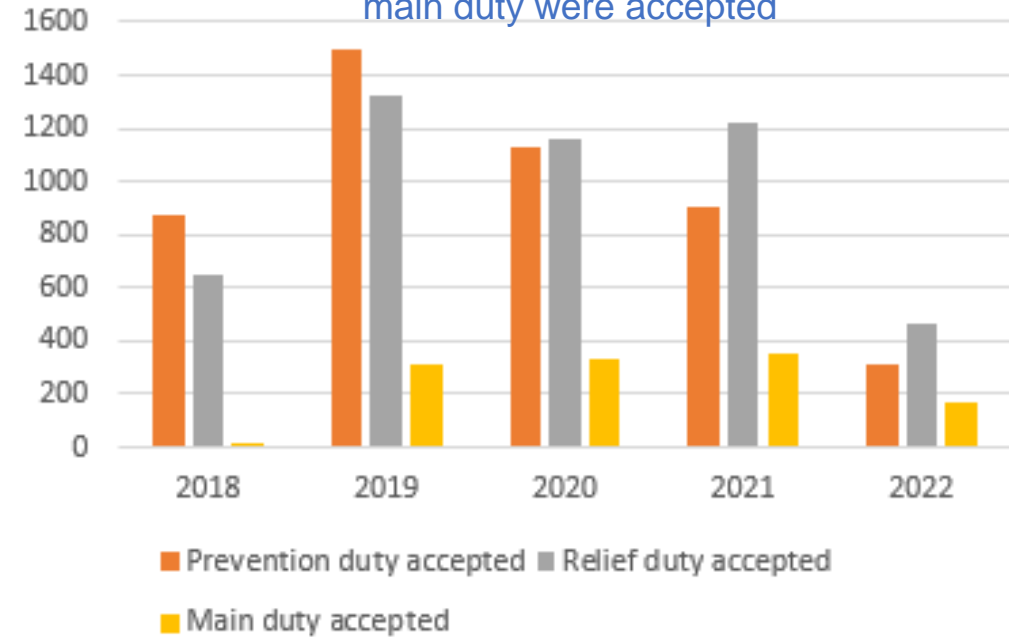


Homelessness – applications

Applications, Preventions, and TA Admissions



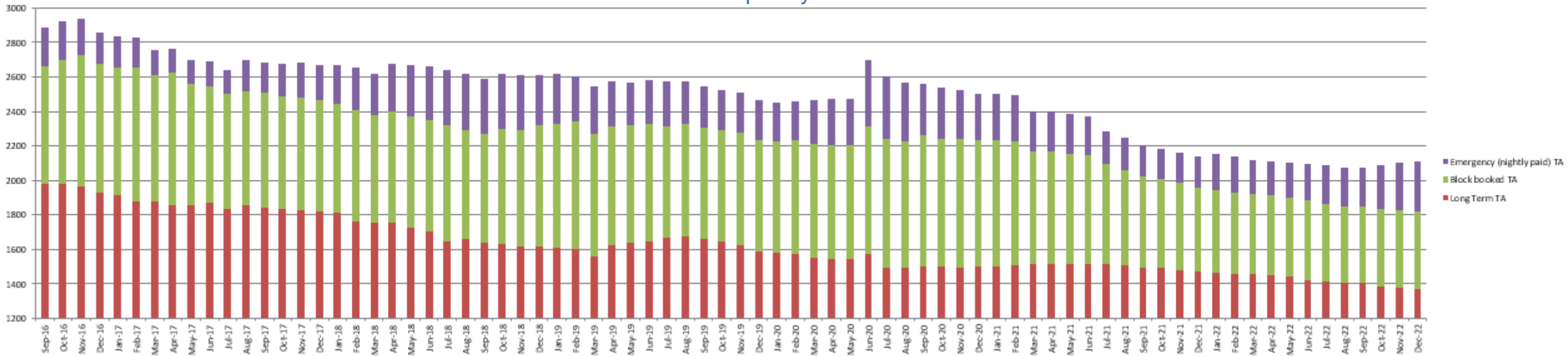
Number for which the prevention duty, relief duty, and main duty were accepted



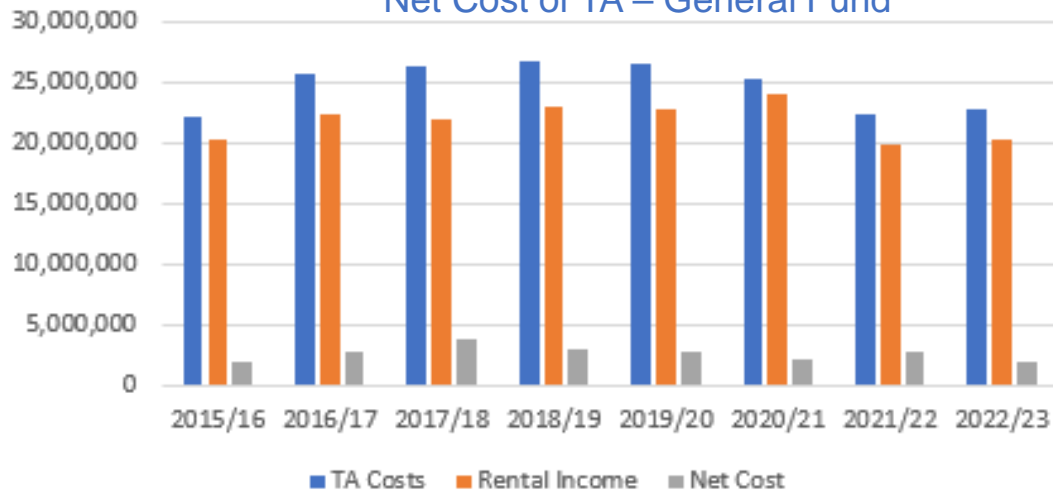
- Homelessness applications have remained high, but preventions have increased slightly.
- The number of households for which the prevention duty was accepted has declined since 2019, however the number of households for which the relief duty was accepted and the main duty was accepted has remained fairly consistent.

Homelessness – temporary accommodation

Households in Temporary Accommodation

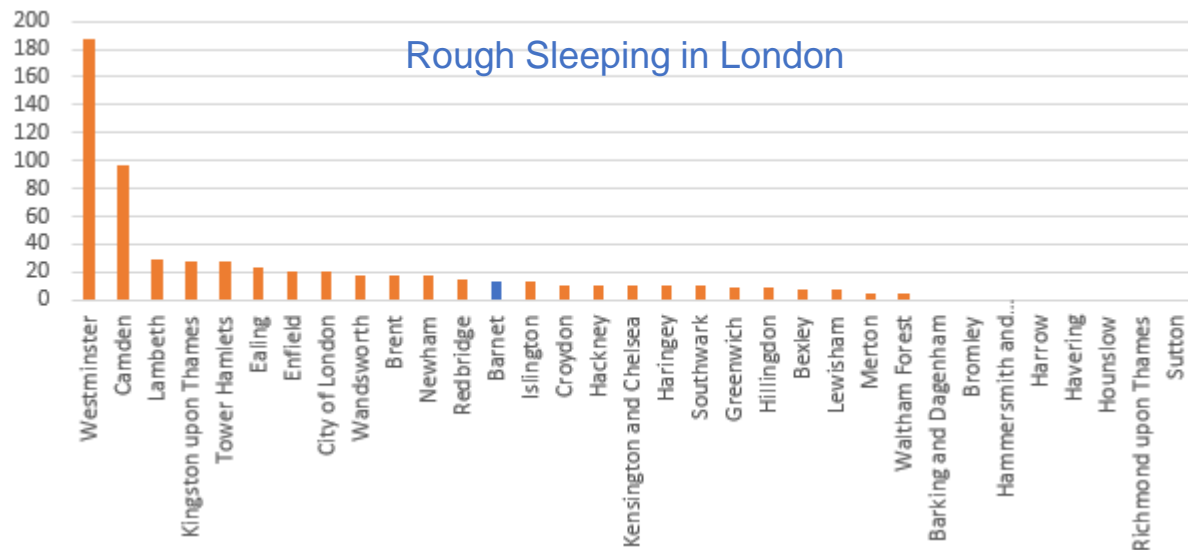


Net Cost of TA – General Fund

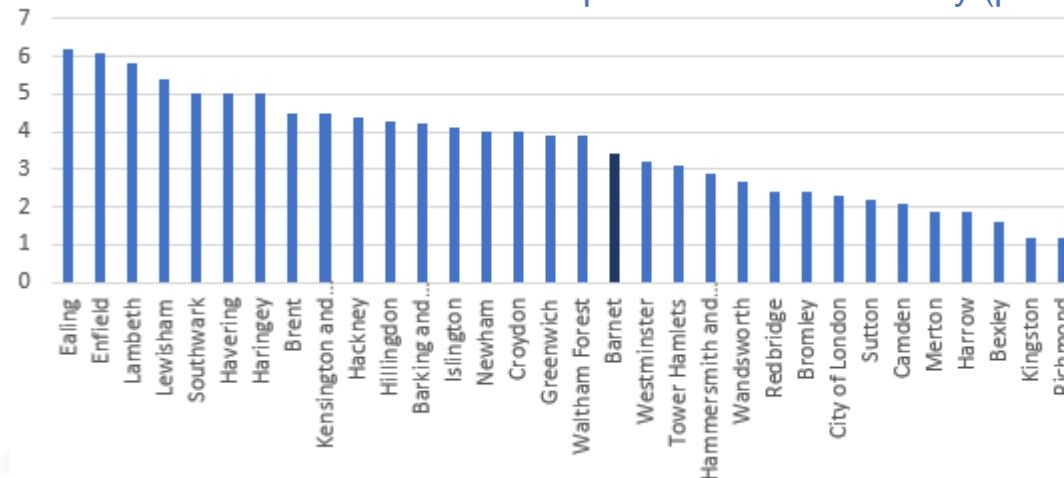


- Use of TA had been reducing and in August and September 2022 was at its lowest in over 10 years; however, numbers in TA have started to rise again due to challenges in the supply of suitable accommodation, including in the private rented sector.
- The projected net cost of temporary accommodation for 2022/23 is slightly lower than the previous year due to underspending on landlord incentives; the package currently offered is not competitive enough with the private market and in comparison with some other boroughs, resulting in less willingness for landlords to take on TA clients in private tenancies.
- Net costs are inclusive of TA payments, TA landlord incentives, TA rental income, and SDI rental income and costs.

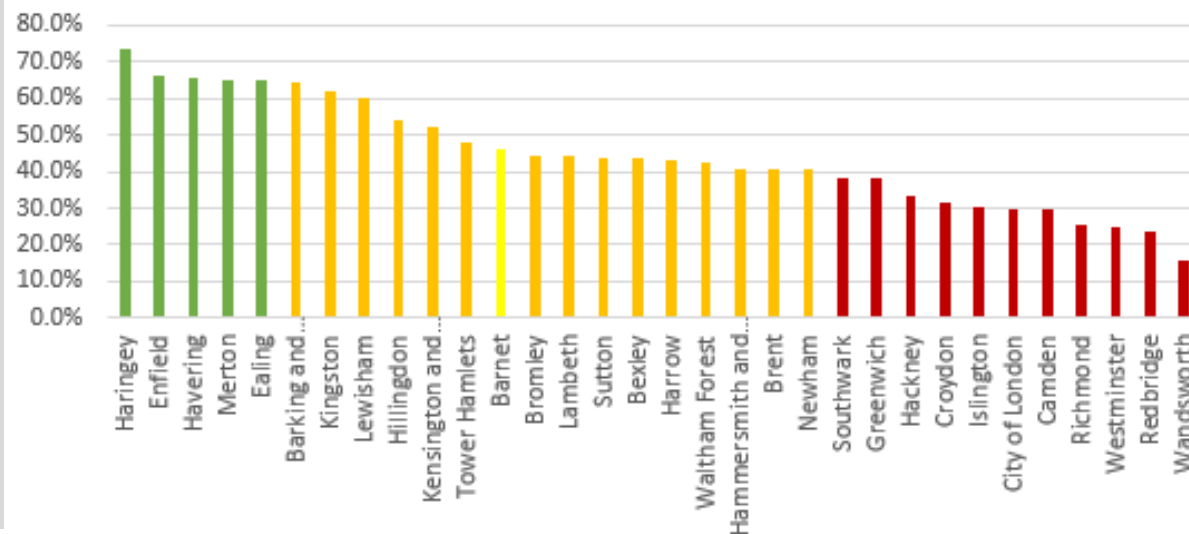
Homelessness performance comparison



Households assessed as owed a prevention or relief duty (per 000s)



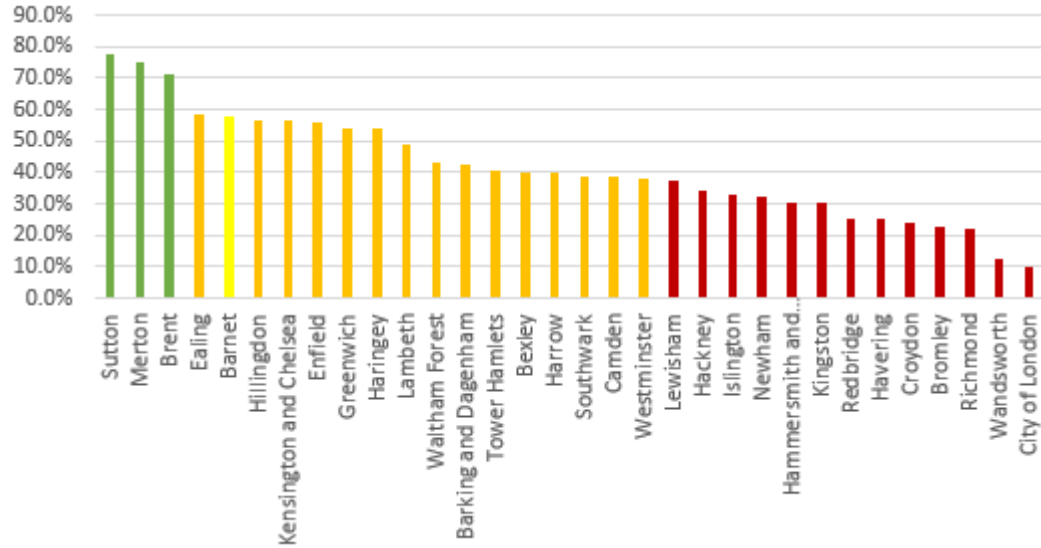
% owed a duty being accepted at prevention stage



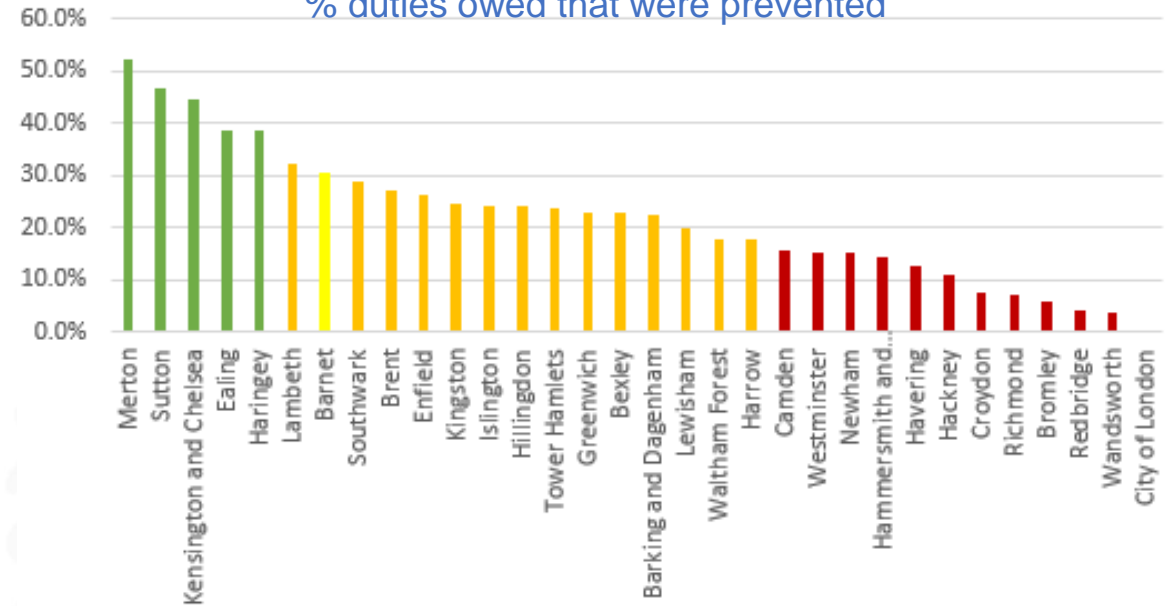
- Rough sleeping lower than London average in Barnet, and was lower in 2020 and 2021 than previous years.
- In the January – March 2022 quarterly data return on local authorities' actions under statutory homelessness legislation, Barnet performed in the middle two quartiles nationally.
- 12 of 27 London 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

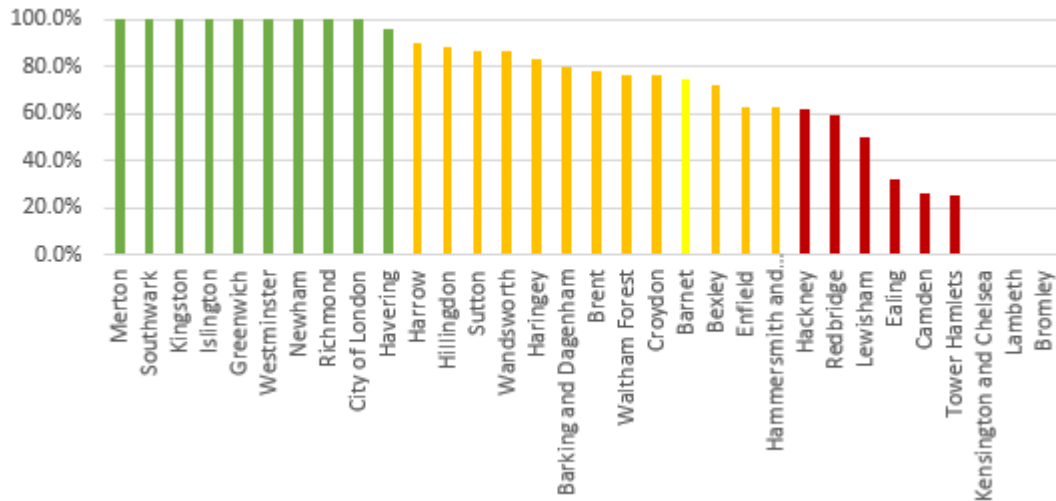
% prevention and relief duties owed that ended in accommodation secured



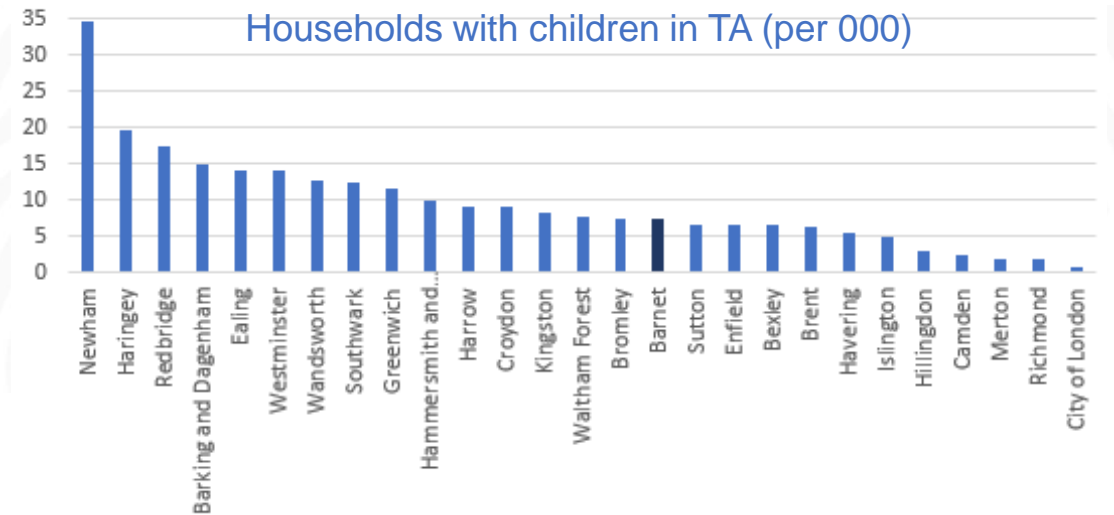
% duties owed that were prevented



% main duties that ended in accommodation secured

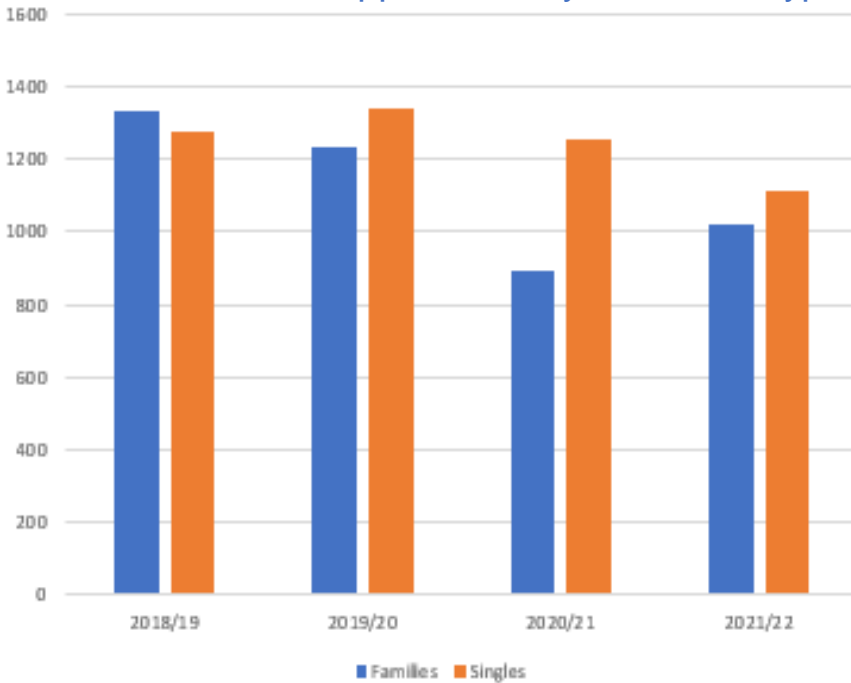


Households with children in TA (per 000)

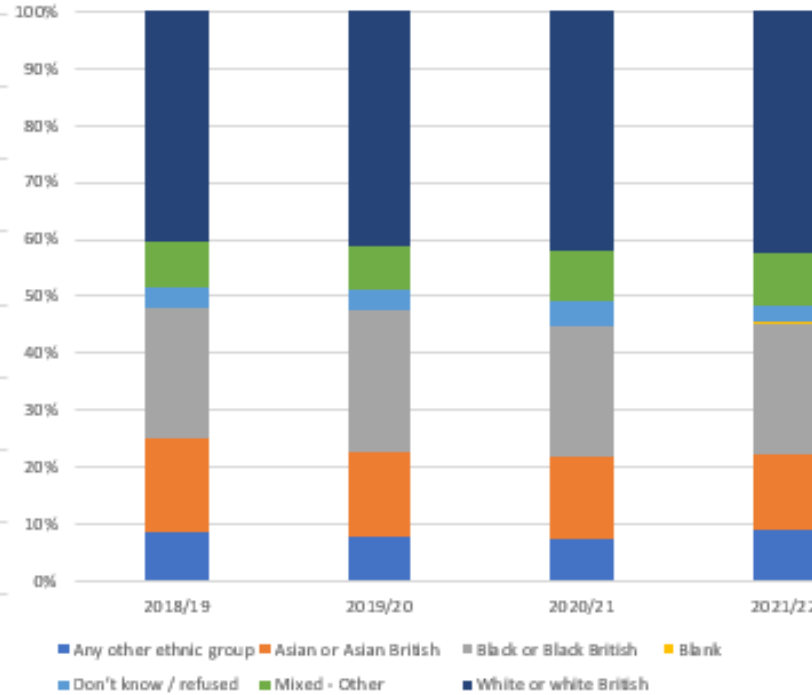


Characteristics of households approaching as homeless

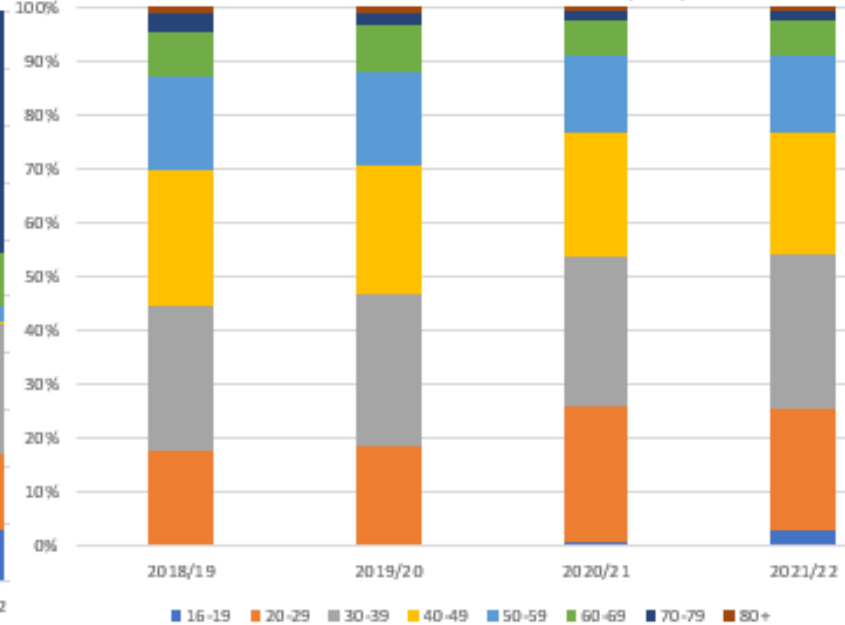
Homelessness approaches by household type



Homelessness approaches by ethnic origin



Homelessness approaches by age group



- A decrease in the number of households approaching as homeless (**2,608** in 2018/19 and **2,134** in 2021/22).
- The proportion of women has increased slightly to **55.8%**.
- A shift in the type of household, with more singles approaching from 2019/20 to 2020/21 (**52%** of cases in 20/21).

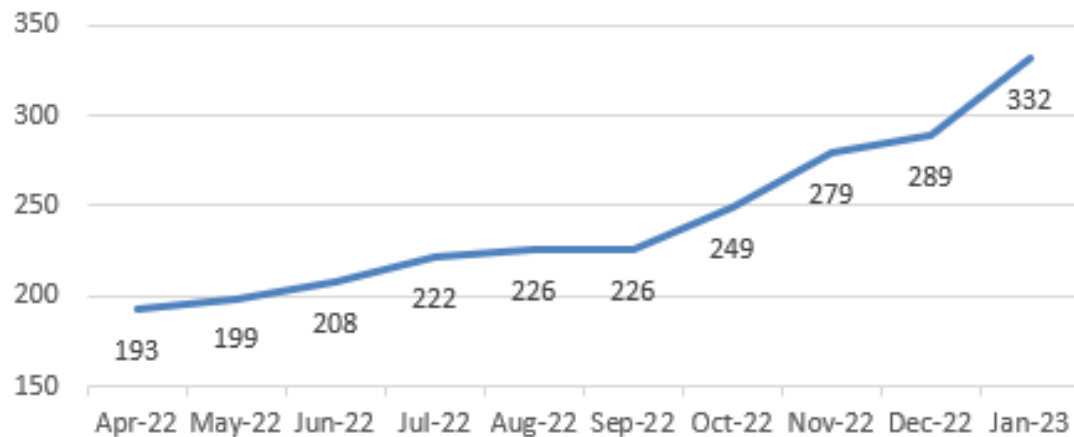
- High representation of those from an ethnic minority background, with those from a Black / Black British background highly represented (**23%**) alongside those from a White background (**42%**) in 2021/22.
- The age group 30-39 remains the most common, however there has been an increase in younger 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
Homelessness approaches from the private rented sector	145	142	166	170	170	283

Households in emergency temporary accommodation



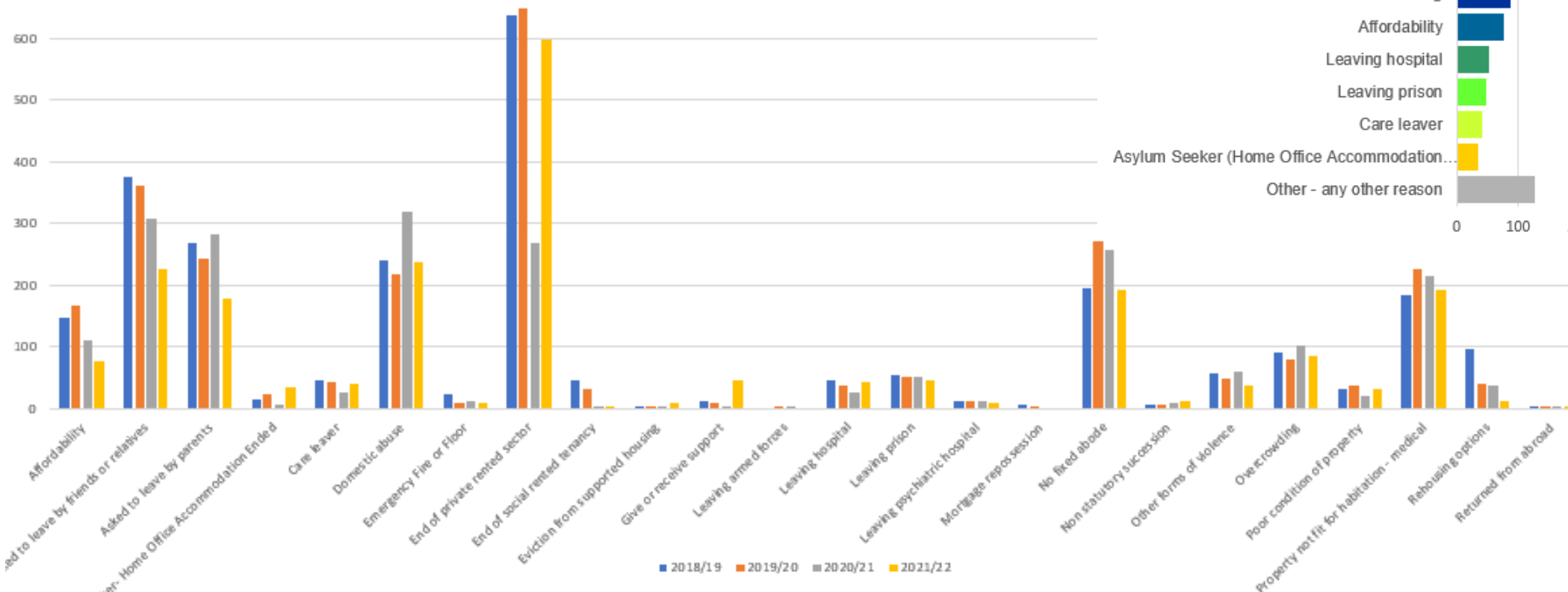
Households in bed and breakfast accommodation

Period	Jun-22	Jul-22	Aug-22	Sep-22	Oct-22	Nov-22	Dec-22	Jan-23
Households in B&B accommodation	92	90	84	97	109	120	121	138
Families in B&B for more than 6 weeks	1	0	0	0	0	0	1	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.

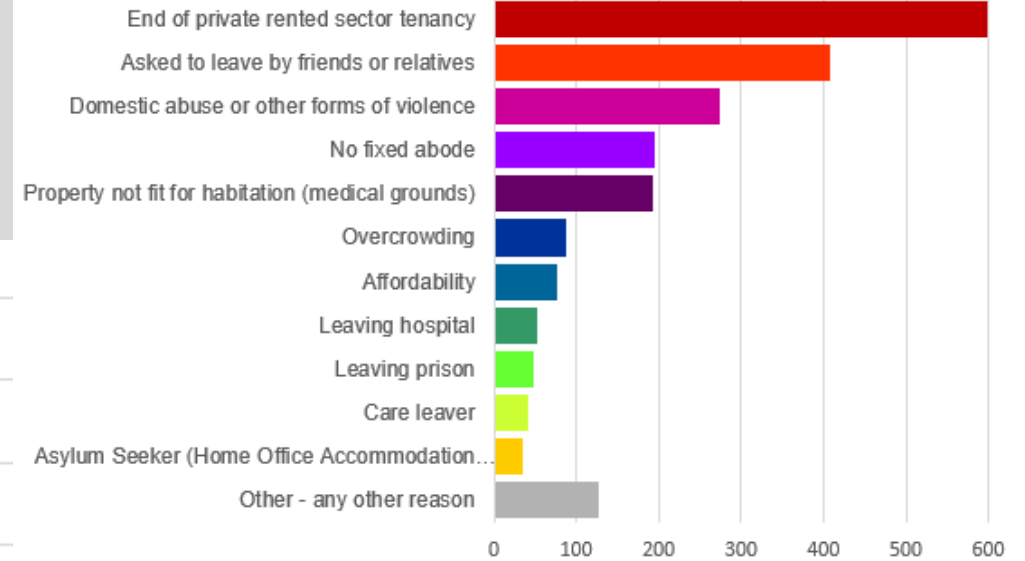
Reasons for approaching as homeless

- End of private rented sector tenancy remains the most common reason for approaching as homeless – from 2018/19 it increased by 3.6% to **28.1%** in 2021/22.
- Other common reasons for approaching as homeless in 2021/22 were domestic violence (**11.2%**), asked to leave by family or friends (**10.6%**), no fixed abode (**9.1%**), and property not fit for habitation (medical) (**9%**).



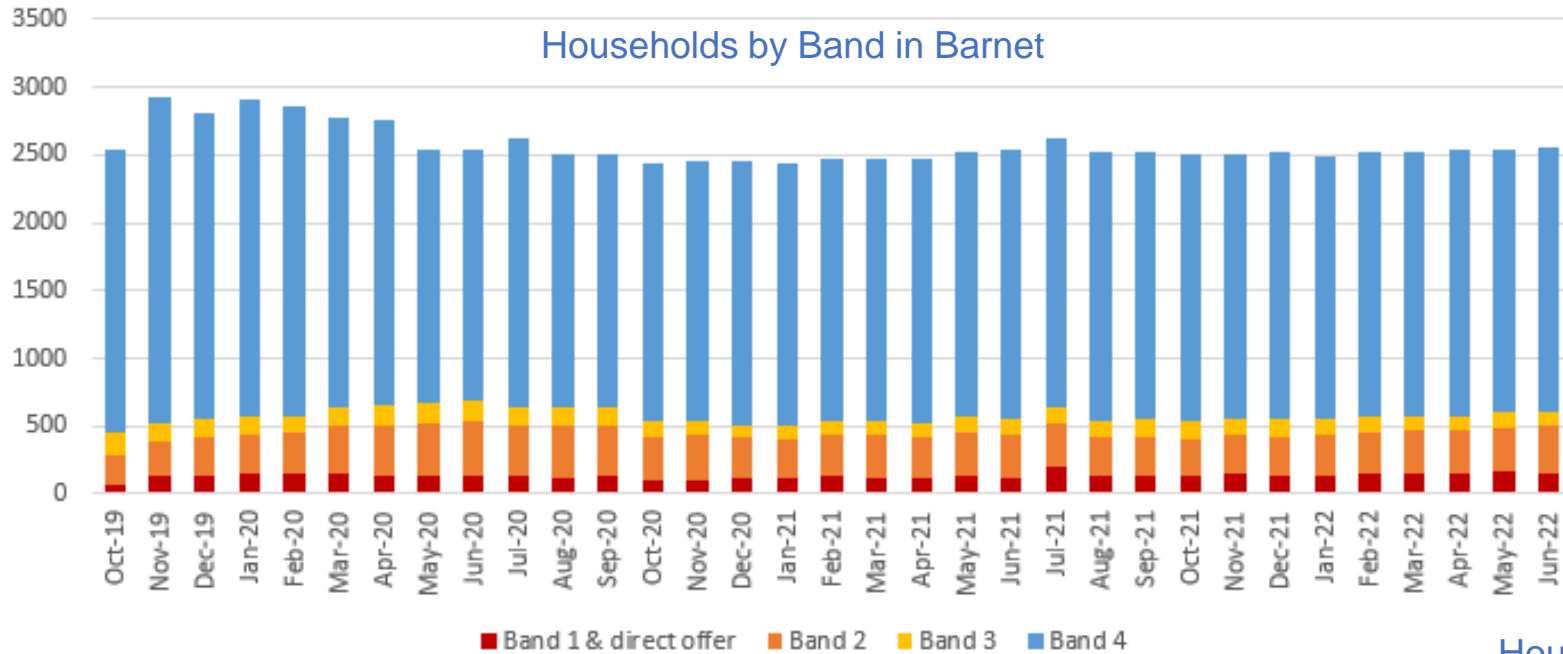
Reason for loss of last settled accommodation 2018/19 – 2021/22

Reason for loss of last settled accommodation 2021/22



Housing needs

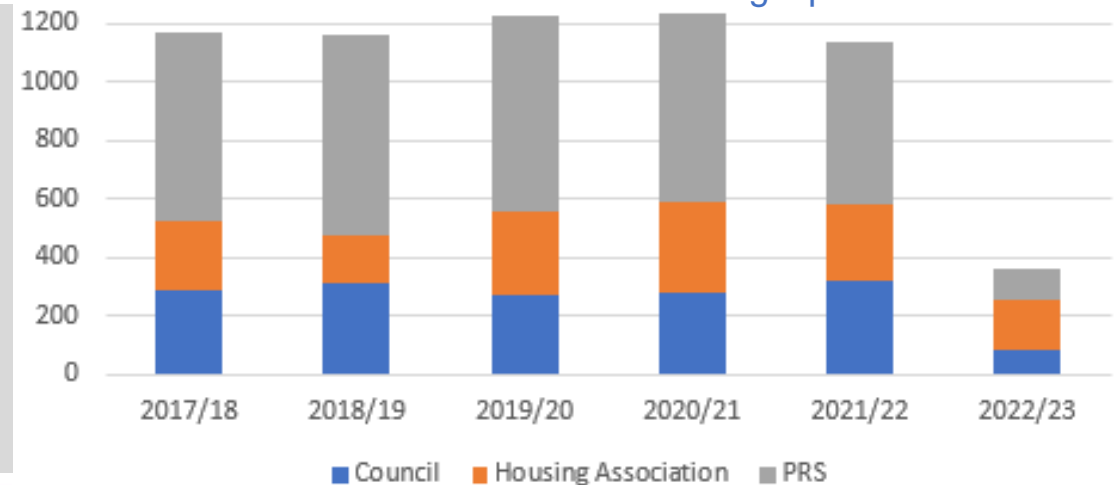
Households by Band in Barnet



- Housing demand has remained high, with an increase in households being placed in Bands 1 and 2.

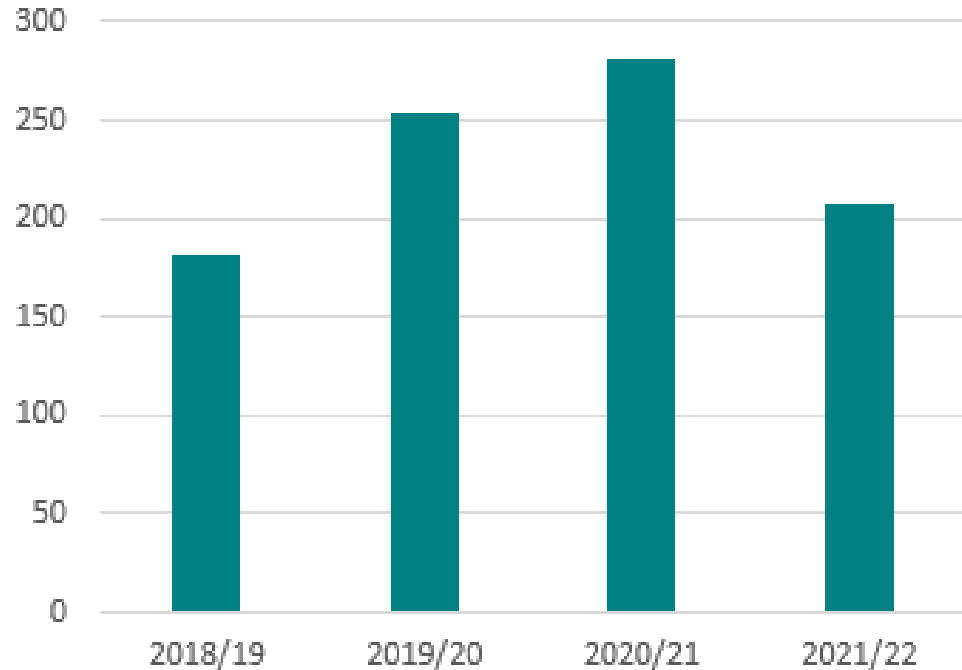
- The supply of social rented / affordable homes has fallen slightly.
- Since April 2021 the private rented market has become increasingly challenging, with a reduction in supply of 35% across London, PRS rents increasing by 16% in 2022, and more households declining PRS offers.

Households rehoused via Housing Options service



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.

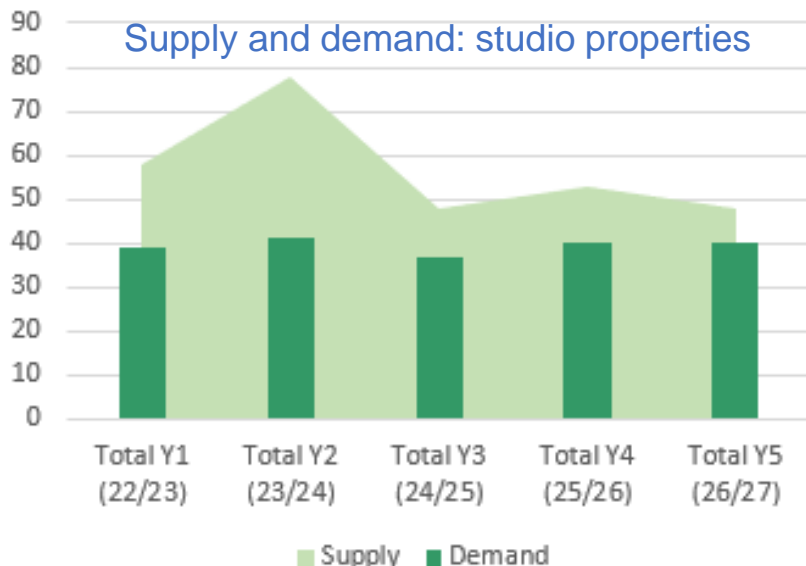
Housing supply and high priority demand

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

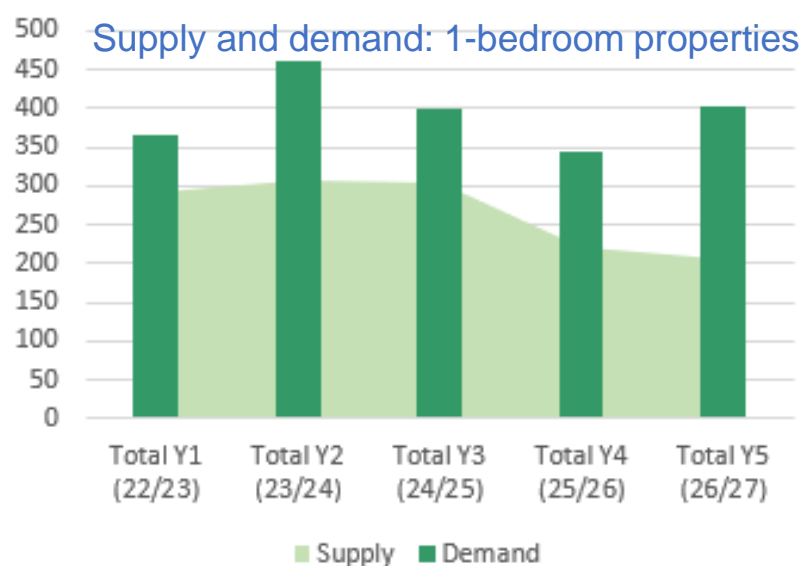
- Focusing on the demand from housing applicants in Bands 1 and 2, direct offers, and regeneration and ad-hoc decanting schemes, there are particular housing supply pressures regarding 1-bedroom properties, 3-bedroom properties, and 4-bedroom properties.
- There is also a limited expected supply of wheelchair-adapted properties to meet the present need from Band 1 applicants.

Housing supply and high priority demand

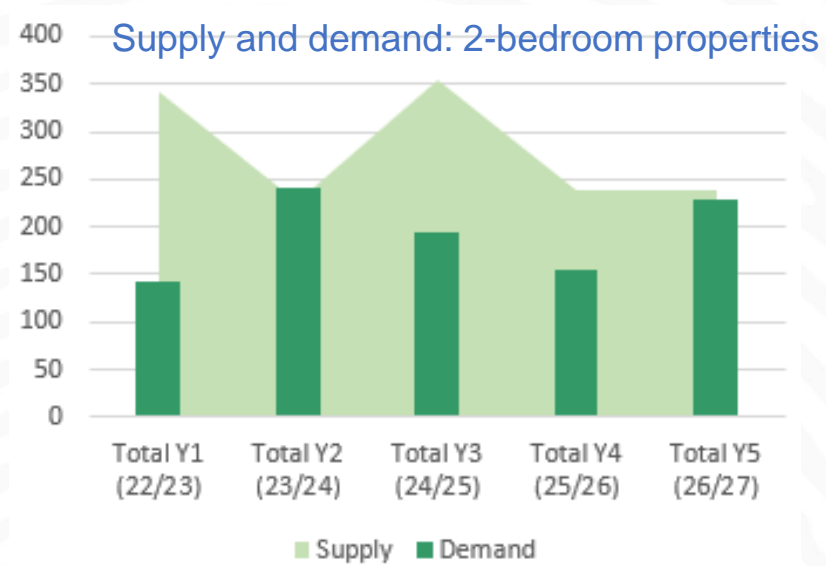
Supply and demand: studio properties



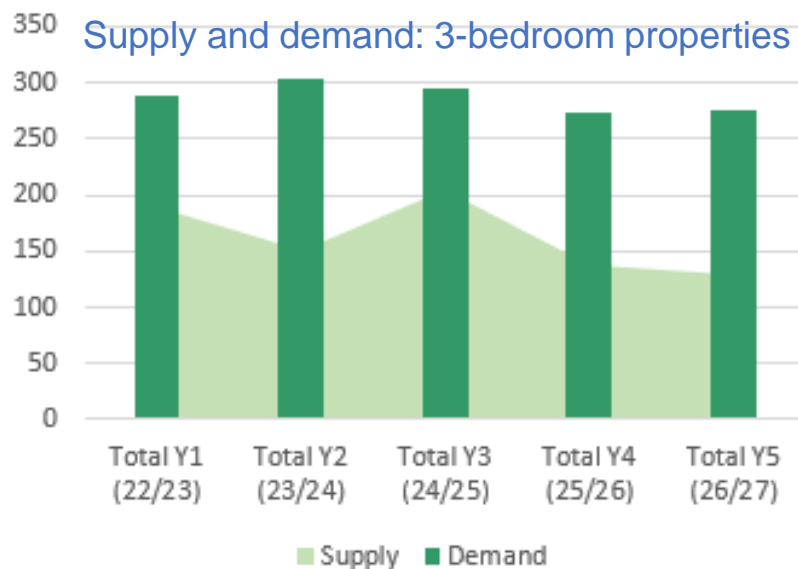
Supply and demand: 1-bedroom properties



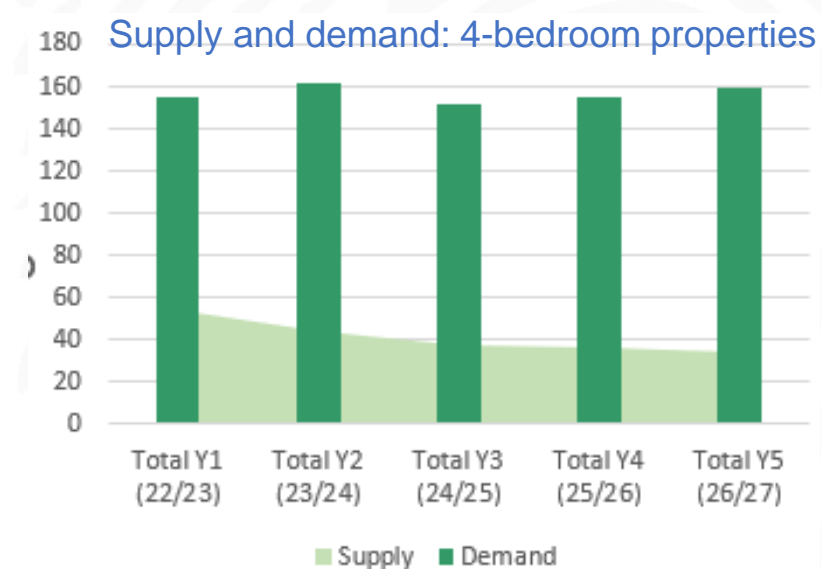
Supply and demand: 2-bedroom properties



Supply and demand: 3-bedroom properties



Supply and demand: 4-bedroom properties

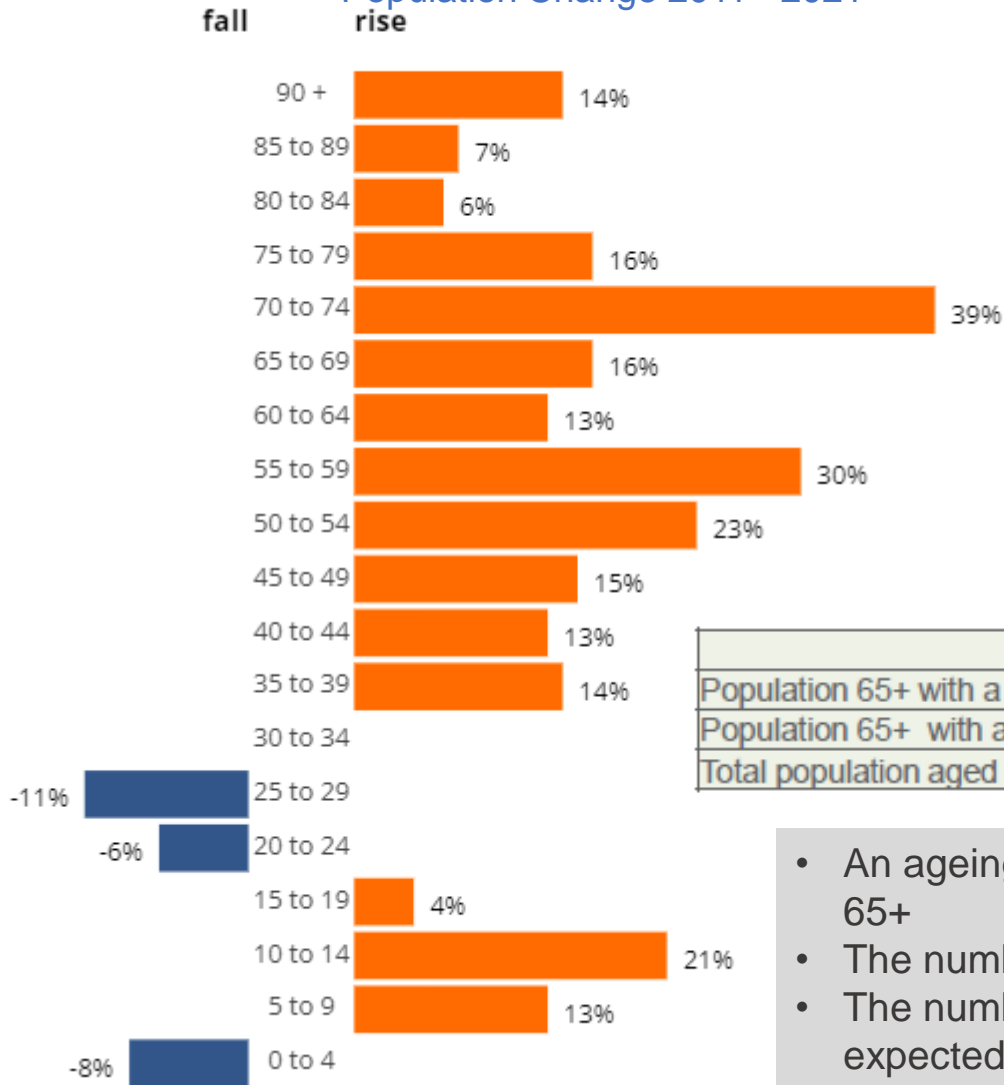


Older People

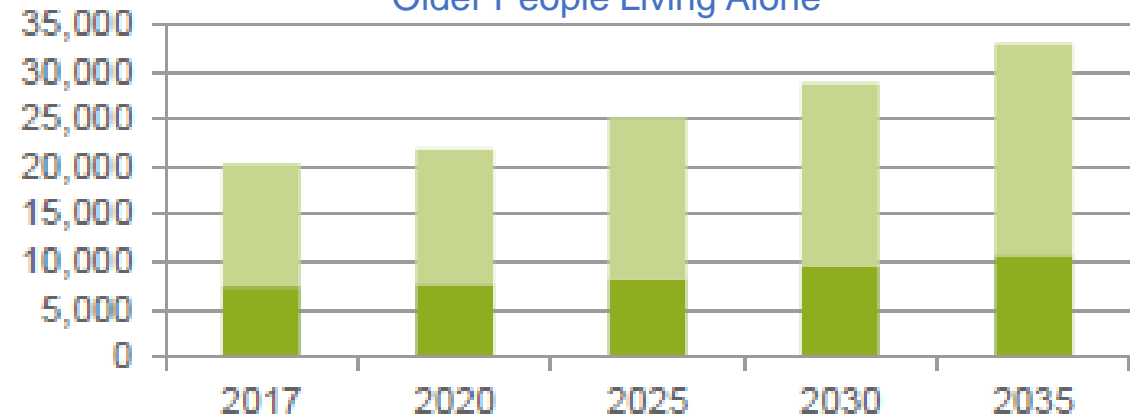


Older people

Population Change 2011 - 2021



Older People Living Alone



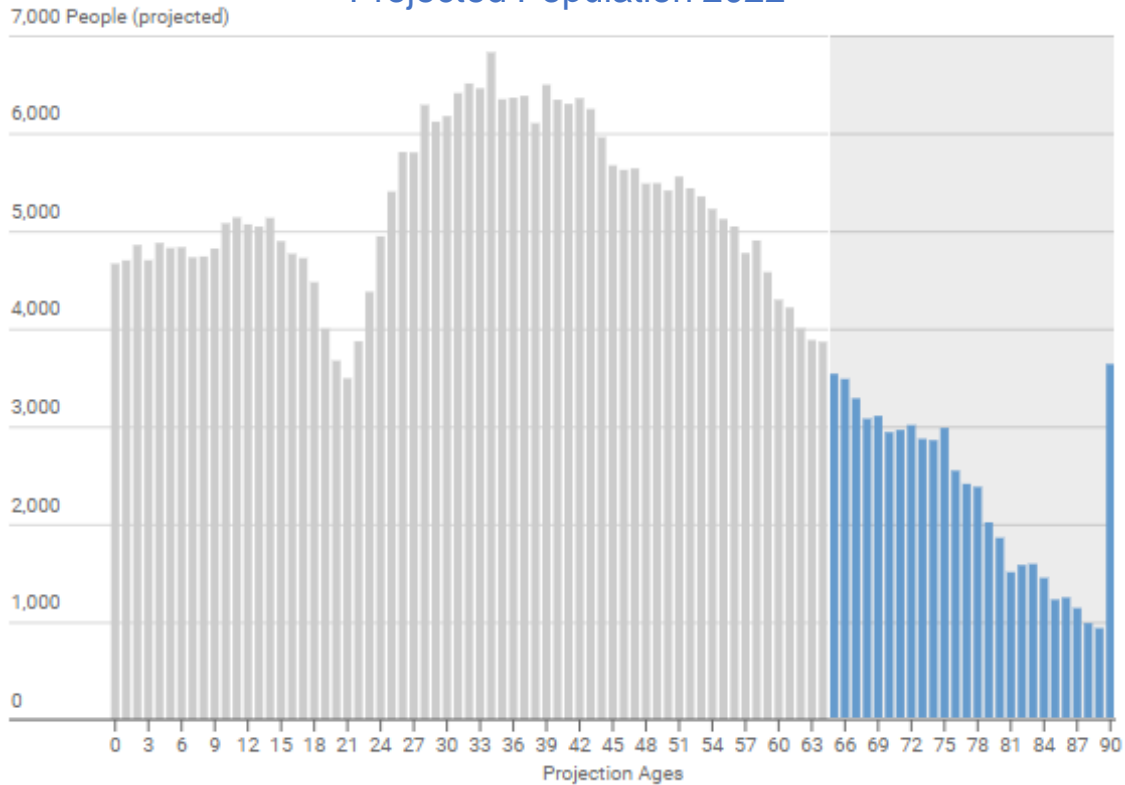
■ Total population aged 75 and over predicted to live alone

	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

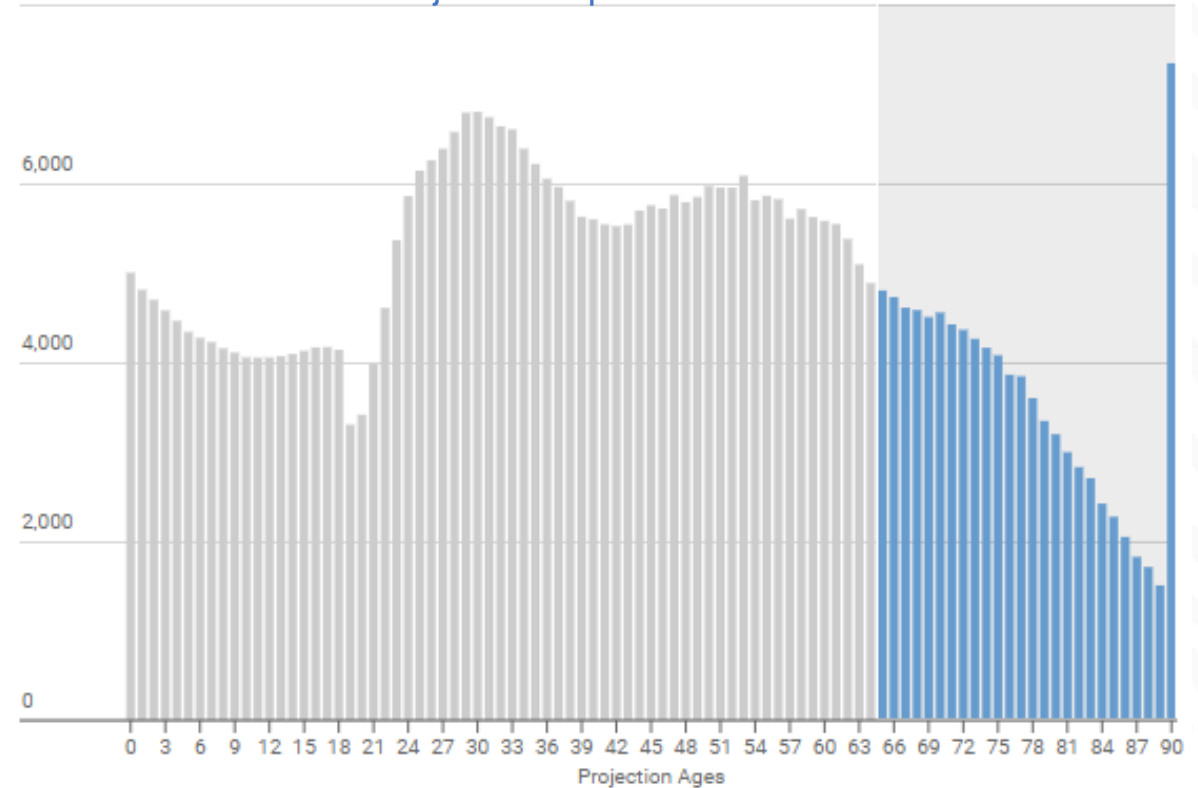
- An ageing population, although below the national average: **18.3%** increase in those aged 65+
- The number of people living alone is expected to increase.
- The number of older people with long-term limiting health conditions and dementia is expected to increase.

Older people

Projected Population 2022



Projected Population 2041



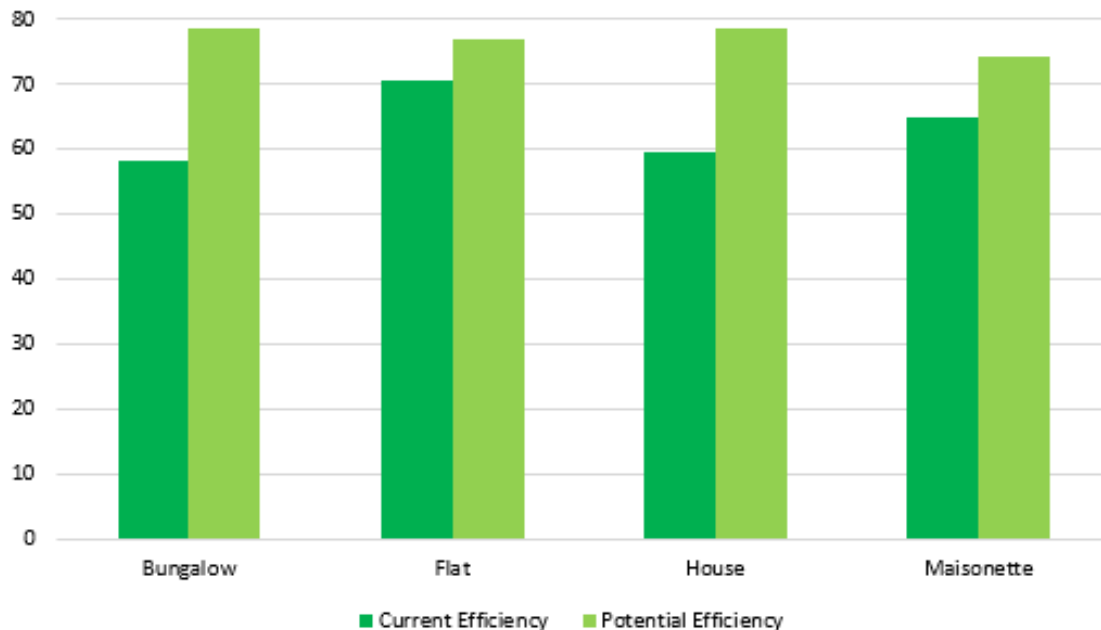
- Projections indicate an increase in people aged over 65 in Barnet by 2041.
- Population of those aged 0-17 projected to decrease by 11.6% by 2041.
- Population of those aged 18-64 projected to increase by 5.7% by 2041.
- Population of those aged 65+ projected to increase by 56% by 2041.

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.

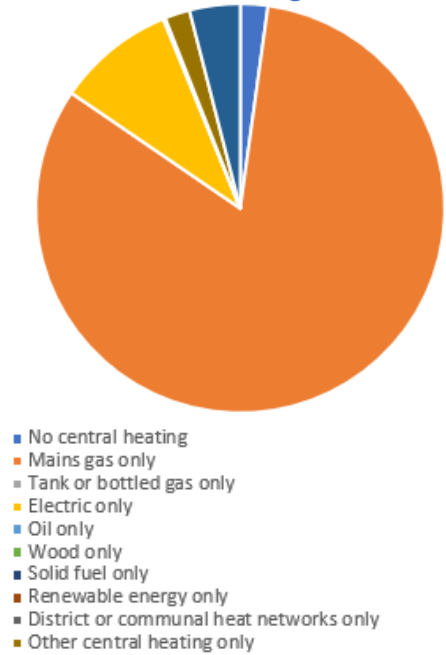
Domestic property energy efficiency rating

Ratings	Energy Rating (%)	
	2022	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.

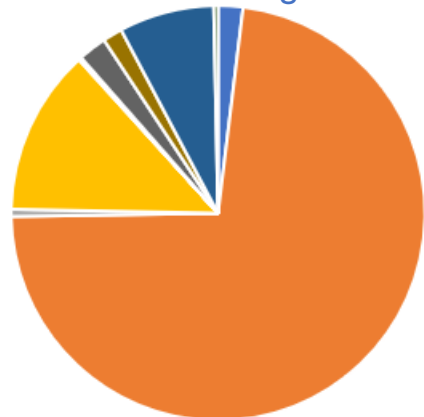
Central heating and renewable energy

Central heating 2011



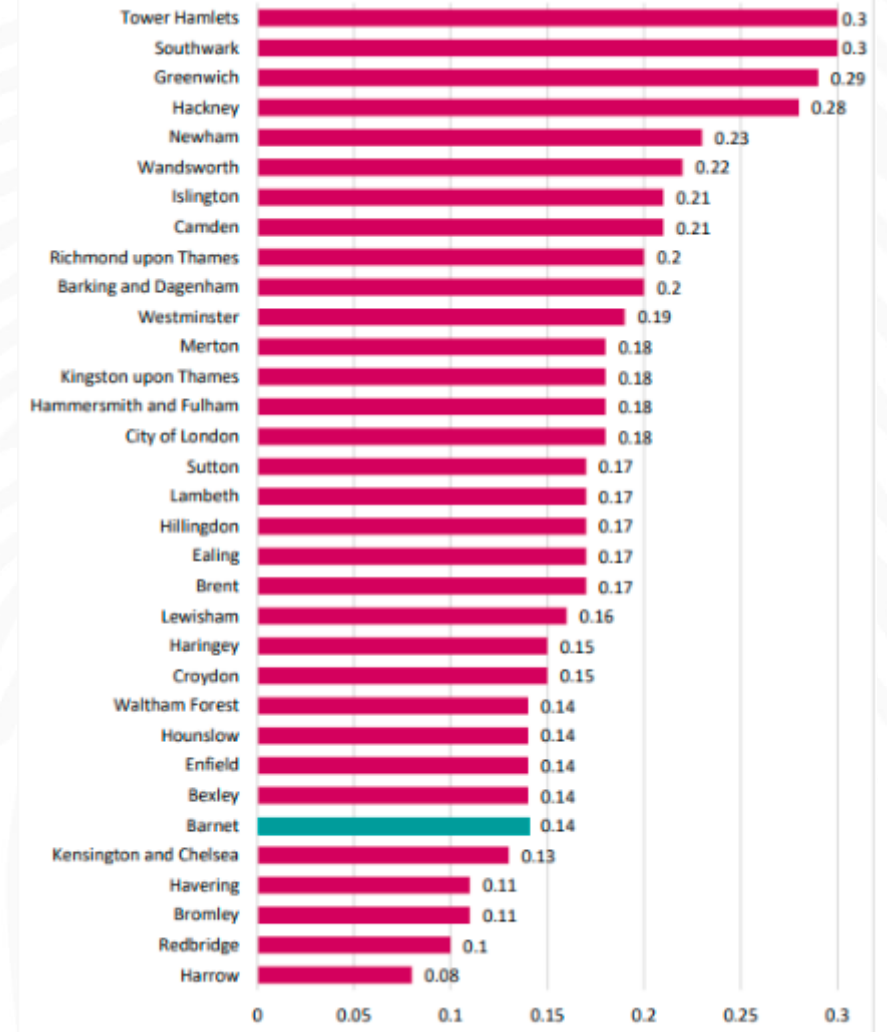
- Most households rely on gas central heating (**72.8%**), although this had reduced by 9% compared to 2011.
- The 2021 Census captured more information about central heating types – including separating mains and tank/bottled gas, separating wood and solid fuel, and adding district/communal heating 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



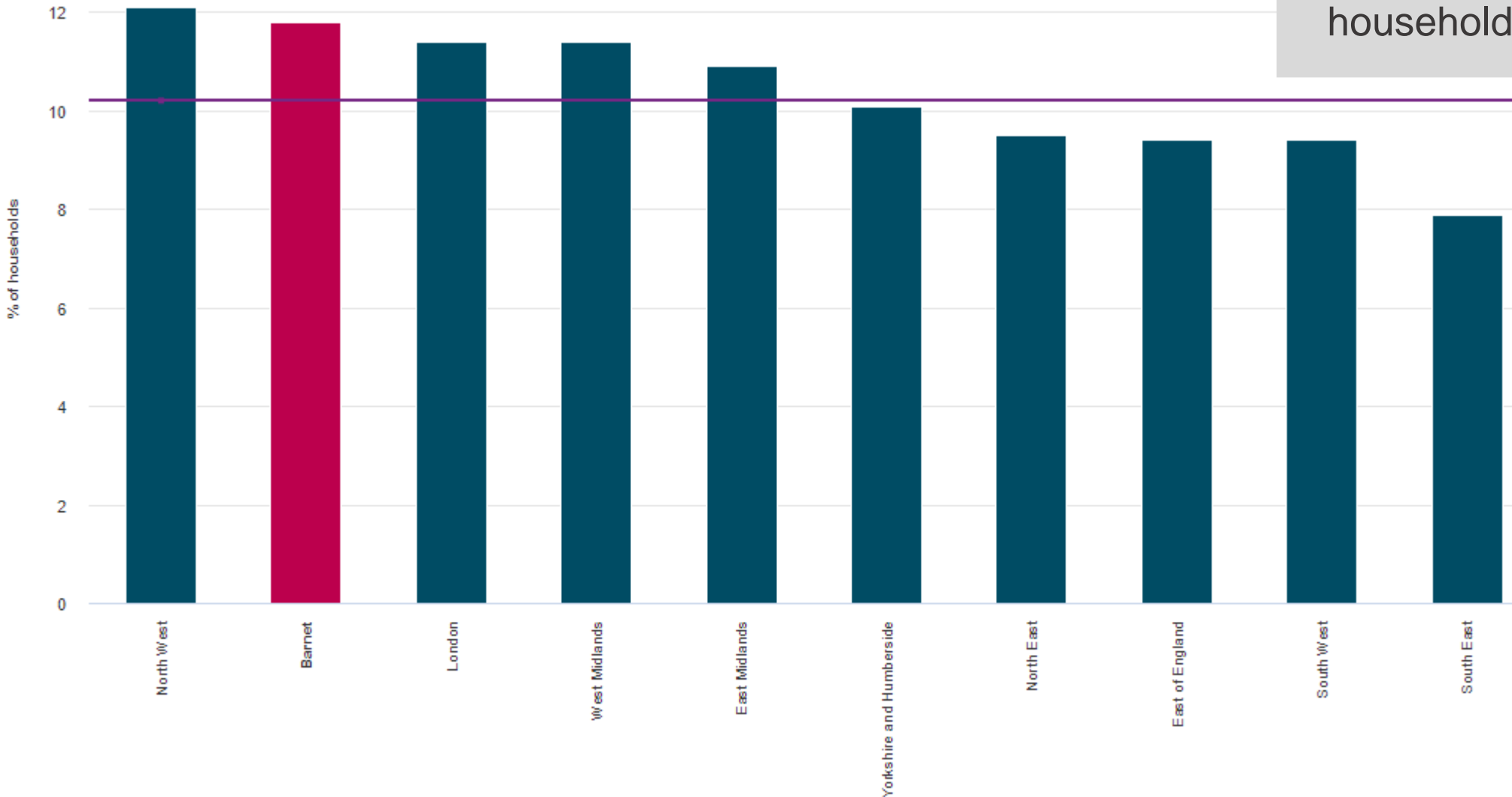
- Barnet ranked **24th** out of 33 London boroughs for the percentage of households that used renewable energy for central heating in 2021.
- Barnet had the **18th** highest percentage (0.34%) of households with two or more types of central heating including renewable energy.

% 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

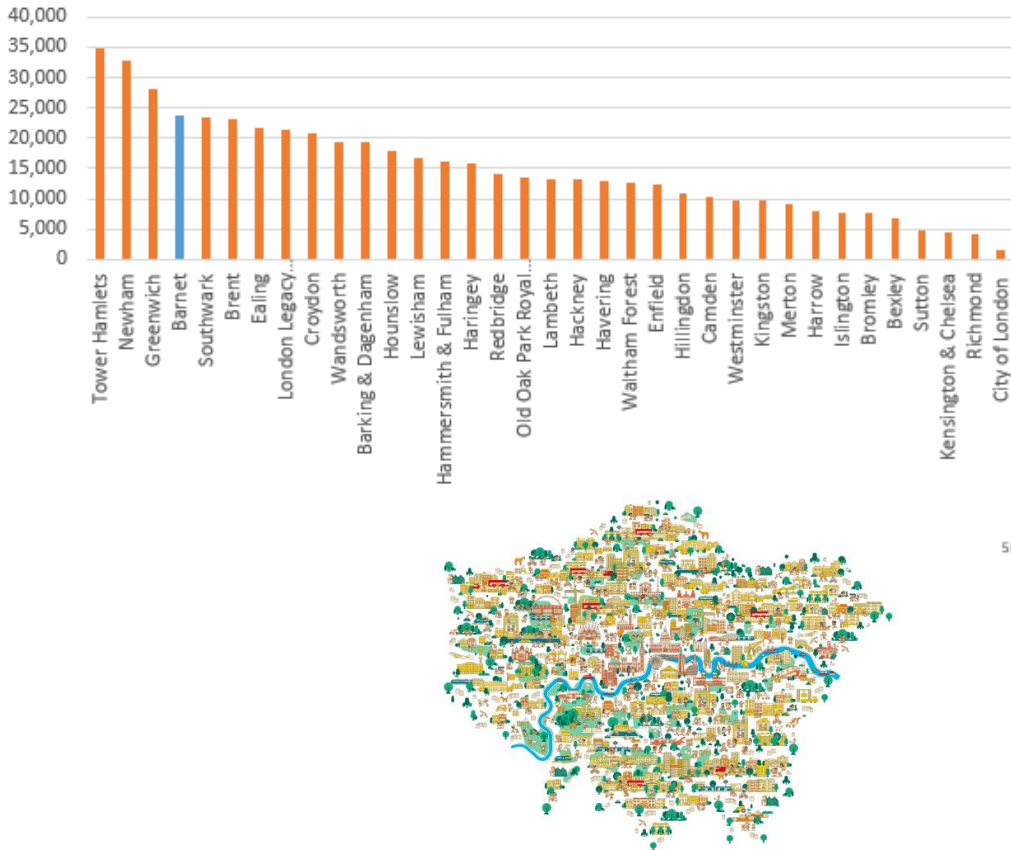
- **2,086** new homes delivered on regeneration schemes between 2018 and 2020
- **1,572** new homes to be delivered on regeneration sites, of which **520** will be for affordable rent, and **1,052** will be affordable homes for purchase

Barnet Homes	2023	2024	2025	2026	Type
Stag House	51				Extra Care
Cheshire House	51	75			Extra Care
Upper Lower Fosters		142			100% affordable
Broadfields			30		100% affordable
The Grange			50		100% affordable
Little Strand		35			100% affordable
Coppetts	16				100% affordable
Burnt Oak Rooftop		18			100% affordable
Potential future programmes			10	600	Mix of 100% & 50% affordable
Total	118	270	90	600	

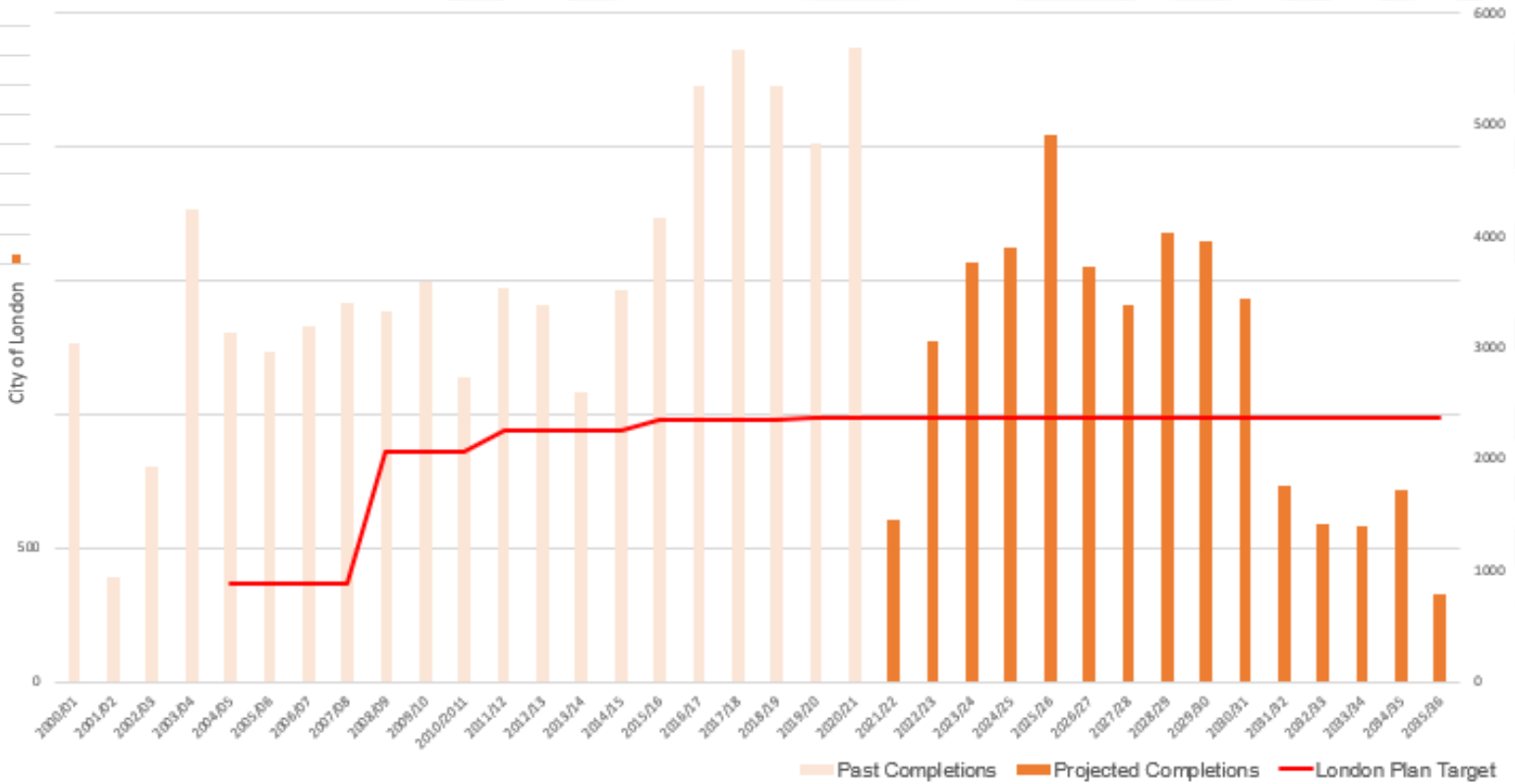
Regeneration sites	2022	2023	2024	2025	2026	2027	2028	2029	2030	2031	2032
Dollis Valley	42			94							
Granville Road	28	18									
West Hendon		78	71	34	96	19					
Grahame Park			209		190	66	72	78	190	229	11
Total	70	96	280	128	286	85	72	78	190	229	11

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)

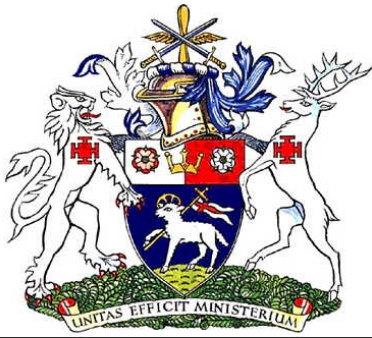


Barnet's London Plan housing trajectory



Barnet's housing trajectory shows that the borough will exceed the target in the London Plan.

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Housing and Growth Committee

23 March 2023

Title	Homelessness and Rough Sleeping Strategy
Report of	Chair of the Housing and Growth Committee
Wards	All
Status	Public
Urgent	No
Key	Yes
Enclosures	Appendix 1 – Draft Homelessness and Rough Sleeping Strategy Appendix 2 – Housing Strategy and Homelessness and Rough Sleeping Strategy Evidence Base
Officer Contact Details	Cath Shaw, Deputy Chief Executive Officer, cath.shaw@barnet.gov.uk Laura Giles, Head of Strategy and Compliance, Barnet Homes, laura.giles@barnethomes.org

Summary

The council has developed a new draft Homelessness and Rough Sleeping Strategy to take account of changes in the housing sector and wider demographic and economic changes, including rising housing costs, a growing private rented sector, and legislative changes.

If approved by the Housing and Growth Committee, the council will undertake a public consultation on the aims of the draft strategy with key stakeholders including residents and interested third parties including local advocacy groups. Cabinet will then be asked to review the responses to the consultation and approve a final version of the Homelessness and Rough Sleeping Strategy.

Officers Recommendations

1. Housing and Growth Committee considers and approves the proposed draft Homelessness and Rough Sleeping Strategy at Appendix 1 for consultation, subject to any changes.
2. Housing and Growth Committee notes that the results of the consultation will be reported to Cabinet in the new municipal year together with officer recommendations and, if appropriate, a revised strategy.
3. Housing and Growth Committee notes the evidence base at Appendix 2.

1. WHY THIS REPORT IS NEEDED

Background

1.1 The council's Homelessness and Rough Sleeping Strategy dates from 2019, and since its implementation there have been significant changes in the housing landscape that make the introduction of a new strategy timely. These changes include:

- a change in the council's administration in May 2022; the administration's manifesto included a number of housing-related priorities, including those concerning the supply of affordable housing for rent and for ownership, sustainability, and private tenants' rights;
- the release of the Social Housing White Paper in November 2020, which sets out central government's housing-related priorities;
- the release of other White Papers that have an impact on housing-related priorities, including the Private Rented Sector White Paper (June 2022), Social Care White Paper (December 2021), and Levelling Up White Paper (February 2022);
- new legislation including the Fire Safety Act 2021, the Building Safety Act 2022, the Domestic Abuse Act 2021, the Renters Reform Bill, the Levelling Up and Regeneration Bill, and the Social Housing Regulation Bill;
- updates to key Barnet strategies, some of which are currently being reviewed following the change in administration, or new strategies in development including the Barnet Plan 2021-25, Growth Strategy 2020-30, the Joint Health and Wellbeing Strategy 2021-25, Cost of Living Strategy, Sustainability Strategy, and the Local Plan; and
- the impact of the COVID-19 pandemic and the ongoing rise in cost of living.

1.2 Officers have updated the evidence base (Appendix 2) that supports the Homelessness and Rough Sleeping Strategy. A new Strategic Housing Market Assessment (SHMA) has not been commissioned due to the timing of the release of the latest Census results; however, a review has been undertaken of the key population information changes. The most significant challenges facing the borough regarding the homelessness and housing crises include:

- Short supply of social housing in Barnet, which has the sixth smallest provision in London;
- Increasing homelessness demand post-COVID 19 pandemic;
- Ongoing contraction of the private rented sector due to challenges of affordability as well as increasing demands on private landlords impacting upon viability;
- Lack of affordable housing creating tenancy sustainment challenges;
- Benefit and welfare reforms impact on affordability;
- Increasingly diverse and complex needs within the borough further exacerbating the lack of suitable housing supply;

- Disproportionate impact of homelessness on some groups, including those from a Black / Black British background and those with a disability including mental ill health.

1.3 In October 2022, the Housing and Growth Committee considered the above matters and instructed council officers to prepare a new draft Homelessness and Rough Sleeping Strategy based on 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**

1.4 Officers have now produced a draft Homelessness and Rough Sleeping Strategy for the consideration of the Housing and Growth Committee. It is attached at Appendix 1.

2 REASONS FOR RECOMMENDATIONS

2.1 The change in local administration, in addition to the changes in the operating and legislative environment set out in Section 1 of this report and the updated evidence base at Appendix 2, mean that the priorities in the Homelessness and Rough Sleeping Strategy need to be reviewed and updated. The draft Homelessness and Rough Sleeping Strategy has been drafted to support the delivery of the recently-approved new Corporate Plan for Barnet, and forms a part of the wider transformation programme being delivered by the council.

2.2 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.

3 ALTERNATIVE OPTIONS CONSIDERED AND NOT RECOMMENDED

3.1 The Housing and Growth Committee has already instructed officers to draft a new Homelessness and Rough Sleeping Strategy at the meeting in October 2022, so alternative options have not been considered further. Not preparing a new Homelessness and Rough Sleeping Strategy was not recommended for the reasons that this would not meet the requirements of the Homelessness Act 2002, and the current strategy would not reflect the changes that have occurred since 2019 or the emerging priorities of the current administration.

4 POST DECISION IMPLEMENTATION

4.1 The council will deliver a communications strategy to engage with and seek feedback on the draft strategy from residents and other stakeholders. An eight-week consultation period will take place during April and May 2023, following which the results will be analysed. Steps will be taken to maximise engagement by providing opportunities to engage online in response to a survey on the Engage Barnet platform, in addition to targeted engagement with partners and representative groups, especially those groups that work closely with and support vulnerable groups including rough sleepers. Options for face-to-face engagement are also currently being explored, with a preference for

facilitated sessions to be added onto already planned events hosted by the council; opportunities for this are being reviewed.

- 4.2 The evidence base will be further updated to include 2022/23 year-end data, where relevant. The Homelessness and Rough Sleeping Strategy will be revised, if appropriate, following the outcomes of the consultation and will be presented to the Cabinet for consideration and approval in the new municipal year.

5 IMPLICATIONS OF DECISION

5.1 Corporate Priorities and Performance

- 5.1.1 The council's new draft Corporate Plan 2023-26 is centred around being a council that cares for people, our places, and the planet. 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.
- 5.1.2 The draft Housing Strategy 2023-28 sets out how the council and its partners will prevent homelessness and support rough sleepers off the streets, and deliver the right homes in the right places.
- 5.1.3 The Health and Wellbeing Strategy 2021 to 2025 recognises that the condition of and access to local housing has an important role in the quality of life and health of both individuals and communities.
- 5.1.4 The Growth Strategy 2020 to 2030 includes priorities to increase the supply of housing, deliver more homes that people can afford, deliver homes on public sector land, and support our growing older population.
- 5.1.5 Barnet's Joint Strategic Needs Assessment highlights the fact that there is a long-term shift in housing tenure towards renting and away from owner occupancy (either outright or with a mortgage), reflecting a sustained reduction in housing affordability and an imbalance between housing demand and supply.

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

- 5.2.1 There is limited supply of social housing in Barnet. In 2021/22 there were over 2,100 homeless applications and only 625 social housing units available to let. 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.
- 5.2.2 Consultation on the draft Homelessness and Rough Sleeping Strategy will be delivered through existing resources within the council and Barnet Homes. Additional support may be procured to support and facilitate any face-to-face engagement, which will be funded through existing budgets.
- 5.2.3 The costs of producing the final draft Homelessness and Rough Sleeping Strategy will

otherwise be met within existing resources through The Barnet Group's strategy function.

5.2.4 Following approval, the strategy will be delivered within the existing budgetary framework within the Housing Revenue Account and General Fund, and 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, these will be appraised and business cases will be managed to secure their delivery.

5.3 Legal and Constitutional References

5.3.1 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.

5.3.2 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'.

5.3.3 The council's Constitution (Article 7 – Committees, Forums, Working Groups, and Partnerships) sets out the responsibilities of the Housing and Growth Committee which include:

- Housing (including housing strategy, homelessness, social housing and housing grants, private sector housing and leasing, housing licencing and enforcement, HRA Revenue Account and Capital Programme).

5.4.1 Insight

5.4.1 The Homelessness and Rough Sleeping Strategy has been informed by the evidence base which includes insight gained through the Healthy Workplan's Homelessness Prevention and Insight Project. The evidence base is attached to this report at Appendix 2, and will be updated as appropriate following year-end 2022/23.

5.5 Social Value

1.1.1 There are no specific Social Value aspects to this report; however, outcomes that are ultimately delivered through the new 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 strategy itself will additionally secure wider social, economic, and environmental benefits through delivery of its objectives.

5.6 Risk Management

5.6.1 There is a risk if the Homelessness and Rough Sleeping Strategy is not updated that the current strategy does not reflect the significant contextual changes summarised at section 1.1 of this report, that the housing requirements of the borough are not met, and that the

council will not ensure compliance with the requirements of the Homelessness Act 2002.

5.7 Equalities and Diversity

5.6.1 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.

5.7.2 The Equality Act 2010, Section 149 sets out the Public Sector Equality Duty which requires Public Bodies to 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 characteristic and persons who do not share it.

5.7.3 The relevant protected characteristics are age, disability, gender reassignment, pregnancy and maternity, race, religion or belief, sex, sexual orientation, and marriage and civil partnership.

5.7.4 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:

- a) Remove or minimise disadvantages suffered by persons who share a relevant protected characteristic that are connected to that characteristic.
- b) 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.
- c) 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.

5.7.5 An Equality Impact Assessment will be undertaken after consultation to assess the potential impacts of the Homelessness and Rough Sleeping Strategy and prior to reporting back to the Cabinet. Equality impact will also be monitored post-implementation, as required.

5.8 Corporate Parenting

5.8.1 Council housing remains the most affordable housing option for care leavers, and therefore the Homelessness and Rough Sleeping Strategy is expected to have a direct and positive impact on looked after children and care leavers, and to help ensure they have safe and appropriate accommodation to meet their needs, and access to suitable advice and information. This will include through the proposed themes of preventing homelessness, ensuring a sufficient supply of accommodation, and providing support for people who are or have been homeless as care leavers are considered to be an at-risk group.

5.8.2 The strategy will play a key part in helping the council to ensure it, as a corporate parent to all children in care and care leavers, has 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.

5.9 Consultation and Engagement

5.9.1 There has been no early engagement with residents in the initial drafting of the Homelessness and Rough Sleeping Strategy, however residents' feedback and insight has been taken into account including Barnet Homes satisfaction and complaint data, as well as insight from the Homelessness Prevention and Insight Project.

5.9.2 Subject to approval by the Housing and Growth Committee, a wider public consultation will take place during April and May 2023. This will include an online survey and inviting comments from partner organisations and other stakeholders, as well as face-to-face engagement wherever it is possible to deliver this.

6. Environmental Impact

6.1 There are no direct environmental implications from noting the recommendations. Implementing the recommendations in the report will lead to a neutral impact on the council's carbon and ecology impact.

7. BACKGROUND PAPERS

5.10 Relevant previous decisions are listed in the table below:

Item	Decision	Link
Item 12, Housing and Growth Committee, 25 October 2022	Endorsement of the emerging themes for the Housing Strategy, and instruction to prepare an updated draft strategy for consideration by the Committee	https://barnet.moderngov.co.uk/documents/s74637/Housing%20Strategy%20and%20Homelessness%20and%20Rough%20Sleeping%20Strategy%20-%20HG%20251022.pdf
Item 10, Housing and Growth Committee, 13 June 2022	Noted proposed timetable for the review of the Housing Strategy and Homelessness and Rough Sleeping Strategy	https://barnet.moderngov.co.uk/ielistDocuments.aspx?Clid=696&MId=11083&Ver=4
Item 9, Housing Committee, 1 April 2019	Approved Homelessness and Rough Sleeping Strategy 2019-2024	https://barnet.moderngov.co.uk/ielistDocuments.aspx?Clid=699&MId=9740&Ver=4

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Homelessness and Rough Sleeping Strategy | 2023 - 2028



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

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Foreword

TBC

Councillor Ross Houston
Chair of the Housing and Growth Committee

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 reduce 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 £X million on homelessness and rough sleeping services, gave advice to nearly X people, 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.

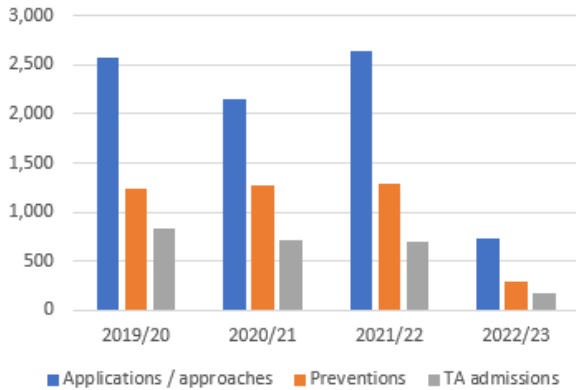
Average waiting time in 2022/23

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

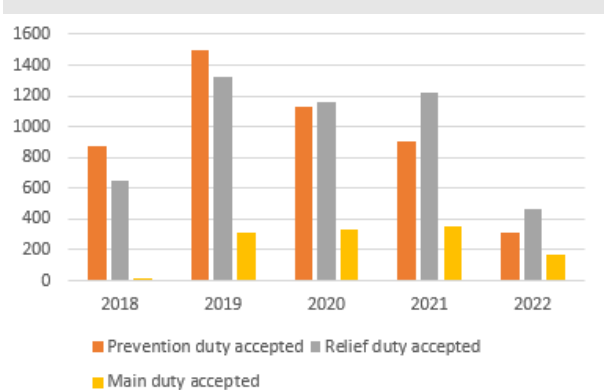
The number of applications or approaches to the council has increased significantly following the enactment of the Homelessness Reduction Act 2017. The restrictions of the COVID-19 pandemic resulted in fewer approaches, however in subsequent years, similarly to our peers in London, we have seen a return 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



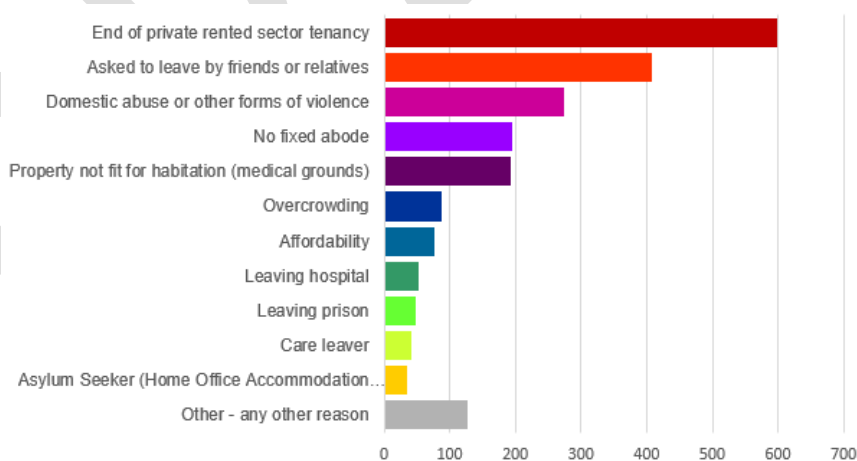
Number for which the prevention duty, relief duty, and main duty were accepted



**will be updated post-year end*

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 19% 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 2021/22



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, 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.

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.

- 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 2021/22, 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

- *To be populated with key outcomes following year-end 2022/23 – e.g.*
- 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 an incredible achievement at a time when most London boroughs saw the numbers living in temporary accommodation increase.

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

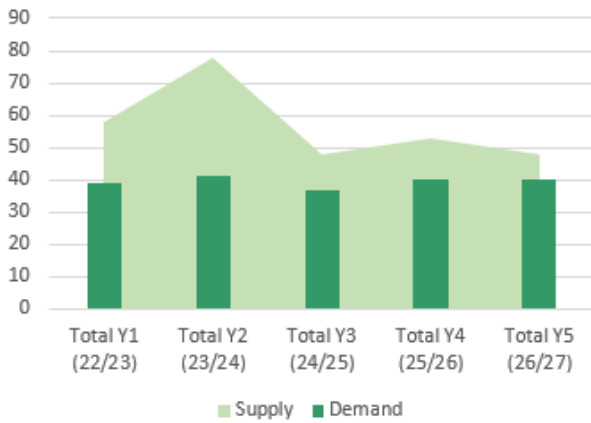
Regeneration sites	2022	2023	2024	2025	2026	2027	2028	2029	2030	2031	2032
Dollis Valley	42			94							
Granville Road	28	18									
West Hendon		78	71	34	96	19					
Grahame Park			209		190	66	72	78	190	229	11
Total	70	96	280	128	286	85	72	78	190	229	11

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.

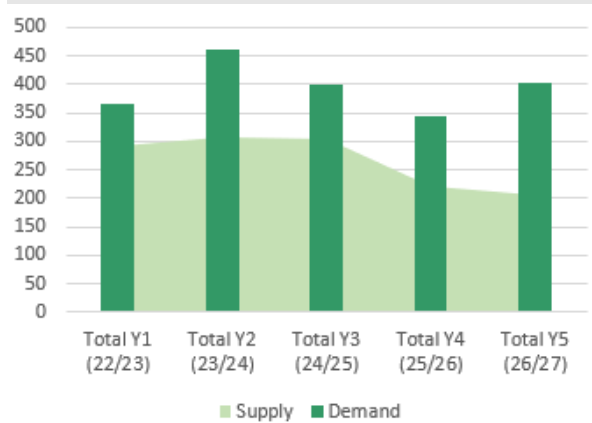
In Barnet Homes' supply vs demand modelling for five years from 2022/23, which includes only demand from households in Bands 1 and 2, direct offers, and regeneration and ad-hoc decanting of properties, we expect a shortage in 1-, 3-, and 4-bedroom properties. The shortfall would increase if the modelling included households in Bands 3 and 4.

Housing supply and demand by property size

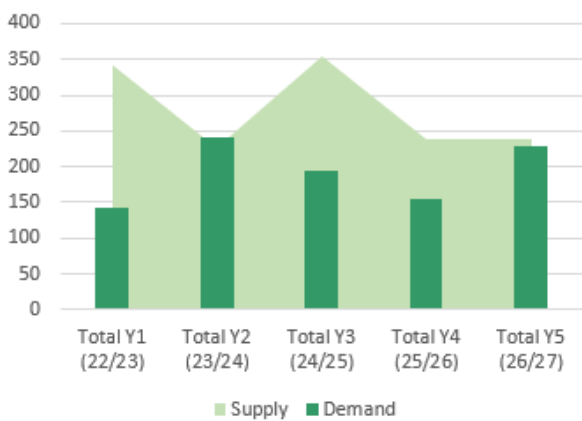
Studio properties:



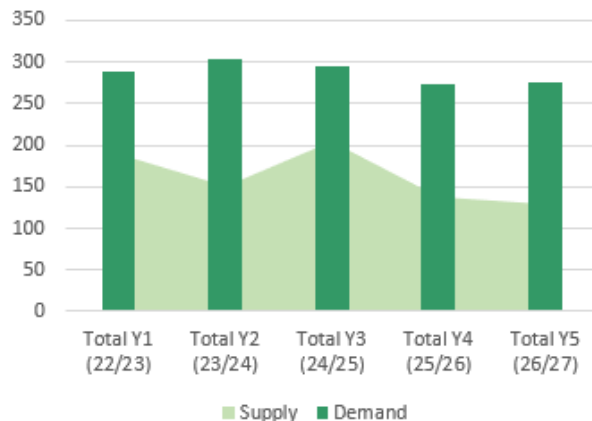
1-bedroom properties:



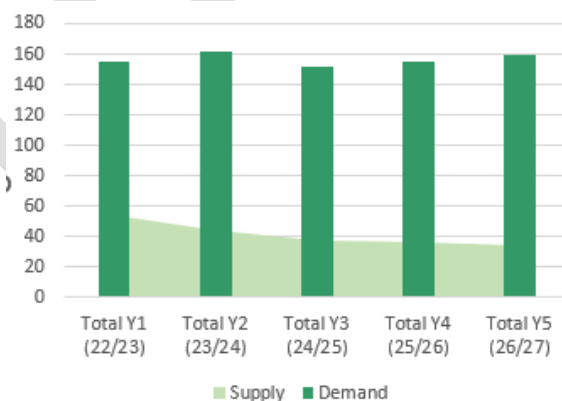
2-bedroom properties:



3-bedroom properties:



4-bedroom properties:



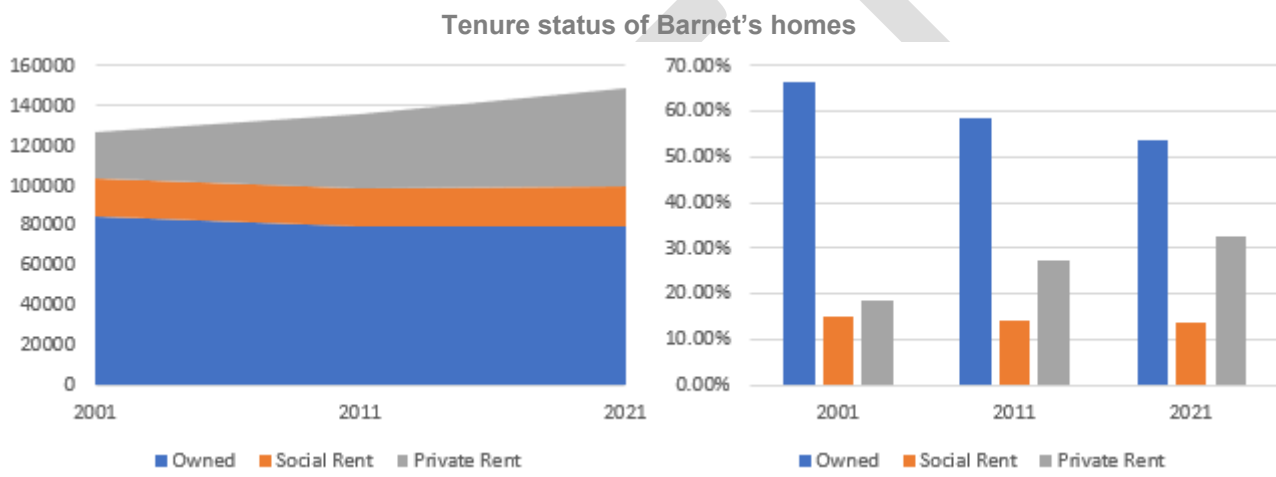
The loss of existing social housing also impacts upon the available supply of affordable housing, with fewer council homes replaced than sold each year. The number of council homes sold under the Government's Right to Buy increased each year from 2017 to 2019. Although the number

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.

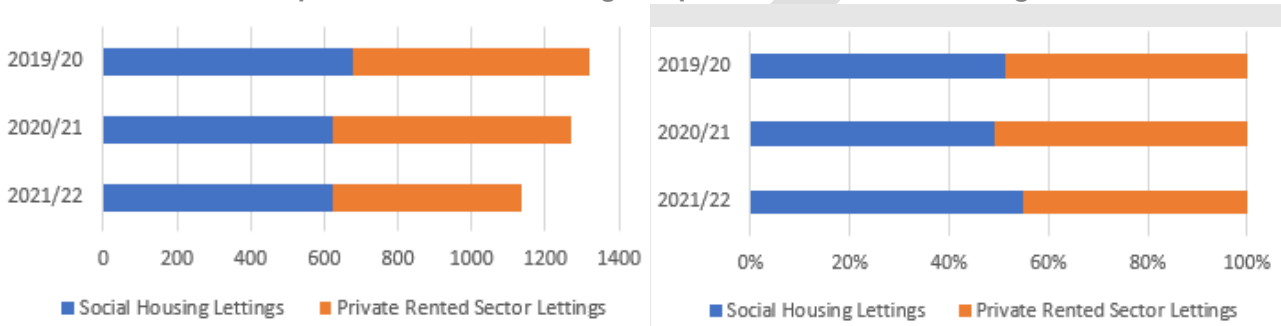
Eviction levels reduced significantly during the pandemic; however, the lifting of the eviction ban in June 2021 coupled with financial challenges such as rent increases in the face of rising mortgage rates and the cost-of-living crisis creating even greater affordability issues, we expect to see the 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.

Proportion of social housing and private rented sector lettings



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.

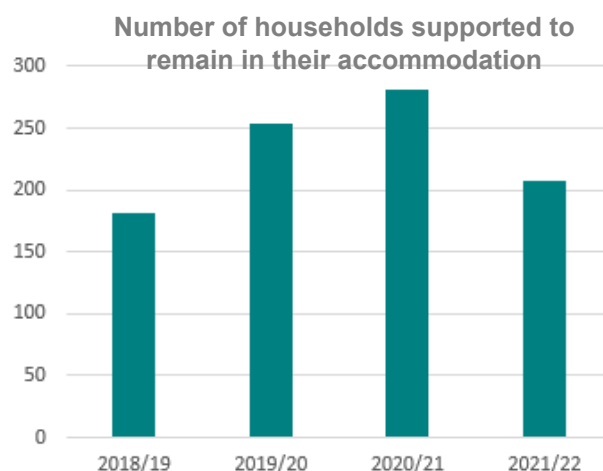
We will improve the housing advice we provide online, and keep our communications under review to ensure they are accessible and inclusive. We will continue to work collaboratively across all departments and Barnet Homes as part of a wider Resident Experience programme to improve access to services and 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.

Since 2019, 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.
 - Tackling over- and under-occupation and empty homes, and bringing empty properties back into use
 - Supporting households with accessibility needs to continue to live an independent life at home through the use of grant funding.

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 homeless people 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 vial 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.

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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.

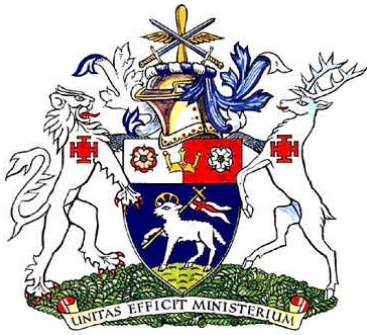
We will continue to set targets for our services within Barnet Homes' annual Delivery Plan, through which we will be able to monitor the impact of our work and take a flexible approach to dealing with the housing and homelessness crises.

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.

VERSION CONTROL

Version	Date	Author	Comments
0.1	17/01/23	Laura Giles	

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Housing and Growth Committee

23 March 2023

Title	Housing Allocation Scheme
Report of	Chair of the Housing and Growth Committee
Wards	All
Status	Public
Urgent	No
Key	Yes
Enclosures	Appendix 1 – Draft Housing Allocation Scheme Appendix 2 – Summary of Changes
Officer Contact Details	Cath Shaw, Deputy Chief Executive Officer, cath.shaw@barnet.gov.uk Laura Giles, Head of Strategy and Compliance, Barnet Homes, laura.giles@barnethomes.org

Summary

The council has developed a new draft Housing Allocation Scheme to take account of changes to the administration's priorities. If approved by the Housing and Growth Committee, the council will undertake a public consultation on the aims of the draft scheme (policy) with key stakeholders including residents and other third parties including local advocacy groups. Cabinet will then be asked to review the responses to the consultation and approve a final version of the Housing Allocation Scheme.

Officers Recommendations

1. Housing and Growth Committee considers and, subject to any changes, approves the proposed draft Housing Allocation Scheme for consultation.
2. Housing and Growth Committee notes that the results of the consultation will be reported back to Cabinet in the new municipal year together with officer recommendations for approval of the final version of the policy.

1. WHY THIS REPORT IS NEEDED

Background

- 1.1 The council's Housing Allocation Scheme was last reviewed in May 2019. 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.
- 1.2 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.
- 1.3 A wider review of the Housing Allocation Scheme has been undertaken, including seeking practical feedback from the Housing Options service and undertaking a good practice review to consider practices from other local authorities in London.

Background

- 1.4 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.
- 1.5 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. The 2021 Census indicated that only 13.5% of all Barnet's housing is social housing.
- 1.6 As the tables evidence below, there is significant demand for social housing in the borough with households waiting several years for the few properties that become available to let each year. Any review of social housing in Barnet is inevitably constrained by the fact that the council only has access to several hundred homes a year.
- 1.7 At the end of January 2023, there were 3,075 households on the Housing Needs Register with 79% in Band 4 (including those in Band 4 who live in long-term suitable temporary accommodation (TA)). Band 1 is assigned to those with the highest level of housing priority who have been granted additional preference due to a very urgent need to move. Band 2 is assigned to those who need to move, fall within a reasonable preference category, and qualify for the positive Community Contribution criteria; Band 3 is assigned to those who do not qualify for the positive Community Contribution criteria. Band 4 is assigned to those who have reasonable preference but reduced priority, including those who have been placed in long term temporary accommodation by the council.

Households on Housing Needs Register	Band 1 and direct offers	Band 2	Band 3	Band 4	Band 4 (long-term TA)
End of Jan 2023	159	368	114	585	1,849

- 1.8 The average number of social housing lettings (council (LBB) and private register provider (including housing associations) (PRP) over the last three years is just under 800 per year. This is supplemented by an average of 600 private rented sector (PRS) placements.

Year	LBB	PRP	PRS
2019/20	590	244	673
2020/21	459	326	647
2021/22	514	263	551

- 1.9 The average waiting time to be rehoused, measured by days, is set out in the table below. The average wait for a 2 bedroom is 3 and a half years rising to 5 years for a 3-bedroom home.

Waiting time (days) by bed size	Studio	1	2	3	4
2022	70	705	1,319	1,877	1,205

Summary of proposed changes

- 1.10 Following the review of the Housing Allocation Scheme and performance information, a number of changes are proposed. These can be summarised broadly into major changes which affect larger numbers of applicants and/or represent a substantive change in how the allocations scheme operates, and minor changes which include items such as changing phrasing, reflecting case law and statute, and similar.

Major changes that have been proposed

- 1.11 There are 5 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.
 - 4) To band (assign a priority within the Housing Allocation Scheme to) applicants owed the new prevention and relief of homelessness duties brought in under the Homelessness Reduction Act 2017.
 - 5) To allow additional successions to take place if:
 - a) they are a person living in the same household as the tenant who has died, and they lived with the tenant for at least a year immediately before their death (all

- additional household members must also have 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.

1.12 The full details of the major and minor changes to the draft Housing Allocation Scheme are set out in Appendix 2 – Summary of Changes.

2 REASONS FOR RECOMMENDATIONS

2.10 Major changes 1, 2, and 3 are administration commitments. The change to succession rules to include other household members is a change that many other councils have made in recognition that there are household members other than partners who may have been living with the tenant for some time before their death. The banding of applicants owed a prevention or relief of homelessness duty is a statutory requirement since the introduction of the Homelessness Reduction Act 2017.

3 ALTERNATIVE OPTIONS CONSIDERED AND NOT RECOMMENDED

3.1 For change 1, a three-offer policy, or a 'no sanction' policy allowing applicants to refuse any number of offers, was considered but is not recommended. This is because there is evidence that it results in high refusal rates. Many applicants wait to see if 'something better' will come up. For example, Camden Council is the only council in London to operate a 'no sanctions policy' and reports a refusal rate of over 50%, which impacts on void relet times and costs. Camden is currently proposing to revert to a two-offer policy as is the recommendation for Barnet.

3.2 Changes to the banding criteria have been considered given the pressing demands from particular groups, including care leavers and those in receipt of adult social care. Changes have not been made due to the significant pressures on supply and the high levels of housing demand within the borough. Instead, the issue of supply will be addressed through the new Housing Strategy 2023-28. In recognition of potential demand from care leavers with a profound disability or assessed as having a significant vulnerability, this has been added to the Band 1 examples of exceptional circumstances regarding welfare and hardship.

4 POST DECISION IMPLEMENTATION

4.10 The council will deliver a communications strategy to engage with and seek feedback on the draft scheme from residents and private registered providers. As set out in 5.3.4 of this report, the draft scheme must be reviewed by registered providers before it is adopted, and their comments should be considered in the final version of the scheme.

4.11 The Housing Allocation Scheme will be revised, if appropriate, following the outcomes of the consultation and will be presented to the Cabinet for approval in the new municipal year.

5 IMPLICATIONS OF DECISION

5.1 Corporate Priorities and Performance

- 5.1.1 The council's new draft Corporate Plan 2023-26 is centred around being a council that cares for people, our places, and the planet. 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 draft Housing Allocation Scheme recognises that there is significant demand for social housing within the borough, and a shortage of supply. It aims to increase the level of choice available to housing applicants, and is intended to help ensure residents who live on regeneration estates have a higher priority to help create and sustain a sense of community and being able to put down roots in an area.
- 5.1.2 The Housing Strategy 2019 to 2024 sets out how the council and its partners will improve the quality of housing available and deliver the additional housing that is required in the borough due to the growing population. The strategy details delivering more housing that people can afford, including the use of Affordable Rents to provide more homes for rent on council land. A new housing strategy is currently in development, and will focus on similar core aims.
- 5.1.3 The Health and Wellbeing Strategy 2021 to 2025 recognises that the condition of and access to local housing has an important role in the quality of life and health of both individuals and communities.
- 5.1.4 The Growth Strategy 2020 to 2030 includes priorities to increase the supply of housing, deliver more homes that people can afford, deliver homes on public sector land, and support our growing older population.
- 5.1.5 Barnet's Joint Strategic Needs Assessment highlights the fact that there is a long-term shift in housing tenure towards renting and away from owner occupancy (either outright or with a mortgage), reflecting a sustained reduction in housing affordability and an imbalance between housing demand and supply.
- 5.2 Resources (Finance & Value for Money, Procurement, Staffing, IT, Property, Sustainability)**
- 5.2.1 There is limited supply of social housing in Barnet, and the current housing issues experienced in the borough are putting severe pressure on the council's housing allocations and budgets. In 2021/22 there were over 2,500 homeless approaches and only 777 social housing units available to let. There are significant costs associated with 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. The Housing Allocation Scheme is the means by which that demand is allocated to existing properties. As such, changes to the plan do not have direct financial implications.
- 5.2.2 The revised Housing Allocation Scheme is expected to 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.
- 5.2.3 Consultation on the draft Housing Allocation Scheme will be delivered through existing resources within the council and Barnet Homes, and continued engagement of consultants funded through existing budgets.

5.2.4 Following approval, the Housing Allocation Scheme will be delivered within the existing budgetary framework within the Housing Revenue Account.

5.3 Legal and Constitutional References

5.3.1 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).

5.3.2 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.

5.3.3 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.

5.3.4 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.

5.3.5 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.

5.3.6 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.

5.3.7 The council's Constitution (Article 7 – Committees, Forums, Working Groups, and Partnerships) sets out the responsibilities of the Housing and Growth Committee which include:

(1) Responsibility for:

- housing (including housing strategy, homelessness, social housing and housing grants, private sector housing and leasing, housing licencing and enforcement, HRA Revenue Account and Capital Programme).

5.4 Insight

5.4.1 No specific insight has been used in this report.

5.5 Social Value

5.5.1 There are no specific social value aspects to this report.

5.6 Risk Management

5.6.1 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. The risk often expressed is that a two-offer policy will result in a higher refusal rate causing delays in letting properties with a loss of rental income.

5.6.2 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.

5.7 Equalities and Diversity

5.6.1 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.

5.7.2 The Equality Act 2010, section 149 sets out the Public Sector Equality Duty which requires Public Bodies to 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 characteristic and

persons who do not share it.

5.7.3 The relevant protected characteristics are age, disability, gender reassignment, pregnancy and maternity, race, religion or belief, sex, sexual orientation, and marriage and civil partnership.

5.7.4 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:

a) Remove or minimise disadvantages suffered by persons who share a relevant protected characteristic that are connected to that characteristic.

b) 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.

c) 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.

5.7.5 An Equality Impact Assessment will be undertaken after consultation to assess the potential impacts of the Housing Allocation Scheme and prior to reporting back to the Cabinet.

5.8 Corporate Parenting

5.8.1 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 proposed 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.

5.8.2 As a corporate parent to all children in care and care leavers, the council under the Children and Social Work Act 2017 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, encourages them to express their views, wishes, and feelings and take such views, wishes, and feelings into account, 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.

5.9 Consultation and Engagement

5.9.1 Subject to approval by the Housing and Growth Committee, a public consultation will take place during March 2023 to June 2023. This will include an online survey and inviting comments from the public and private registered providers.

6. Environmental Impact

6.1 There are no direct environmental implications from noting the recommendations. Implementing the recommendations in the report will lead to a neutral impact on the council's carbon and ecology impact.

7. BACKGROUND PAPERS

5.10 Relevant previous decisions are listed in the table below:

Item	Decision	Link
Item 10, Housing and Growth Committee, 13 June 2022	Housing Strategy, Homelessness and Rough Sleeping Strategy, and Housing Allocation Scheme: approval to instruct officers to explore the emerging housing allocations priorities of the new administration, and where considered appropriate, review and propose amendments to the Housing Allocation Scheme and Tenancy Strategy.	https://barnet.moderngov.co.uk/documents/s72887/20220613HAG-Housing%20Strategy%20Homelessness%20and%20Rough%20Sleeping%20Strategy%20Housing%20Allocations%20Scheme.pdf

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Housing Allocation Scheme

| March 2023



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

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Section 1: Introduction to the Housing Allocation Scheme

1.0 Introduction

This document is the revised Housing Allocation Scheme for the London Borough of Barnet ('Barnet Council').

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 to.

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.

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.

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.

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.

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

Barnet Council's Allocation Scheme sits within a legal framework that is summarised in this section.

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

They are also available on Barnet Homes' website: www.thebarnetgroup.org/bh/applying-for-housing/how-we-allocate

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.

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.

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

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.

All references to statutory materials are by way of summary and are not used as substitutes for the details within the original.

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.

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.

This is the revised Housing Allocation Scheme for Barnet Council and will take effect on or after *insert date here when the Scheme has been approved and an implementation date has been agreed*. The assessment of need and qualifying criteria set out in the Scheme will be applied to all new and existing applicants from this date.

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

The Scheme will be reviewed and revised as required:

- in respond 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.

Any significant changes to this Scheme will be approved by the council's Cabinet.

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 Housing.

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.

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.

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

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.

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.

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.

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.

Any applications made by third parties on behalf of an applicant (for example by a lawyer acting for a client) must be accompanied by written evidence of authority to act. If this is not possible by reason of disability, Barnet Homes should be contacted in order to make alternative arrangements.

Barnet Homes will not usually charge a fee to deal with a subject access request.

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.

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.

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

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).

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 under the FOIA or EIR to the "Complaints and Information team" at Barnet Homes' postal address or to talk2us@barnethomes.org.

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

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).

Information setting 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

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.

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.

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'.

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 or from Barnet Homes.

1.6 Complaints

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.

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.

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.

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 of choice

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.

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.

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.

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.

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.

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.

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));

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.

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 that 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.

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.

Decisions to allocate properties outside of band and date order system will be 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

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.

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

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.

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.

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.

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.

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 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.

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

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.

Anyone over the age of 16 years can apply to join the Housing Needs Register. Applications will be rejected if:

- a) they are ineligible to be considered by law; or
- b) they come within one of the 'non qualification' categories set out in the Scheme; or
- c) they do not have a statutory housing need.

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.

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

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.

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.

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

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 (save for applicants placed in Band 4 who are owed a main homelessness duty by Barnet under Section 193(2) of the Housing Act 1996 (See section 2.6 below for more details));
- 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;
- i) 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;
- j) 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.

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

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.

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).

Income checks and checks on whether an applicant owns a home will include the council undertaking credit checks.

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.

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.

'Sufficient financial resources' includes any assets or investments even if they are not immediately available to the applicant.

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.

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

Applicants who do not qualify under the homeownership or sufficient financial resources rule may be considered as an exception if:

- a) 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;
- b) 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
- c) 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

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.

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.

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

To qualify for the Housing Needs Register an applicant (and 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.

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.

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.

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.

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.

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.

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

1. applicants owed a main Section 193(2) homeless duty by Barnet Council unless they are assessed as not qualifying under one of the other qualification rules.
2. 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.
3. 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.
4. 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).
5. 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.
6. 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.

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

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

8. Applicants who satisfy the Allocation of Housing (Qualification Criteria for Armed Forces) (England) Regulations 2012. These are:
- applicants who are serving members of the regular armed forces;
 - applicants who served in the regular armed forces within the 5 years immediately prior to the date of their application;
 - 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;
 - 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
 - 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 in respect of the current tenancy or former accommodation

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: an agreed repayment plan must normally have been maintained for a minimum of eight 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.

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.

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 which have been accrued through deliberate and wilful non-payment.

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.

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.

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.

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.

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

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.

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 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.

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.

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;

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.

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;
- 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

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. 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.

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.

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.

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

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

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

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.

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.

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.

People who usually live with the applicant but are temporarily absent due to circumstances beyond their control (for example, they are in prison on a short-term sentence, or in the care of the 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.

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) a carer, where the council decides that on the evidence there is a need for a live-in carer. 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 carer in the application. An overnight carer may not require a bedroom as they would be expected to stay awake to provide that care.
- e) 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.

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

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.

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.

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.

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.

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

If the main applicant is eligible and not subject to immigration control, non-eligible 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

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.

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.

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.

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.

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.

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.

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.

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

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

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.

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

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

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

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.

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.

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.

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.

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

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.

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

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

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 by a Housing Service Manager.

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

3.9 Cancelling applications

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) when a tenant completes a mutual exchange;
- e) where the applicant moves and does not provide a contact address;
- f) where the applicant has died;
- g) where, at the housing application or any reassessment, an applicant has not supplied information requested within 28 days;
- h) where an applicant already registered becomes ineligible or is disqualified under the rules adopted for this Scheme;
- i) 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.

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

3.10 Deliberate worsening of circumstances

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.

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;
- 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.

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

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

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.

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.

If an applicant wishes to take the matter further, they can make a request for a formal review of the decision within 21 days. 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.

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

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

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.

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.

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

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.

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.

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.

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.

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.

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

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.

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

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.

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

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. Families who are willing and choosing to occupy smaller properties up to one bedroom size less than their assessed need must not be statutorily overcrowded. Young people aged 16 to 25 might be offered shared housing dependent on their assessed housing need.

Larger accommodation than specified in Annex 2 may be considered in exceptional circumstances on the recommendation of the Medical Assessment Team.

In calculating the number of bedrooms available within properties the council will treat every habitable room as a bedroom except kitchens, bathrooms and one room for use as a living room. The council will normally consider additional downstairs rooms in houses for use as bedrooms in accordance with Housing Benefit regulations.

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

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.

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.

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.

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.

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.

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.

Where a care leaver who is a secure or flexible tenant needs to leave the borough for a placement in for 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.

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

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

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

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.

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

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.

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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

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.

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.

If accepted onto the Housing Needs Register, an applicant will be informed of:

- a) whether they qualify for the Allocation Scheme;
- b) the housing needs band they have been placed in (this determines priority);
- c) the date of application (may be used to determine priority within the band allocated);
- d) the size and type of properties for which they may be allocated;
- e) their application reference number;
- f) 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;
- g) 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

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.

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:

- a) 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;
- b) 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;
- c) 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

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.

The banding system will normally be used to decide when to make an offer of accommodation and to whom.

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:

Band 1: People who have a Reasonable Preference and are granted additional preference (being people with a very urgent need to move) and have a residential connection.

Band 2: People who need to move and fall within one of the Reasonable Preference categories with a residential connection, 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 with a residential connection 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. applicants owed a main homeless duty under Section 193(2) by Barnet Council but do not meet the residential connection criteria and are not disqualified under any of the other qualification rules; or

2. are owed a main homeless duty under Section 193(2) by Barnet Council but do not meet one or more of the qualification rules but nevertheless have been allowed to qualify due to exceptional circumstances; or
3. those households owed a main homeless duty under Section 193(2) by Barnet Council but are housed in suitable long term temporary accommodation; or
4. 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.

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.

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

Band 1: Urgent Need to Move due to Reasonable Preference plus Additional Preference and a residential connection	
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.
Exceptional Circumstances Welfare and Hardship Criteria	<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;

	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • 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>
Armed Forces: Disability need to move on hardship grounds	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.
Release of adapted property	Where a tenant is willing to transfer to a suitable non adapted property and is releasing an adapted house or designated older persons property.
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>
<p>Under-occupation</p>	<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.
<p>Major works or demolition</p>	<p>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.</p>
<p>Foster carers referred by the Council's Children's Service or providers of supported lodgings</p>	<p>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.</p>

Band 2: Need to move – Reasonable Preference plus Community Contribution and a residential connection

For the definition of Community Contribution see Annex 2

Category of Housing Need	Summary Guide of Criteria
<p>Homeless households owed a main homeless duty under s.193(2) by Barnet Council.</p>	<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>
<p>Overcrowded by the adopted bedroom standard</p>	<p>Where a household is two bedrooms short of the bedroom standard outlined in Annex 2.</p>
<p>Applicants living in unsatisfactory housing lacking basic facilities.</p>	<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

	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • 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.
Discretionary Succession	Where the council has agreed to grant a tenancy under section 3.20 of this Allocation Scheme.
Existing foster carers or providers of supported lodgings approved by the council willing to provide care for an additional child	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.

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Band 3: Need to move:	
<p>a) Reasonable Preference and a residential connection but without a Community Contribution, and</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>

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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 do not meet the residential connection criteria and are not disqualified under any of the other qualification rules.
Homelessness duty	Applicants owed a main homeless duty under Section 193(2) by Barnet Council but do not meet one or more of the qualification rules but nevertheless have been allowed to qualify due to exceptional circumstances.
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
A couple with one child who is under the age of 1	1 bedroom
Two adults of the same sex and generation ¹ , for example flat sharers, or two brothers	1 bedroom
A couple with a child aged one or over, 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 and children under the age of 1 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;
- a couple or single parents with a child under 6 months are entitled to one double bedroom;
- two children of the opposite sex under ten will be expected to share a bedroom;
- some retiring staff are contractually entitled to one bedroom more than they need;
- council or 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.

¹ A generation is 20 years or more.

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 and all household members 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 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.

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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.

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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.

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 chats, 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 award letter stating 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 sever, as a result of having to share).
- f) Careers award letter 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)

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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.

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

Draft Housing Allocation Scheme

Appendix 2 – Summary of changes

Major changes

There are 5 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.
- 4) To band applicants owed the new prevention and relief of homelessness duties brought in under the Homelessness Reduction Act 2017.
- 5) To allow additional successions to take place 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 (all household members must also have resided with the tenant 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.

Note: 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.

This approach is in line with all other London Boroughs that have adopted a 2-offer policy. The approach adopted is normally to remove an applicant owed a statutory homeless duty from the Housing Register if they have refused a suitable offer, and this has been incorporated in the draft Housing Allocation Scheme.

Minor changes to the policy

A number of minor changes are recommended as a result of the experience of officers administering the scheme. These are:

- 1) To allow as part of an applicant's household any other household member such as adult children where it is accepted that:
 - a. They have been part of the applicant's household for a period of 12 months prior to their application to the council; and
 - b. 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.

- 2) To allow as part of an applicant's household young people / residents who leave the family home solely to attend university outside the borough and return to the same family home immediately after the course finishes.
- 3) To add a section on medical recommendations for future housing and guidelines for assessing extra bedroom requests for ADHD, Asperger's, sensory processing difficulties and other mental or physical health problems.
- 4) Regarding the assessment of financial needs references to 'Paycheck' have been changed to ONS data.
- 5) For an award of community contribution the following changes have been made:
 - a) to allow the applicant and partner to both contribute to the required hours to facilitate childcare requirements (combined contribution to over 64 hours per month).
 - b) amended qualifying factors to include those in receipt of the Carer's element of Universal Credit

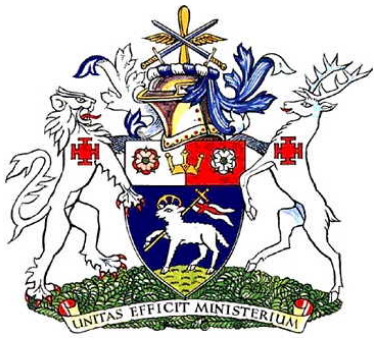
Areas where further clarification has been included

There are a number of areas where officers are of the view that the policy would benefit from further clarification to ensure clarity for applicants and officers when assessing cases. These are:

1. To update the section on legal requirements to reflect changes in legislation since the policy was last reviewed in 2019
2. Include clearer examples of when an exception to the 5/7 years residency requirement rule will be considered.
3. To clarify that qualification under the 5 years in the last 7 rule relates to the applicant, and a member of their household.
4. To provide more clarity regarding how the qualification rules will be applied (and when exceptions will be considered) relating to:
 - a) applicants with current, or former, social housing rent arrears or another relevant recoverable housing related debt owed to the council,
 - b) unacceptable behavior
 - c) residential connection
 - d) sufficient financial resources
5. Making the rules more transparent for when a direct offer outside of the band and date order process may be made in exceptional circumstances.
6. To review the criteria for when an applicant will and will not qualify for a statutory need band to ensure that the assessment process is clear for applicant's and assessing officers. For example, more detail has been included for when an applicant may be awarded priority band 1 or 2 on the basis of a medical or disability need.
7. To include a clear definition of what would constitute a suitable offer of social housing.
8. To include in the Band 1 criteria care leavers with a profound disability or assessed as having a significant vulnerability over and above the fact that they have been in

care, where they are assessed as needing to be housed urgently to significantly improve the impact on their current circumstances.

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Housing & Growth Committee 23 March 2023

Title	Development Delivery and Procurement Strategy for the Regeneration of Grahame Park North East
Report of	Chair of the Housing & Growth Committee
Wards	Colindale North
Status	Public
Urgent	No
Key	Key
Enclosures	None
Officer Contact Details	<p>Stephen Macdonald, Director of Growth, London Borough of Barnet stephen.macdonald@barnet.gov.uk</p> <p>Derek Rust, Group Director of Growth and Development, Barnet Homes derek.rust@barnethomes.org</p> <p>Susanna Morales, Development Manager, Barnet Homes susanna.morales@barnethomes.org</p>

Summary

In 2003, residents of the Grahame Park Estate in Colindale, NW9, voted in favour of a regeneration masterplan that would see much of the estate redeveloped by a partner Registered Provider, Choices for Grahame Park Limited, which is now owned by Notting Hill Genesis (NHG). The existing masterplan was approved in 2004, securing outline planning consent. The regeneration masterplan has progressed over the last decade with Stage A delivering new homes to the south, east and western parts of the estate. Stage B gained planning consent in July 2020 which encompasses the southern part of the estate, and this has started on site.

Barnet Homes, working as development agent on behalf of Barnet Council, has established a proposal to bring forward the regeneration of the north-eastern part of the estate which would not otherwise see proposals until 2030 at the earliest. NHG are supportive of the

proposal to remove this area from the wider development agreement and discussions are ongoing to vary this agreement accordingly.

The Grahame Park North East (GPNE) scheme is proposed to be split into two phases with the intention being to progress the first stage to Full Business Case and submit a detailed planning application, with the Outline Business Case and detailed planning application for a second phase of the project to follow at a later date.

The Housing & Growth Committee approved the Outline Business Case for the first phase of the scheme in November 2022, including the progression of the design to planning submission stage. The Committee noted that the request for approval of the procurement and development delivery strategy would be presented at a later date.

The Outline Business Case proposed a number of delivery options. This report sets out how these options have been appraised further and recommends the establishment of a Joint Venture to deliver the scheme, with a private sector development partner being selected through a Competitive Dialogue procurement process. This report sets out the principles of a Joint Venture which will be further defined through the procurement process and the final proposal will be presented for approval at a later stage as part of the Full Business Case.

Legal and professional advice costs to deliver the procurement will be met from the £2.55m budget from the Housing Revenue Account approved as part of the Outline Business Case by the Policy & Resources Committee in December 2022.

Work is underway to continue to progress other aspects of the scheme including development of a planning application, further community engagement, development of the decant & acquisition strategy, and discussions with Notting Hill Genesis to vary the existing Principal Development Agreement. The Full Business Case is expected to be presented for approval in spring 2024.

Officers Recommendations

- 1. That the Housing and Growth Committee approves the proposed development delivery and procurement strategy, comprising the establishment of a Joint Venture to deliver Phase 1 of the Grahame Park North East scheme (with the option to deliver additional sites) through a Competitive Dialogue procurement process.**
- 2. That the Housing and Growth Committee notes that the proposal to form a Joint Venture with the preferred partner will be subject to further Committee approval and relevant appointments will be subject to Full Council approval.**

1. Why this report is needed

- 1.1. The Housing & Growth Committee approved the Outline Business Case for Phase 1 of the GPNE scheme in November 2022 and noted that the development delivery and procurement strategy would be brought to the Committee for approval at a later date.

- 1.2. This report sets out the options considered in section 3 and the recommended delivery and procurement strategy in section 2. The scheme will accelerate redevelopment of parts of the estate that would not otherwise see regeneration for a significant period. The delivery of affordable housing through this scheme will help to meet ongoing demand in the borough.
- 1.3. The Greater London Authority has approved a grant allocation of £22.4m from the Affordable Housing Programme 2021-26. This amounts to £160k per social rent home and £60k for London living rent and shared ownership. The grant requires a start on site by March 2026. The proposed development delivery and procurement strategy puts forward a route to meet this funding requirement.

2. Reasons for recommendations

- 1.4. Since the approval of the Outline Business Case, Barnet Homes have continued to assess development delivery options and have obtained further legal and professional advice to help identify the best delivery option for the scheme. This has included consideration of a range of factors including financial viability, market conditions and the objectives of the scheme.

1.5. Development delivery strategy

- 1.5.1. Based on the options appraisal, it is recommended that a Joint Venture (JV) is set up with a private sector development partner to deliver Phase 1 of the GPNE scheme, with the option to deliver additional sites at a later stage.
- 1.5.2. JV delivery is recommended as recent increases in costs, inflation and interest rates mean that the Housing Revenue Account (HRA) will not have sufficient capacity to deliver the scheme directly. In the JV model, development risk, cost and profit will be shared between the partners and will be ringfenced within the JV. JV delivery also offers the benefit of providing external expertise in delivering private tenure homes which will be crucial to the success of this mixed tenure scheme.
- 1.5.3. The proposed JV would also enable delivery of additional sites in the future, on a case-by-case basis, including Phase 2 of GPNE, among other sites. This would provide a tested delivery route for other council sites in future. It is also planned that bidders will be invited to propose additional land opportunities that they could bring to the JV, helping to further support delivery of affordable housing in the borough. The selected private sector partner would not have exclusivity over sites in the borough and the partners could choose not to progress a scheme that has been proposed if it is no longer viable.
- 1.5.4. It is important to set out the objectives for the JV from the outset in order to guide the procurement process and, following establishment of the JV, to ensure that the partners remain strategically aligned. The objectives will be finalised by agreement with the council's Director of Growth and the lead member, ahead of the opportunity being advertised. The final objectives will be confirmed as part of the Full Business Case.
- 1.5.5. The proposed draft objectives for the JV are set out below:
 1. Deliver more housing that is genuinely affordable, to meet local needs.

2. Drive the pace of housing delivery so that local need can be met more quickly.
 3. Provide high quality housing that meets local needs including accessibility needs.
 4. Ensure that estate regeneration benefits existing residents first and foremost and use co-production principles to ensure that regeneration is community led.
 5. Adopt a place-making approach to support thriving communities including providing new or improving existing community facilities and open spaces.
 6. Improve wider connectivity within sites and to the surrounding streets, centres, open spaces, and transport hubs, including upgrading existing routes and creating new routes.
 7. Ensuring that designs are aligned with existing and planned neighbouring developments.
 8. Deliver sustainable developments that are energy and water efficient, reducing carbon emissions and helping to tackle fuel poverty.
 9. Maximise social value contributions including job and training opportunities.
 10. Create a long-term partnership and programme for housing delivery, giving flexibility to both partners on their investment vs return.
 11. Provide the opportunity for the council/Barnet Homes to reinvest returns to deliver further affordable housing, increase social value outputs, or improve the quality of development.
- 1.5.6. To establish a JV, it is proposed that the council and a private sector partner will set up a Limited Liability Partnership (LLP). This would be controlled 50:50, overseen by a board made up of equal representation from the council and the partner. A Members' Agreement will set out the objectives of the JV and the processes and procedures for how the business of the JV is conducted. The JV would be a deadlock partnership, with each partner having a veto on key decisions but neither partner being able to force through a decision without the consent of the other.
- 1.5.7. To deliver schemes through the JV, the council would need to transfer the land into the vehicle for development. This could be by way of freehold disposals or grant of long leases. The affordable housing would ultimately be retained within the HRA and would be managed by Barnet Homes. The detail of the land disposal process and the recommended mechanism for land transfer will be developed in the next phase of work based on further detailed legal and financial advice. This will be presented as part of the final proposal in the Full Business Case.
- 1.6. **Procurement strategy**
- 1.6.1. Preliminary soft market testing has been undertaken to ascertain the market appetite for this type of opportunity and to inform the development of the procurement route. Soft market testing has shown that there are a number of developer contractors with extensive experience of delivering mixed tenure estate regeneration projects and knowledge of the local area that could be suitable. Early engagement has indicated market interest in the opportunity.
- 1.6.2. The intention is that the private sector partner will provide development management services and bring with it the construction supply chain to carry out works to deliver the scheme. As these activities fall within the remit of the Public Contracts

Regulations 2015 (PCR), a regulated procurement exercise is required to select the partner.

- 1.6.3. The council is seeking a partner to provide development and construction expertise to further develop the proposals for the scheme including design and the financial model. On this basis, the route to market will need to accommodate some form of dialogue and discussion between the council and bidders to refine the proposals and reach the most appropriate arrangements for delivery of the scheme. A Competitive Dialogue (CD) procedure is therefore recommended as this will enable the development of a bespoke solution for the opportunity.
- 1.6.4. Dialogue with bidders is expected to include the following themes:
 - Design & planning
 - Social value and resident engagement
 - Financial and commercial structure
 - Governance and legal agreements
- 1.6.5. Following the dialogue stage, bidders will submit final tenders. These tenders will be assessed on weighted quality and cost criteria. The quality criteria will be developed further in the next stage of work and are likely to include questions on the following aspects:
 - Design including building safety standards
 - Construction and quality
 - Sustainability standards
 - Resident engagement and communication
 - Social value
- 1.6.6. An evaluation panel will participate in the dialogue process and assess final tenders, with support from external specialist advisors. The panel will be made up of senior staff from the council and Barnet Homes, including participation from representatives from internal finance, procurement, and legal teams.
- 1.6.7. The procurement process will be designed and planned to ensure that it can be concluded as quickly as possible and achieves the objective of securing a suitable partner. Particular attention will be given to planning the dialogue stage to make sure that discussions are constructive and are focused on reaching the final tender stage.

3. Alternative options considered and not recommended

- 1.7. The Outline Business Case set out two alternative delivery options for the scheme: do nothing and council-led direct delivery.
- 1.8. The option to do nothing is not recommended due to the opportunity available to bring forward regeneration to this area of Grahame Park and due to the need to increase affordable housing supply, contributing towards council's target to deliver 1,000 new homes at 50% of market rent or lower by 2026.
- 1.9. Direct delivery is not considered a financially viable option as economic factors including increases in costs, inflation and interest rates have affected the HRA's

capacity to deliver a scheme of this scale. The council would also have to accept significant sales risk on market tenure homes, which is not recommended in the current economic climate.

- 1.10. Procurement options for the scheme were considered based on the council's requirements. Due to the need for dialogue with bidders, Competitive Dialogue (CD) and Competitive Procedure with Negotiation (CPN) were the two available procurement routes. CPN requires relatively defined requirements upfront, compared to CD where these requirements are further defined through dialogue. Due to the current stage of design work and the need to further develop the requirements for the GPNE scheme, CD is the recommended procurement route.

4. Post decision implementation

- 4.1 The contracting authority will be Barnet Council and Barnet Homes will carry out the procurement on the council's behalf.

- 4.2 The table below provides an indicative procurement programme:

Stage	Date
Detailed procurement planning and preparation of tender documentation	Q1 2023/24
Opportunity advertised	Q1 2023/24
Shortlisting	Q2 2023/24
Open dialogue stage	Q2-Q4 2023/24
Final tenders received and evaluation	Q4 2023/24
Preferred bidder provisionally selected, and approval requested to enter into the JV as part of Full Business Case	Q1 2024/25
Legal agreements completed	Q2 2024/25

- 4.3 The formation of the JV with the preferred partner will be subject to further Committee approval as part of the Full Business Case. The agreement of Full Council will be sought for appointments to the proposed Joint Venture body as required.

- 4.4 Due to the target start on site date, design development and preparation of a planning application will be progressed concurrently with the procurement process. Barnet Homes will seek private sector input into the evolving design ahead of planning submission.

5. Implications of decision

1.11. Corporate Priorities and Performance

- 1.11.1. Delivering more affordable homes in the borough is a priority for the council, as set out in the Housing Strategy and the Growth Strategy. Since May 2022, this has become a council priority and work is underway to convert current delivery plans to ensure they contribute to starting on site with 1,000 affordable social rent homes over the next 4 years.

- 1.11.2. The Health and Wellbeing Strategy 2021 to 2025 recognises that the condition of and access to local housing has an important role in the quality of life and health of both individuals and communities.
- 1.11.3. The 2023-2026 draft Corporate Plan sets out the vision to put caring for people, our places, and the planet at the heart of everything the council does. Under the People priority, it aims to be family friendly, tackle inequality, and support health and independence. Under the Place priority, it aims to ensure safe, attractive neighbourhoods, quality homes, sustainable growth, and thriving town centres and to make Barnet a fun place to visit. Under the Planet priority, it aims to focus on the council's journey to net zero, local environment, and green spaces.
- 1.12. **Resources (Finance & Value for Money, Procurement, Staffing, IT, Property, Sustainability)**
- 1.12.1. **Finance & Value for Money**
- 1.12.2. The principle of the JV will be that the two partners will make contributions into the JV to deliver the scheme as a partnership, sharing risk and reward. The procurement process to select a private sector development partner will require bidders to submit a financial proposal which will be evaluated by the council and its advisers.
- 1.12.3. In a typical development partnership of this nature, the public sector partner would contribute land and the private sector partner would contribute equity to match the land value. Due to the level of affordable housing proposed in the GPNE scheme, a significant land value is not expected to be generated. A financial contribution from the council for the delivery of the affordable housing will therefore be required. The source of funding for this is likely to be the identified HRA development capacity within the current agreed HRA business plan, subject to further viability testing.
- 1.12.4. Further financial and commercial advice will be obtained during the procurement and contract negotiation process to ensure value for money. The proposals will be presented for approval as part of the Full Business Case.
- 1.12.5. Cost of approximately £400k to carry out the procurement will be met from the £2.55m budget from the Housing Revenue Account approved as part of the Outline Business Case by the Policy & Resources Committee in December 2022.
- 1.12.6. **Procurement**
- 1.12.7. Legal and procurement advice has been obtained to confirm the basis for this procurement and to recommend the most suitable procurement route. The recommendation is to conduct a Competitive Dialogue (CD) procedure (PCR Regulation 30) on the basis that this type of development opportunity requires a bespoke solution and that requirements need to be refined further. CD enables the council to develop solutions through dialogue with bidders.
- 1.12.8. Barnet Homes will act on Barnet Council's behalf in accordance with Barnet Council's contract procedure rules and applicable laws. A Royal Institution of Chartered Surveyors registered practice will be appointed to manage the tender process.
- 1.12.9. **Staffing**

- 1.12.10. Barnet Homes will carry out the procurement on behalf of Barnet Council. Barnet Homes will appoint legal and financial advisers to support the procurement process.
- 1.12.11. Staffing arrangements for the delivery of the JV will be set out in the Full Business Case.

1.13. **Social Value**

- 1.13.1. Increasing the utility of existing assets through mixed use redevelopment will enable the council's portfolio of assets to go further towards supporting local needs by helping to provide new opportunities for housing, (in particular, affordable housing) and new, improved community facilities.
- 1.13.2. The private sector partner will be required to provide opportunities for employment, training and apprenticeships for local people and use local suppliers where appropriate. Social value contributions will be assessed as part of the procurement process.

1.14. **Legal and Constitutional References**

- 1.14.1. Council Constitution Article 7.5 states that the remit of the Housing and Growth Committee includes responsibility for regeneration strategy and oversight of major regeneration schemes, asset management, and economic development including employment strategy, business support and engagement.
- 1.14.2. The Council Constitution, Article 10 Table A, states that the Housing and Growth Committee is responsible for authorising all acquisitions and disposals over £500K.
- 1.14.3. The Council Constitution, Article 4 (The Full Council), lists the roles and functions reserved for full Council and includes "Approving Member and officer appointments to outside bodies and external organisations ..." Appointment of members and/or council officers to the LLP are decisions reserved for Full Council.
- 1.14.4. The council has a range of powers including the general power of competence under Section 1 of Chapter 1 of the Localism Act 2011 to do anything that individuals can do subject to any specific restrictions contained in legislation and Section 111 of the Local Government Act 1972 which provides that a local authority has power to do anything which is calculated to facilitate, or is conducive or is incidental to, the discharge of its functions, subject to any specific restrictions contained in legislation.
- 1.14.5. The general power of competence referred to above, is caveated in Section 4 of the Localism Act 2011, which states that if a local authority intends to do something "for a commercial purpose" then it must do so through a company. It has been clarified over time that the reference to a "company" is to a company limited by shares only, and not any other form of corporate entity (and therefore not an LLP, which is the proposed form of legal entity for the recommended JV structure). It is therefore important to establish the council's purpose for entering into a JV. This was examined in the case of *Peters v London Borough of Haringey*, which examined the proposed establishment by LB Haringey and its partner Lendlease of an LLP to deliver housing and regeneration across the borough. That case established that it is necessary to examine the "dominant purpose" of the local authority in seeking to set up an LLP. The commentary in this report recites the purpose of setting up a JV partnership which is to accelerate, facilitate and de-risk the delivery of affordable

housing at Grahame Park North East and potentially elsewhere. The council's dominant purpose can therefore be seen to centre on affordable housing delivery to improve the wellbeing of residents, and not primarily commercially driven. As such, the advice received from the council's external legal advisers is that an LLP is an appropriate legal structure for the proposals set out in this report.

- 1.14.6. The council has the power to acquire and dispose of land in accordance with Sections 120 to 123(2A) of the Local Government Act 1972, and subject to obtaining all appropriate consents and approvals. On any disposal of property, the council is required to observe the requirements of Section 123(2) of the Local Government Act 1972 to ensure that any disposal, other than a short tenancy, is not for a consideration less than the best that can reasonably be obtained, except with the consent of the Secretary of State. Any land held for the purposes of part II of the Housing Act 1985 (which this site is likely to be) can be disposed of under sections 32 to 34 of that Act either in reliance on a general or express consent of the Secretary of State. To cleanse a site of third-party interests, where it is in the public interest to do so and on satisfaction of conditions, land can be appropriated from its current purpose to planning purposes under section 122 of the LGA 1972. Where the land in question is held for housing purposes (as this site is likely to be), the consent of the Secretary of State may be needed for such appropriation. Any disposal of land appropriated for such purposes is effected in reliance on Section 233 Town and Country Planning Act 1990, which requires that it be for the best consideration reasonably obtainable, except with the consent of the Secretary of State.
- 1.14.7. Proposals for any land disposals into the JV will be developed following further legal advice and will be presented for approval as part of the Full Business Case. To the extent that future sites are identified for potential disposal to the JV, appropriate approvals will be sought at the time.
- 1.14.8. The council will need to make the required adjustments between the Housing Revenue Account and the General Fund to account for the value of any housing land appropriated to planning. This will be subject to further specialist advice obtained in the next stage of work and ahead of the Full Business Case.
- 1.14.9. The council will need to consider, comply with, and obtain any statutory and legal requirements/consents to give effect to the preferred option.
- 1.14.10. Procurement of public works and services contracts over the relevant value thresholds must observe the requirements of the Public Contracts Regulations 2015 (PCR), to include the placing of Find a Tender notices where such contracts are not drawn down from a compliant framework. Any procurement activity undertaken must also be in accordance with the council's Contract Procedure Rules.
- 1.14.11. As the private sector development partner will be required to perform activities that fall within the remit of the PCR, a regulated procurement exercise is required to select the partner. As the competition will require dialogue/discussion with bidders, the only viable options are to select a Competitive Dialogue (CD) procedure or a Competitive Procedure with Negotiation (CPN). Between these two options, external legal advisers have recommended that a CD procedure is adopted, on the basis that Barnet Homes and London Borough of Barnet will finalise their requirements through the procurement process. The CD process will best enable Barnet to develop its requirements through the dialogue phase of the procurement process.

1.14.12. The Public Services (Social Value) Act 2012 requires If a relevant authority proposes to procure or make arrangements for procuring the provision of services, it must consider:

(a) how what is proposed to be procured might improve the economic, social, and environmental well-being of the relevant area; and

(b) how, in conducting the process of procurement, it might act with a view to securing that improvement; and

(c) it must consider whether to undertake any consultation in relation to such matters.

1.14.13. Any terms required by the Greater London Authority grant will need to be observed.

1.15. **Insight**

1.15.1. The council's Housing Strategy and emerging Local Plan respond to evidence such as the Strategic Housing Market Assessment and other needs assessments that have identified a need for increased housing delivery. Barnet has 393,000 residents and this figure is expected to grow by 76,000 over the next 25 years: an increase of 19%.

1.15.2. The delivery of new affordable rented homes will help to meet the objective in the council's Housing Strategy to prevent and tackle homelessness, by reducing the use of temporary accommodation. There are currently more than 2,700 households living in temporary accommodation which presents significant budgetary pressures for the council.

1.15.3. Barnet's Health and Wellbeing Strategy recognises the importance of access to good quality housing in maintaining Well-Being in the Community.

1.15.4. Lack of affordable housing is highlighted in Barnet's Joint Strategic Needs Assessment (JSNA) as one of the top three concerns identified by local residents in the Residents' Perception Survey.

1.16. **Risk Management**

1.16.1. The main risks associated with the delivery and procurement strategy are set out below.

1.16.2. *Financial viability:*

There is a risk that prevailing economic conditions and increased construction and development costs will impact on the financial viability of a JV. The dialogue stage of the procurement process will consider viability and bidders will also be able to contribute development expertise to improve viability. The council will appoint its own advisers to evaluate bidders' proposals to ensure that a viable proposal can be achieved. Market conditions will be also closely monitored throughout the process. Once established, the JV is a living business, and it is open to the partners to make decisions based upon the economic situation at the time in order to mitigate viability issues.

1.16.3. *Insufficient capacity in the HRA:*

There is a risk that the HRA will not have sufficient capacity to make the required financial contributions to the JV. However, JV delivery is likely to reduce the financial contributions required, compared to other delivery routes. The procurement process will include evaluation of costs in bidders' proposals. Once the JV is established, it will be able to engage with the council with a view to future HRA business planning in order to plan for HRA expenditure over multiple accounting periods: forward planning can assist in smoothing financial requirements over time.

1.16.4. *Procurement challenge:*

There is a potential risk of challenges from the market in relation to the procurement route followed or incorrect application of the PCR. This is mitigated through the legal advice contained to date to establish the basis for the procurement to design a compliant procurement process. The process will be managed in accordance with the PCR.

1.16.5. *Programme risks:*

The nature of the CD process means that dialogue with bidders could potentially become protracted, increasing procurement costs, and potentially even leading to bidders withdrawing from the competition. Significant increases in the procurement period could also cause delays to the progression of the scheme overall. This risk will be mitigated by allowing sufficient time to thoroughly plan the process and develop all the necessary documentation before the opportunity is advertised in order to ensure that the process is efficient and expedient. Particular attention will be given to ensuring that the dialogue stage is focused and constructive. Design development will be progressed concurrently with the procurement process and private sector input into design will be sought so that a planning application can be submitted.

1.17. **Equalities and Diversity**

1.17.1. The council is committed to taking a proportionate approach to equalities and considering which groups with protected characteristics are likely to be affected, whether this is a large or small group and the level of impact: nil, minimal or significant.

1.17.2. An Equalities Impact Assessment (EqIA) has been completed as part of the Outline Business Case. The EqIA concludes that there are minor or no impacts on groups with protected characteristics and there is no negative cumulative impact on all groups.

1.17.3. The proposals developed as part of the dialogue process will be in line with the recommendations of the EqIA.

1.17.4. Under the Equality Act 2010, the council must have due regard to the need to:

- a. eliminate discrimination, harassment, victimisation, and any other conduct that is prohibited by or under the 2010 Act;
- b. advance equality of opportunity between those with a protected characteristic and those without; and

- c. promote good relations between those with a protected characteristic and those without.

1.17.5. The 'protected characteristics' referred to are age; disability; gender reassignment; pregnancy and maternity; race; religion or belief; sex; sexual orientation. It also covers marriage and civil partnership with regards to eliminating discrimination.

1.18. **Corporate Parenting**

1.18.1. Barnet Council have a small number of care leavers in temporary accommodation. Increasing the supply of affordable housing is therefore a corporate parenting issue.

1.19. **Consultation and Engagement**

1.19.1. A summary of consultation and engagement activity on the GPNE scheme to date and the proposed approach during the next stages of the project are set out in Outline Business Case. Formal consultation will take place as part of the planning application process.

1.19.2. The procurement process will include an assessment of bidders' principles and proposals for resident engagement and communication. Proposals will be evaluated against best practice and the council's resident involvement and engagement strategy.

1.20. **Environmental Impact**

1.21. The Outline Business Case sets out the sustainability standards for Phase 1 of the GPNE scheme. The ambition is for the design of Phase 1 of GPNE to achieve an 'exemplary' sustainable design as part of the RIBA 2030 Challenge.

1.22. The procurement process will include an assessment of bidders' proposals for sustainability and emissions reduction. Proposals will be evaluated against best practice and the council's sustainability strategy requirements.

6. **Background papers**

Outline Business Case for the Regeneration of Part of Grahame Park Estate by Barnet Council, Housing and Growth Committee, 16 November 2022

<https://barnet.moderngov.co.uk/ieListDocuments.aspx?CId=696&MIId=11129&Ver=4>

Business Planning for the years 2023-27, Policy & Resources Committee, 13 December 2022.

<https://barnet.moderngov.co.uk/documents/g11138/Public%20reports%20pack%2013th-Dec-2022%2019.00%20Policy%20and%20Resources%20Committee.pdf?T=10>

	<h2 style="margin: 0;">Housing and Growth Committee</h2> <h3 style="margin: 0;">23 March 2023</h3>
Title	<h3 style="margin: 0;">Development Pipeline Programme- Delivery Strategy</h3>
Report of	Chair of the Housing & Growth Committee
Wards	East Barnet, East Finchley, Edgwarebury, Colindale North, Underhill and High Barnet.
Status	Public with accompanying Exempt Report (not for publication by virtue of paragraph 3 of Schedule 12a of the Local Government Act 1972 as amended as this relates to information of a financial or business nature)
Urgent	No
Key	Yes
Enclosures	Appendix 1- Delivery Models
Officer Contact Details	<p>Cath Shaw, Deputy Chief Executive cath.shaw@barnet.gov.uk</p> <p>Abid Arai (Assistant Director of Development Delivery) abid.arai@barnet.gov.uk</p> <p>Julia Xu (Programme Manager) julia.xu@barnet.gov.uk</p>

Summary

Since the commencement of the design work on the five sites in the Council's Development Programme in September 2021, market conditions have changed significantly due to several external factors, and they imposed considerable risks to the viability and deliverability of the portfolio under Council's self-delivery model. In the meantime, there is an ever increasing need to meet the Council's affordable housing target within a set timeframe.

This report outlines the viability challenges of delivering the sites to meet the Council's housing target. It recommends the formation of an Investment Partnership with a Private Sector Partner, Kuropatwa Group, to facilitate a more viable housing delivery strategy for the Council's sites by addressing external market factors that would not be possible through traditional procurement routes such as Design & Build contracts. This alternative

model will enable the Council to leverage private sector commercial acumen to address viability issues and continue delivering across the Council's own assets.

Officers Recommendations

1. That Committee approves the developer, Kuropatwa Group, as the Private Sector Partner (PSP) for an Investment Partnership.
2. That Committee grants delegated authority to the Deputy Chief Executive in consultation with the Chair of the Housing and Growth (HAG) committee/ portfolio lead to:-
 - (a) in consultation with the S151 Officer, approve and finalise the terms of the proposed Investment Partnership Members' Agreement (as described in Section 4.1.1 of this report) and to establish the Investment Partnership;
 - (b) to agree the terms of and enter into a land sale agreement (or option agreement) under which the initial 4 Development Pipeline Programme (DPP) sites identified in this report may be disposed of to the Investment Partnership;
 - (c) to review and consider the outputs of due diligence to be undertaken in respect of the 3 car park sites identified in this report and, if they consider it appropriate in light of those outputs, to agree the terms of and enter into a land sale agreement (or option agreement) for the disposal of those sites to the Investment Partnership; and
 - (d) to agree the terms of and enter into all further documents that are required in order to give effect to the arrangements described in this report.
3. That the Housing and Growth Committee notes that the proposal to become a member of the proposed Joint Venture, or the appointment of officers and/or Members to the same will be presented for approval at a later date to full Council.

1. Why this report is needed

- 1.1 Delivering more affordable homes in the borough is one of the Council's objectives as set out in the Housing Strategy and the Growth Strategy. Since May 2022, this has become a Council priority and work has been underway to convert current delivery plans to ensure they contribute to delivering the Council's 1,000 affordable homes target.
- 1.2 The Development Pipeline Programme (DPP) is one of the Council's housing delivery programmes that comprised of five sites, originally: Former East Barnet Library, Park House, Avion Crescent (Trinity Church), Danegrove Playing Field and Mill Hill Golf Club land assembly. Design work on these sites commenced in September 2021 and Danegrove was withdrawn in July 2022 due to changes in the administration and the Council's priorities. The remaining 4 sites are currently at concept design stage (RIBA2).

1.3 In the last couple of years, due to a number of compounded external factors such as the economic disruption of the global pandemic, Brexit and now the geopolitical risks caused by the Ukrainian war, market conditions have changed considerably. In addition, the building industry is undergoing substantial regulatory changes in relation to sustainability and building fire safety. As a result of these, there is a significant risk to the viability and deliverability of the 4 sites if delivered by the Council through a self-delivery model i.e., procuring a contractor on a traditional basis.

1.4 The design work undertaken across the 4 sites so far has illustrated that based on a traditional procurement route as noted under Paragraph 3.7, the following key factors have contributed to additional cost pressures impacting scheme viability:

- Build cost inflation has been increasing at an unprecedented rate. The unique factors of Brexit and Covid-19 have led to a 'perfect storm' whereby the cost of both materials and labour have risen exponentially against a backdrop of a sharp increase in consumption. These factors have contributed to supply chain issues, congestion at ports and the volume of delays to imported goods has had a detrimental impact on construction costs.

Development Consultants' benchmarking analysis showed apartment build cost for example has increased from c£2,450/sqm in Q4 2021 to c£3,700/sqm in Q3 2022, presenting an over 50% increase to account for uplifts from a combination of regulatory changes, tender and construction risks, inflation and other market risk factors. This as a result has resulted in an increase in the total development cost of the 4 sites.

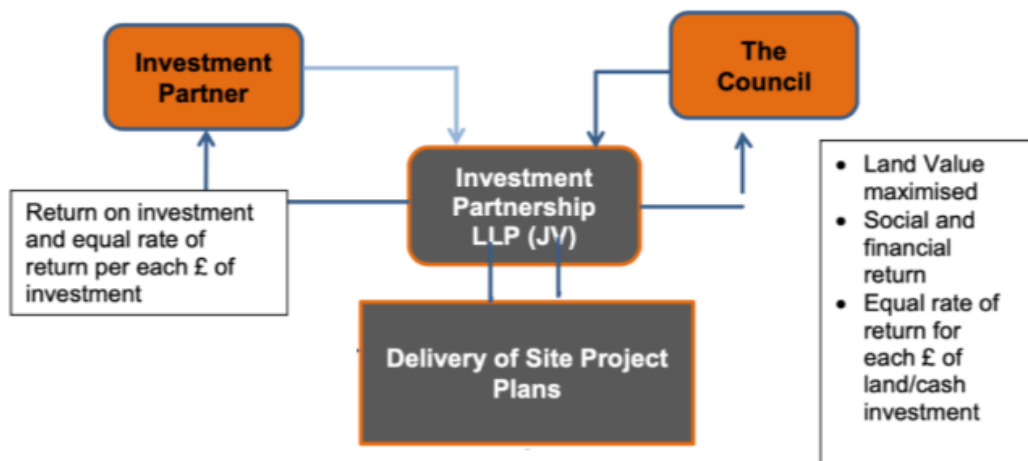
- Forward indications point to a slowing market and sales values plateauing. Recent increases in mortgage rates and subsequent impacts on the residential housing market have not yet had an observed impact on statistics. This is likely because transactions data is based upon date of completion, which is later in the property purchase process, and it typically takes between 2 to 4 months for a house sale to complete. Based on sales information received for the 4 sites, there was an indicator of 5-10% downward trajectory in the sales values in Q3 2022 from Q4 2021.
- Higher inflation and borrowing costs. Between 2021 and February 2023, interest rates on 50+ year loans from the Public Works Loan Board (PWLB) have fluctuated significantly, from a low of 1.45% to a peak of 5.70%, with an average rate of 2.66% over the period. Rates have been volatile over this period, however they began to trend upwards consistently from 2% at the beginning of December 2021, going above 4% at the beginning of September 2022 and remaining above 4% for all but 24 days since. The Council's treasury advisors, Link, forecast that rates will remain above 4% until early 2024. For the 4 sites, average borrowing cost increased from 4% (2% PWLB interest rate + 2% MRP) in Q4 2021 to 7% (5% PWLB + 2% MRP) in Q3 2022, incurring additional pressure to the viability challenge.

1.5 By Q3 2022, following 4 months of scenario testing, the development return remained sub-optimal on the 4 sites. In order to ensure that the scheme is sufficiently viable to deliver an appropriate return, i.e., circa 15%, without compromising the affordable housing quantum, a review of the delivery strategy was required for these sites. Further work on the design was suspended pending a review of the delivery strategy.

- 1.6 In reviewing the delivery strategy, the development team have identified several important Council objectives to inform the recommended delivery model:
- Deliver a range of housing tenures that reflect local need, including affordable housing.
 - To mitigate viability challenges in a volatile economic climate and create a revenue return or capital receipt for the Council, with the flexibility for the Council to make a decision on this on a scheme-by-scheme basis.
 - Create a long-term programme for the delivery of housing in the Borough to give flexibility to both partners on their investment return.
 - Timely delivery of new housing in the Borough to meet demand.
 - Create new communities with a focus on quality of place.
 - Reduce overall carbon emissions within the Borough by developing sustainable and environmentally conscious housing.
 - Council has the flexibility to retain freehold of sites where required.
- 1.7 With the above in mind, the team have explored various options in consultation with legal and identified the need for the Council to work in partnership with a private sector partner to help support the delivery of these targets in a particularly challenging market.
- 1.8 Strategic corporate partnerships with registered providers and the private sector have been seen across the UK to support Local Authorities in their housing development ambitions. Such partnerships enable risk-sharing, the benefit of commercial skills and expertise to help unlock sites, adding social value through training and apprenticeships, and safeguarding quality in trusted track records in the development of new homes. Strategic partnerships are also welcomed by Homes England as they support the timely delivery of development programmes.
- 1.9 Within the borough, partnership approaches have been adopted across a number of regeneration projects such as the Inglis Consortium (Mill Hill) and Brent Cross. These routes essentially create a platform that provides a level of flexibility to enable the Council to deliver and meet its corporate priorities.
- 1.10 The needs and objectives set out under Paragraph 1.6 require a strategic partnership that could directly respond to the viability challenges whilst retaining the flexibility to suit sites of varying scales.
- 1.11 The recommended delivery option that fulfils these objectives is an Investment Partnership (IP). It is a joint venture partnership with a Private Sector Partner (PSP) formed as a Limited Liability Partnership (LLP), which is the standard legal structure for this type of partnership. The LLP is 50:50 controlled by the Council and the PSP it selects to work with, therefore, it is not a public sector body.
- 1.12 In an IP setup, the Council invests its land with the IP and the partner brings investment skills and funding as well as market relationships, and branding knowledge and experience to the partnership. The IP can buy, sell and develop its

own land. Once the development is complete, the Council and the PSP will share the outputs (financial and/or social).

- 1.13 Officers have so far identified 21 sites that could be suitable for development via the IP. Of these sites, officers recommend that the 4 DPP sites noted in paragraph 1.2 should be included in a land sale agreement or option agreement between the Council and the IP as Phase 1. This agreement could be put in place immediately upon formation of the IP, or the Council could alternatively grant to the IP an exclusivity agreement in relation to these sites while the IP carries out due diligence and works up business plans for each of these sites, with a sale (or option) agreement to be entered into if and when the Council and the IP agree to proceed with the disposal.
- 1.14 For the remaining 17 sites, 3 carpark sites (Fitzjohn Avenue, Moxon Street and Church Hill Road) could potentially be disposed to the IP. However, due diligence work is required to be carried out on these 3 sites to ascertain whether the consequent reduction in car parking provision would be acceptable and proportionate. If following this due diligence, it is considered appropriate to dispose of these 3 further sites to the IP, then these will constitute the next tranche of sites (Phase 2). Again, it is possible to enter into exclusivity agreements in respect of these sites pending full sale or option agreements. The remaining 14 sites have been appraised and could potentially be added to future phases.
- 1.15 Further sites can be selected and (if agreed) disposed of into the IP at a later date.
- 1.16 It is worth reiterating that the disposal of any site to the IP, is to a vehicle in which the Council has a 50% stake, and thus the Council can influence the business plan and strategy for each site and share in risk and reward in relation to development activities that are carried out.
- 1.17 This approach allows for considerable flexibility and control by the Council in that it can choose which sites it wishes to take forward through the IP and which sites may lend themselves to different approaches such as disposal or alternative use. Once set up, it can be seen as an available platform that allows the Council and its partner to agree the individual sites that are appropriate to be brought forward through the partnership. This does not prevent the Council from choosing alternative approaches for the development of its sites rather than putting them all into the IP.
- 1.18 The diagram below summarises the structure of an IP with a partner.



- 1.19 The establishment of an IP is not subject to public sector procurement rules as set out in paragraph 5.3. However, the Council has a fiduciary duty to ensure best consideration.
- 1.20 From the outset, officers defined criteria to select the partner as set out below:
- A. They can or will align to the Council's vision and commitments for the Borough and the Council's objectives set out at paragraph 1.6 above.
 - B. They have the ability to optimise the future investment in Council land opportunities.
 - C. They have an understanding of the local housing market to optimise sales values and manage rates of sale.
 - D. They have an understanding of local land supply to facilitate land assembly and direct experience of the construction supply side to balance cost, quality and timely delivery of new homes.
 - E. They have the skills and experience to work with the Council to deliver all component parts of the development process i.e. the flexibility to work with the Council to secure the construction of schemes as well masterplan, design, secure planning and market and sell homes.
 - F. They have the skills, experience and flexibility to work with the Council to deliver housing schemes of all sizes including sites with under 10 homes to sites with over 100 homes.
 - G. They have the flexibility to realise both the Council's financial and social outcomes from investment.
 - H. They will commit to the Borough in forming a medium to long term partnership.
 - I. They will ensure value for money for the Council and its residents and maximise social values.

J. They have proven track record of delivering housing within the borough.

- 1.21 Soft market engagement was undertaken with several prospective partners to understand their priorities, track records in the delivery of housing. As viability is high on the agenda, the prospective partners were asked to undertake some high-level capacity studies across the 4 sites to demonstrate their innovation to design and problem solving addressing the viability hurdle.
- 1.22 Three potential partners were chosen against the criteria above with an opportunity to present initial ideas and proposals for working with the Council. In parallel, a case study site visit with Cambridge Council was also undertaken to better understand the approach of working in a true partnership of this nature. Over the last several months, Council officers met with the prospective development partners on a number of occasions to review their capacity studies and financial models.
- 1.23 Following consideration, a recommendation of Kuropatwa Group is proposed based upon the criteria listed at paragraph 1.20 and the following:
- Commitment to form a medium to long term partnership with the Council. Kuropatwa have already undertaken a number of viability/capacity studies of the Council land/ assets at no costs to the Council.
 - Approach to problem solving and unlocking development value through design.
 - Proven track record with the successful delivery of a complex site within the borough.
 - Synergy of delivering a Build to Rent site within the borough.
- 1.24 Due diligence checks have previously been undertaken on Kuropatwa Group for the Northway/ Fairway site redevelopment. This included due diligence of the partner's financial standing, capacity, and exposure. For the purpose of this recommendation, updated reports have been commissioned and will be completed ahead of agreeing the Members' Agreement.

2. Reasons for recommendations

- 2.1 Under the current climate, an Investment Partnership (IP) approach is a more flexible and viable way for the Council to carry out its future aspirations for development in the Borough. It will enable the Council to more efficiently and strategically plan its mixed tenure housing development pipeline and assist with business planning and allocating future funding and resources as appropriate.
- 2.2 The 50:50 nature of the partnership model enables the Council to leverage private sector expertise to generate profit from the delivery. It also gives the partner a commercial imperative to maximise profits, which are split equally. For the Council, any profit generated through the partnership could be used to fund future housing development or retrofitting of energy efficiency measures within the existing stock.
- 2.3 A partnership will enable the Council to utilise the resources offered by the partner to bring the sites forward quickly and accelerate mixed tenure housing programme. By utilising a partner's commercial knowledge of development, investment, and the construction supply chain, this will result in a more cost-effective solution.

- 2.4 An investment Partnership is an equitable and fair way of working with the commercial sector and leads to greater transparency, helping to build lasting relationships and helping the Council to gain knowledge of the commercial development market.
- 2.5 By sharing resources and knowledge in the development fields and working with a partner in this way, the Council will benefit from skills transfer so that it can become a more efficient housing developer and be in a better position to bring forward and advance its own housing building programme.

2.6 **Case Study of an Investment Partnership – Cambridge City Council**

- 2.6.1 The 'Investment Partnership' model has been used by a number of local authorities, Cambridge City Council stood out as a good example in terms of its Investment Partnership, Cambridge Investment Partnership (CIP).
- 2.6.2 Following a devolution deal with Government, Cambridge City Council recognised the challenge they had ahead of them in trying to deliver the housing numbers required and as agreed as part of their deal. It understood that to achieve its ambitions, it would need a partner to work alongside and that would complement the internal resources it already had. It decided that an Investment Partnership would be an appropriate way to build capacity, and leverage private sector finance and resource, over time, to accelerate and maximise affordable housing delivery in the city.
- 2.6.3 CIP was formed in 2017 between Cambridge City Council and a housebuilder, Hill Group. The Council selected Hill as its partner because of the alignment between ethos and ambitions between the two and Hill's willingness to invest in site to drive affordable housing delivery. The lifespan of the partnership was intended to be 10-15 years.
- 2.6.4 Since then, CIP has developed out a number of sites in Cambridge on a sequential basis, with 8 sites fully completed and 1120 homes in the overall programme.

3. **Alternative options considered and not recommended**

- 3.1 The section below summarise the options investigated. Refer to Appendix 1 for more details.
- 3.2 **Do nothing**
 - 3.2.1 The Council can choose to simply keep the land and not progress development or disposal. This option does not deliver towards the Council's housing objectives, and it could also incur ongoing liabilities along with anti-social behaviours and fly tipping.
- 3.3 **Straight land sale**
 - 3.3.1 The Council can parcel sites up together or sell them individually on the open market. Land will be sold to the highest bidder and a capital receipt can be received on day one, or deferred, possibly with additional overage at a later date.
 - 3.3.2 This option is not recommended as it does not help the Council achieve its corporate objectives. Once disposed, the Council would have limited influence on the pace, type and quality of the development.

3.4 Land sale with 'Negative obligations'

- 3.4.1 This option has key features as straight disposal, but in addition, the sale agreement contains some degree of control for the Council to take the land back if, by a long stop date, the buyer has not delivered the requisite development in compliance with its planning permission.
- 3.4.2 As with the straight disposal, this option is not recommended because it does not help the Council achieve its corporate objectives on housing: whilst the Council has a degree of influence on the delivery timeframe, there is still limited scope to influence on the type and quality of the development.

3.5 Development agreement

- 3.5.1 This model is a standard route which has been adopted by the public and private sector over many years. It is a contractual joint venture (JV) rather than a corporate JV. This means that no separate legal entity is created: rather, the public sector partner enters into a contract with its private sector developer partner under which the private sector developer will commit to develop land upon satisfaction of conditions, on a sequential basis.
- 3.5.2 This option is not recommended as it requires the Council to run a fully regulated procurement exercise to identify its partner, which will incur cost and programme implications. Once a developer has been procured, there is some flexibility and control in terms of how much exclusivity the Council wishes to give and the specifications of the end products, but once a brief has been set from the outset, the contractual structure is less flexible to incorporate changes without incurring additional costs. There is also a lack of financial transparency within the contractual boundary- without an equal and transparent structure to share development returns, it provides little impetus for the developer to help the Council resolve the viability challenge.

3.6 Corporate Partnership

- 3.6.1 This model has been widely adopted by a significant number of local authorities in the form of an Investment Partnership (IP), or a Master Developer Partnership, or a Fully Integrated Partnership, depending on how flexible or prescribed the parties wish it to be.
- 3.6.2 The key features of this model and the three variants are detailed in Appendix 1. Master Developer Partnership and Fully Integrated Partnership are both more suited to large scale development- they have a higher risk profile and are more complex to set up, both also require a fully regulated procurement process, which can be lengthy and costly. Based on the objectives as set out under paragraph 1.6, the cost and process would not be justified by these two options, therefore they are not recommended.

3.7 Self Delivery

- 3.7.1 As set out under paragraph 1 above, the previous delivery approach taken was a self-delivery model. Typically, this involves the Council appointing the design and development consultants directly for the pre-construction work up to the planning stage. Once planning permission has been granted, the works would then be procured by the Council through a Design and Build contract, so the Contractor would take over and be the single point of responsibility to complete the detailed design and construction. This is widely used in the industry to safeguard the quality as well as managing the cost and

risks.

- 3.7.2 Under the current economic climate, viability challenges have imposed constraints across the Council sites. Commercial benefits such as economy of scale at the supply chain level are unlikely to be shared as sites are developed on a one-by-one basis.
- 3.7.3 In this model, each project would need to be tendered, which comes at a cost to the Council and would also incur delays to the programme. Currently, because this approach does not help the Council build professional relationships with a trusted and reliable partner, it is a missed opportunity for utilising the resource and knowledge that a partnership approach brings to help to unlock some of the more difficult sites in the Borough. It is therefore not recommended for delivering the development portfolio.

4. Post decision implementation

4.1 Subject to the approval of the Recommendations, officers will:

- 4.1.1 Prepare a Members' Agreement and other required ancillary documents for approval. The Members' Agreement will cover the following:
- Governance and decision making process;
 - Process of how and what sites are brought forward;
 - How finance works (including tax arrangements) - to ensure both partners have an equal share of risks and profits;
 - Governance outside decision making (i.e. meetings and appointment of project team);
 - Disputes and deadlock;
 - Procurement of works (to ensure value for money).
- 4.1.2 Prepare and negotiate a land sale agreement (or option agreement) in respect of the initial 4 DPP sites (with or without initial exclusivity agreements while the IP carries out due diligence and works up its business plans). This will regulate how and at what value the Council transfers each site to the IP once the IP has an agreed business plan in place. This land sale agreement (or option agreement) may also form the template for the disposal of any further sites that the Council may identify for disposal to the IP (including the 3 car park sites referred to at paragraph 1.14);
- 4.1.3 Proceed with establishing an Investment Partnership with the recommended PSP and the Council will enter into the Members' Agreement;
- 4.1.4 Carry out due diligence as described in paragraph 1.14 in relation to the three car park sites identified in that paragraph in order to identify whether they are potentially appropriate for disposal to the IP.

5. Implications of decision

5.1 **Corporate Priorities and Performance**

- 5.1.1 The Council's Corporate Plan sets out the aim to ensure Barnet is a destination borough and a brilliant place to live, and it is invested in by:
- Championing and developing our town centres and neighbourhoods, creating places that are clean, safe and welcoming; where it is attractive for people to visit and spend time and where businesses have the best chance of success.
 - Providing good quality homes in the right places that meet residents' diverse needs and are affordable. Creating better places that connect and support communities, with services our residents need and a local economy that is fit for all.
- 5.1.2 The Corporate Plan states the need in 'delivering the right homes to meet diverse needs now and for future generations, that people can afford and are in the right places.'
- 5.1.3 Lack of affordable housing is highlighted in Barnet's Joint Strategic Needs Assessment (JSNA) as one of the top three concerns identified by local residents in the Residents' Perception Survey. The Corporate Plan pledges to 'build more homes that people can afford, including 1,000 homes for rent at half market rates.'
- 5.1.4 The London Plan and Local Plan recognise the need to deliver more housing in the Borough. The council's Housing Strategy 2019-2024 continues to emphasise that delivering more homes that people can afford is a key priority and sets out how the council will deal with a number of challenges including high prices, a shortage of affordable housing and the potential threats to the qualities that make the Borough attractive.
- 5.1.5 Barnet's Health and Wellbeing Strategy recognises the importance of access to good quality housing in maintaining Well-Being in the Community.

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

- 5.2.1 The initial cost estimate for establishing an Investment Partnership is approximately £30,000- £50,000. The cost can be met from existing budget.
- 5.2.2 There are several financial considerations that the Council should be aware of in establishing an Investment Partnership as set out below, each of which will be considered and managed in conjunction with legal colleagues in establishing the Investment Partnership;
- 5.2.2.1 **Land Value** - The Council would put land into the Investment Partnership (IP). The land would be independently valued at the point of input and the Council will be issued a 'loan note' (which is an IOU from the IP to the Council) to the value of the land. This would therefore satisfy the statutory requirement for the Council to 'dispose' of the land at the best consideration. The investment partner will match the value of the land with cash (or a promise to pay cash as needed), thus creating the 50:50 investment proposition. Once the land has been developed, the IP will redeem the loan note from the development proceeds, i.e. pay the assessed market value. Any other development value above the value of the Council's land at the input will be shared between the Council and the partner in proportion to the value of other inputs, after paying all development costs (including any required repayments to lenders funding the development).

- 5.2.2.2 Likewise, it is true that in such a partnership arrangement, any losses would also be shared equally. However, this shared risk, should the market work against the development plan, is still reduced when compared to what it would be if developing independently. It is in both parties' interest to mitigate such risks as the liability is a shared one.
- 5.2.2.3 **Revenue Return** - The Council will be able to require a revenue return on the development value. For example, it can specify some of the housing be let at intermediate rents and forego any capital receipt should these properties have been sold.
- 5.2.2.4 **Funding** - The Council may choose to provide funding either through Public Works Loan Board (PWLB) or a commercial lender as part of its investment. The benefit of this would be analysed on a scheme by scheme basis at the appraisal stage.
- 5.2.2.5 **Reinvesting returns in the IP** - The model would allow for the Council to instruct that the IP retain some of the return should it be helpful for subsequent schemes.
- 5.2.2.6 **Tax implications** – The LLP is not subject to corporation tax. Any other tax liabilities will be considered as part of the due diligence process in setting up the IP and on all individual projects to be taken forward.
- 5.2.3 Any Council-owned assets put forward for the Investment Partnership would need to be reviewed in terms of any Treasury Management implications constitutional procedures for land disposal and appropriation (if the land is not held for housing purposes).
- 5.2.4 The LLP will ensure it has its own finance function. It will be responsible for forecasting, reporting and the preparation of statutory financial returns and statements.
- 5.2.5 **Governance, Structure, and Procurement**
- 5.2.5.1 The governance structure will be set out in more detail in the Members' Agreement.
- 5.2.5.2 The setting up of an Investment Partnership per se does not involve the Council in any procurement of goods works or services. None are being sought by the Council in the partnership setup process. The Council is simply engaging with its potential investment partner who will contribute cash to the value of each site and will work with the Council to develop appropriate investment and development strategies for each site.
- 5.2.5.3 As a site is identified, the IP team will work up a draft business plan for that site and will present it to the Board, and then the partners, for approval. If approved, the Council will ultimately transfer or lease (by way of long lease) the site to the IP and the partner will match the value of the site in equity.
- 5.3 **Legal and Constitutional References**
- 5.3.1 The financials are included in the exempt section as it contains commercially confidential information (relevant legislation -paragraph 3 of part 1 of schedule 12 A of the Local Government Act 1972 (as amended) and the public interest in maintaining the exemption outweighs the public interest in disclosing the information.

- 5.3.2 The Council's Constitution, Article 7 – Committees, Forums, Working Groups and Partnerships sets out the responsibilities of all council committees. The H&G Committee remit includes responsibility for:
- housing matters including housing strategy, homelessness, social housing and housing grants;
 - regeneration strategy and overseeing major regeneration schemes, asset management, economic development including employment strategy, business support and engagement.
 - Council, Constitution, Article 10 Table A states that the Housing & Growth Committee is responsible for authorising all disposals of land for over £500,000 and any disposal which is not for best consideration. Disposals of Council property pursuant to the proposed partnership would require approval by Committee or by an authorised officer as set out in Table A.
 - Article 4 of the Council's constitution sets out the matters reserved to full Council. These include approval of Member and officer appointments to outside bodies and external organisations on the recommendation of the Group Secretaries or Chief Executive.
- 5.3.3 Section 1(1) of the Localism Act 2011 bestows a general power of competence on local authorities which permits them to do anything that private individuals generally may do, but this is subject to the general principles of public law. The Council will need to have regard to the account in which any housing stock is ultimately to be held and the provisions of s 74 of the Local Government and Housing Act 1989 including any financial adjustments between the Councils General Fund and Housing Revenue Accounts which may be required to be made if stock were to be held by the Council direct (as opposed to through the proposed LLP).
- 5.3.4 Section 4 of the Localism Act 2011 enables the Council to do for a commercial purpose anything that it is empowered to do under section 1 of the 2011 Act, provided that they do so through a company.
- 5.3.5 Section 95 of the Local Government Act 2003 allows a local authority to do, through a company, for a commercial purpose anything which they are authorised to do for carrying on any of their ordinary functions.
- 5.3.6 The Council has a range of powers including the general power of competence under Section 1 of Chapter 1 of the Localism Act 2011 to do anything that individuals can do subject to any specific restrictions contained in legislation and Section 111 of the Local Government Act 1972 which provides that a local authority has power to do anything which is calculated to facilitate, or is conducive or is incidental to, the discharge of its functions.
- 5.3.7 The general power of competence referred to above, is caveated in section 4 of the Localism Act 2011, which states that if a local authority intends to do something "for a commercial purpose" then it must do so through a company. The reference to a "company" is to a company limited by shares only, and not any other form of corporate entity (and therefore not an LLP, which is the proposed form of legal entity for the recommended IP structure). It is therefore important to establish the Council's purpose for entering into an IP. This was examined in the case of *Peters v London Borough of*

Haringey (2018), which examined the proposed establishment by LB Haringey and its partner Lend Lease of an LLP to deliver housing and regeneration across the borough. That case established that it is necessary to examine the “dominant purpose” of the local authority in seeking to set up an LLP. The commentary in this report recites the purpose of setting up an IP which is to accelerate and de-risk the delivery of high quality, affordable housing in the borough, overcoming the limitations that the Council would encounter if it were to pursue the self-delivery model. The Council’s dominant purpose can therefore be seen to centre on housing delivery, improving the quality and affordability of accommodation for its residents, and not primarily commercially driven. As such, the advice received from the Council’s external legal advisers Pinsent Masons is that an LLP is an appropriate legal structure for the proposals set out in this report.

- 5.3.8 As the Council is a contracting authority, it is obliged to comply with the Public Contracts Regulations 2015. Where it intends to create a contract for works, services or goods above the relevant financial thresholds as published by the UK Government from time to time, it must run a fully regulated procurement competition. As mentioned in the Governance, Structure and Procurement section above, the creation of an Investment Partnership does not involve the procurement by the Council of goods, works or services. As such no public contract is created and there is no obligation on the Council to run a formal procurement process. It is critical to the procurement analysis that the constitution of the IP does not offer exclusivity of services or works to the investment partner: ie the IP must be free to select the professionals, consultants and contractors that it wishes to work with in order to deliver sites according to its agreed business plans.
- 5.3.9 The IP itself is not a contracting authority and thus is not bound by the Public Contracts Regulations. As such it need not run formal competitions to identify suppliers of works and/or services; obviously however the Council will wish the IP to demonstrate value for money over time following its formation.
- 5.3.10 In due course the Council is likely to dispose of individual sites to the IP (although this is not guaranteed). Depending on the value of the land, future report will be brought back to the HAG Committee in due course as required.

5.4 **Insight**

- 5.4.1 The Council’s Housing Strategy and Local Plan respond to evidence such as the Strategic Housing Market Assessment and other needs assessments that have identified a need for increased housing delivery.

5.5 **Social Value**

- 5.5.1 Increasing the utility of existing assets through mixed use redevelopment will enable the Council’s portfolio of assets to go further towards supporting local needs by helping to provide new opportunities for housing, (in particular, affordable housing) and new, improved community facilities.
- 5.5.2 Any contractors or parties involved in the development will be encouraged to provide opportunities for employment, training and apprenticeships for local people and use local suppliers where appropriate.

5.6 **Risk Management**

- 5.6.1 Whilst establishing an IP is deemed to be a positive step forward for the Council, it must

be noted that it does not mitigate any of the risks associated with the development of housing such as contaminated land, increasing build costs, etc. However, whilst certain factors will always remain a risk, the IP model allows for those risks to be shared, which in itself, is a benefit.

- 5.6.2 In establishing an IP, some potential direct risks are summarised below:
- 5.6.3 The Council and its partner do not agree to progress a scheme – The impact of this risk is that the cost of progressing the scheme to date would be lost and there would be a delay in delivering the scheme. This risk can be mitigated by the partnership itself as is not in the interest of either partner without good reason to prevent a scheme from progressing, as any abortive costs would be shared. The Council can of course decide not to make further sites available to the IP if it chooses to.
- 5.6.4 That the return generated through the IP does not represent the best value – Land invested by the Council into the IP will be valued by an independent valuer. At any time, the Council can require the IP to test the best value of any of its activities. As the partner is set to share in the up-lift in development value and therefore it is not in their interest to not work with the Council to jointly manage the efficient delivery of projects.
- 5.6.5 A legal challenge about the choice of the partner and transparency – expert advice will consider this in establishing the partnership, but all case studies and secondary legal commentary indicate that a local authority can choose its partner in an IP without running a formal procurement process. However, as outlined in paragraphs 1.21 to 1.24 of this report, a selection process has been undertaken to select a partner, and it will be followed by an update to the existing due diligence check before agreeing the Members' Agreement, thereby, mitigating this risk.
- 5.6.6 In the event of a provider failure by either deadlock where the two partners cannot agree on a strategic matter, or default where the partner does not behave as anticipated, the IP can terminate. If the termination arises from a deadlock, it is usual for one partner to be able to buy out the other either in respect of the whole of the IP or where the deadlock relates to a single site, by buying that site out of the IP at fair market value. If the termination arises from a default, then the non-defaulting partner typically could have the option to buy out the defaulting partner's interest. The price, whilst subject to commercial negotiation, is typically discounted to reflect the occurrence of the default. With the exception of an insolvency situation, it is also theoretically possible for the non-defaulting partner to be able to oblige the defaulting partner to acquire its interest.
- 5.6.7 If a buyout does not occur, then the IP would typically be wound up. In this case, there will be no new sites taken into the IP, and there is a short pause for the partners to agree whether they are able to work together to finish developing any partially built sites. Once partially developed sites are built out or, if the partners agree just to move forward with termination immediately, a winding up practitioner will be appointed to sort out the process and to wind up the IP. Any assets left over once debts are paid will then be distributed to the two partners in line with their capital contributions.
- 5.6.8 Although there will be certain risks associated with an IP, there are also several benefits to working in this way that far outweighs any risk:
- 5.6.9 **Versatility** - The Model can support a wide range of development from affordable housing, private sale, market rent, estate regeneration, and commercial development. It

can also provide income or capital returns to the Council and the Council can choose which schemes it inputs into the partnership. The Council can also choose to veto a scheme before it proceeds. Work collaboratively and transparently with all decisions made equally, ensuring the Council retains influence.

5.6.10 **Resources** - The partnership will complement in-house teams. It is possible to assign project managers to individual projects and these costs can be recovered as project costs. Joint expertise ensures projects meet specific Council needs. Set up costs are low and there are no ongoing procurement costs for the council. The Council will need to provide resources at the board level.

5.6.11 **Delivering at Pace** - The IP can be set up quickly and through speedy procurement, confidence in build costs and simple decision making means new affordable housing development can be delivered at pace. The transparent approach enables planning applications to optimise the delivery of affordable homes and the challenges of viability in the current market.

5.6.12 **Maximising Return & Sharing Risk and Reward** - On residential mixed tenure projects, expertise can help develop an Investment Partnership market product, with half the profit going to the Council. Planning and pre-development costs can be funded at risk by the developer.

5.6.13 **Incentivisation** - There is no exclusivity provided to the partnership and therefore the partner is truly incentivised to deliver the Councils requirements, and as joint funders, there is a commitment to enhancing their investment.

5.6.14 **Flexibility** - There is flexibility in the type of structure and the preferred scheme of governance.

5.7 Equalities and Diversity

5.7.1 The 2010 Equality Act outlines the provisions of the Public-Sector Equalities Duty which requires Public Bodies to have due regard to the need to:

- Eliminate unlawful discrimination, harassment and victimisation and other conduct prohibited by the Equality Act 2010.
- Advance equality of opportunity between people from different groups and foster good relations between people from different groups.

5.7.2 Any Equalities Impact Assessments will be undertaken on individual schemes as they are brought forward, and the proposals outlined will give appropriate consideration and where required consider any matters raised in these assessments. However, the proposals in this report are not considered at this stage to raise any negative impacts for equalities and demonstrate that the Council has paid due regard to equalities as required by section 149 of the Equality Act 2010

5.8 Corporate Parenting

5.8.1 Not applicable.

5.9 Consultation and Engagement

5.9.1 Not applicable.

5.10 Environmental Impact

- 5.10.1 As was highlighted by the Prime Minister at the opening of COP26, the evidence for human made climate change is now overwhelming, with the need to take action becoming ever more urgent. This sentiment was echoed in the Leader of Barnet Council's statement on sustainability, which made clear the Council's ambition of being at the forefront of London's programme to tackle climate change.
- 5.10.2 The Sustainability Strategy Framework sets out how the Council intends to respond to climate change and the agreements reached at COP26. It sets out ambitious targets for the Council to be net zero by 2030, and Barnet as a place to be net zero as soon as possible following this, and by 2050 at the latest. In particular, the Council is seeking to lead the way in making the new homes more energy efficient and fit for the future. The sustainability strategy stipulates its intention to ensure that all projects delivering the housing target are to achieve net-zero standards and include provision for electric vehicle charging. This principle will be adopted by any Investment Partnership established by the Council.
- 5.10.3 In parallel, the building industry is also undergoing significant regulatory changes in response to the climate emergency. Statutory requirements are in the process of transitioning into a set of higher energy performance requirements to meet the country wide net zero target. The cost impact of the environmental imperatives has been reflected in the viability challenges, which require a different delivery strategy to meet the onerous demands. The financial advantages of the IP model can help the Council achieve these ambitious environmental targets.

6. Background papers

- 6.1 Assets Regeneration and Growth Committee 25 March 2019- Establishing new sites for consideration [Future Sites Pipeline.pdf \(moderngov.co.uk\)](#)
- 6.2 Housing and Growth Committee 6 July 2020 - Development Portfolio Programme (Public with accompanying Exempt Report (not for publication by virtue of paragraph 3 of Schedule 12a of the Local Government Act 1972 as amended as this relates to information of a financial or business nature) [\(Public Pack\)Agenda Document for Housing and Growth Committee, 06/07/2020 19:00 \(moderngov.co.uk\)](#)
- 6.3 Chief Officer in Consultation with Committee Chairman- Delegated Powers Report, Contract Award for Development Consultancy Services (Lot A) and Design Consultancy Services (Lot B) to Progress the Development Portfolio Programme, 5 May 2021. [Development Design and Development Consultancy appointment DPR.pdf \(moderngov.co.uk\)](#)

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Appendix 1 – Delivery Models

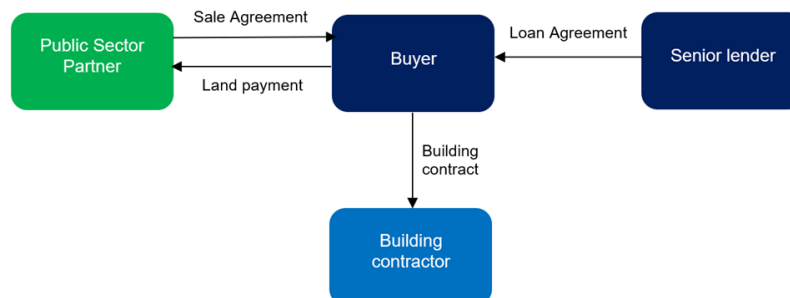
1. Do nothing

1.1 The Council can choose to simply keep the land and not progress development or disposal. This option does not deliver towards the Council’s housing objectives, and it could also incur ongoing liability associated with asset management.

1.2 Pros and Cons

PROS	CONS
No resource requirement on disposal	Fundamentally does not deliver at all towards the Council’s housing objectives.
	Potentially incur ongoing liability associated with asset management.
	Does not optimise the asset value for the Council.

2. Straight land sale (with or without preconditions to land disposal such as planning)



2.1 Key Features

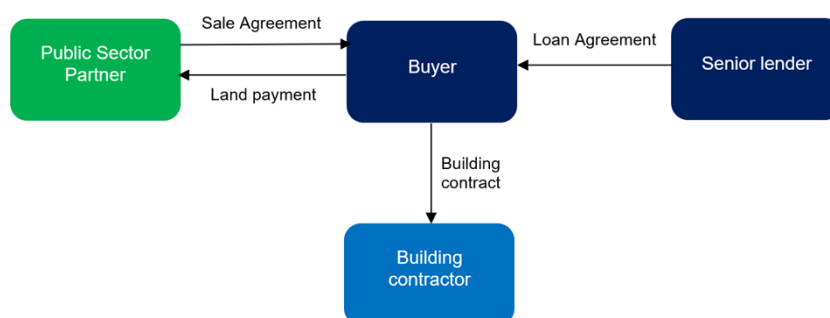
- 2.1.1 The Council can parcel sites up together or sell them individually. It will expose them to the open market by way of public advertisement (i.e. advert in Estates Gazette).
- 2.1.2 Bids are received and the land will be sold to the highest bidder based on price alone.
- 2.1.3 The disposal can be subject to preconditions such as obtaining detailed planning permission or reserved matters approval (although the landowner could not ultimately prevent the buyer from re-planning the land). However, there are no development obligations in the agreement between the parties.
- 2.1.4 A capital receipt can be received on Day One, or deferred, possibly with additional overage at a later date.

2.1.5 No separate legal entity is created: each party simply contracts as itself.

2.2 Pros and Cons

PROS	CONS
Well understood by the market: a tried and tested model	No ability to control quality or timing of delivery on land (apart from as planning authority in the case of the Council) – no ability to prevent buyers from re-planning sites
Relatively quick and cheap to put in place	Disposing of single sites / parcels means that those that are less viable/attractive will have a limited market unless packaged together
No requirement for OJEU procurement process	Does not prevent landbanking: no assurance of delivery
This is likely to yield the highest, earliest capital receipt for the land – or can be structured with deferred consideration if desired	Limited ability to participate in profit (overage is available but can be relatively difficult to unlock transparently)
The terms of each sale can be tailored to suit that site / parcel	Disposing of single sites / parcels means multiple processes, with attendant resource requirements
There is no direct participation by the landowner in land development, so this option carries a low delivery risk for the Council.	Inflexible: landowner has no ongoing involvement in the development of land once disposed of and so cannot force the arrangements to adapt to changing circumstances
Quick exit - no "trailing wires"	Potentially delivering less affordable housing on the land due to a less onerous planning requirement on the private landowner to deliver the affordable housing quantum.

3. Land sale with ‘Negative obligations’



3.1 Key Features

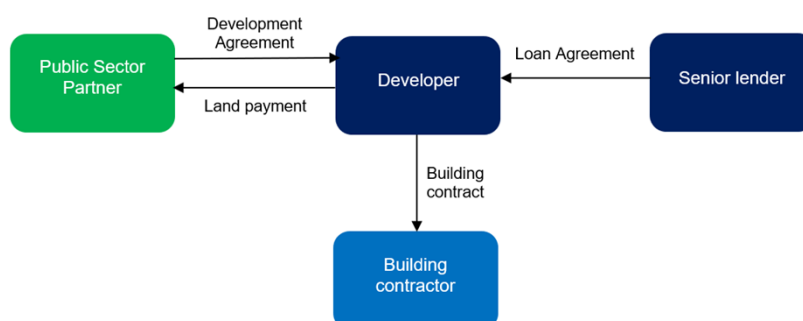
3.1.1 This option has key features as straight disposal, but in addition, the sale agreement contains some degree of control for the landowner through an ability for the landowner to take the land back if, by a long stop date, the buyer has not delivered the requisite development in compliance with its planning

permission. However, in practice, developers are likely to require that any option to take the land back must be exercised at market value or only a small discount to market value.

3.2 Pros and Cons

PROS	CONS
Well understood by the market	No ability to control quality or timing of delivery on the land (apart from as planning authority in the case of the Council), except through what could be an unaffordable buy back option: this would be the only method through which the landowner could prevent the buyer from re-planning the relevant site
Relatively quick and cheap to put in place (compared to a partnership arrangement).	In practice, likely to take some time to negotiate the details of the buyback arrangements: this will inevitably be more costly to the landowner than a straight land sale
No requirement for OJEU procurement process	Disposing of single sites / parcels means that those that are less viable/attractive will have a limited market unless packaged together
This is likely to yield the highest, earliest capital receipt for the land – or can be structured with deferred consideration if desired	Does not prevent landbanking: no assurance of delivery
The terms of each sale can be tailored to suit that site / parcel.	Limited ability to participate in profit (overage is available but can be relatively difficult to unlock transparently)
There is no direct participation by the landowner in land development, so this option carries a low delivery risk for the landowner	Disposing of single sites / parcels means multiple processes, with attendant resource requirements
	Inflexible: landowner has no ongoing involvement in the development of land once disposed of and so cannot force the arrangements to adapt to changing circumstances

4. Development agreement



4.1 Key Features

- 4.1.1 This model is a standard route which has been adopted by the public and private sector over many years. It can be described as a joint venture; however, it is a contractual rather than a corporate joint venture. This means that no separate legal entity is created: rather, the public sector partner enters into a contract with its private sector developer partner under which the private sector developer will commit to develop land upon satisfaction of conditions, on a sequential basis.
- 4.1.2 The public sector can specify quality and design standards, as well as pace and order of delivery. If the developer fails to perform, the public sector can potentially take land back (albeit no doubt via a purchase, perhaps at a discounted value), and in any event terminate the agreement and prevent further land drawdowns.
- 4.1.3 This model could either involve the disposal of individual sites, multiple sites (sequentially or together), or individual serviced plots to individual developers.
- 4.1.4 There is therefore some flexibility in terms of how this is structured depending on how much exclusivity the public sector wishes to give. That question will no doubt be driven by commercial considerations.
- 4.1.5 This model will require the public sector partner to run a fully regulated procurement exercise to identify its partner.

4.2 Pros and Cons

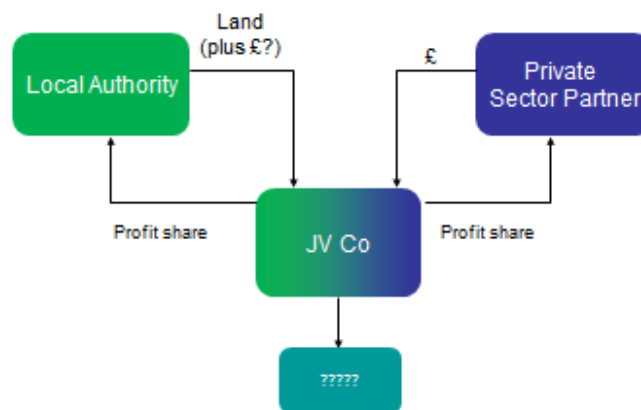
PROS	CONS
Well understood by the market: a tried and tested model.	Limited ability to adapt to any changing requirements as to what is delivered on the relevant land; or in future.
If one master developer, or a developer for multiple sites, may be only one procurement exercise.	Limited ability to inject equity in order to generate profit returns in the future (as compared to corporate structure).
Can ensure receipt of up front capital sum or deferred consideration.	Profit share unlikely to be transparent in practice (overage can be difficult to extract)
Public sector partner can share in the success of the scheme through overage.	A fully regulated procurement is necessary – likely Competitive Dialogue or possibly Competitive Procedure with Negotiation.
Public sector partner can control the timing, pace and quality of delivery on the land through imposing long stop dates, quality requirements etc in development agreement.	
Public sector partner can control land drawdown/terminate the agreement if land not built out to its stipulated requirements.	

PROS**CONS**

Public sector partner does not directly participate in the scheme and so has a low level of development risk.

5. Corporate Partnership

5.1 This model is widely adopted within the local authority market. The basic structure is as set out below:

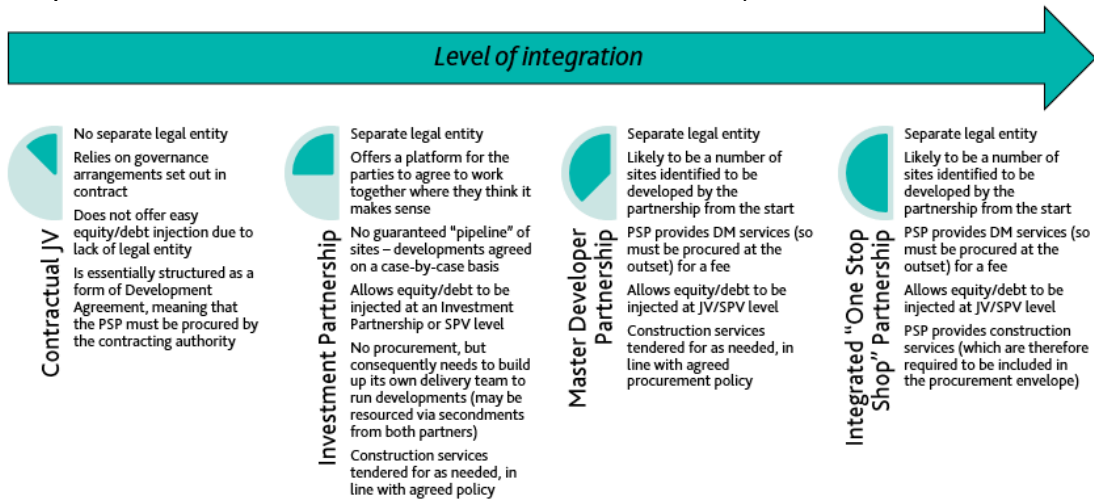


5.2 Once the decision to set up a separate legal entity has been taken, the choice becomes how flexible or prescribed do the parties wish it to be.

5.3 The three models of this set up range from an IP through to a fully integrated JV, each of which is more integrated than the last.

- IP
- Master Developer Partnership
- Fully Integrated Partnership (which the Council and BH understand as a “JV”).

5.4 This is shown on the spectrum described below (which for completeness includes reference to a Contractual JV).



5.5 The key features that are common to all Corporate Partnerships are set out in the table below:-

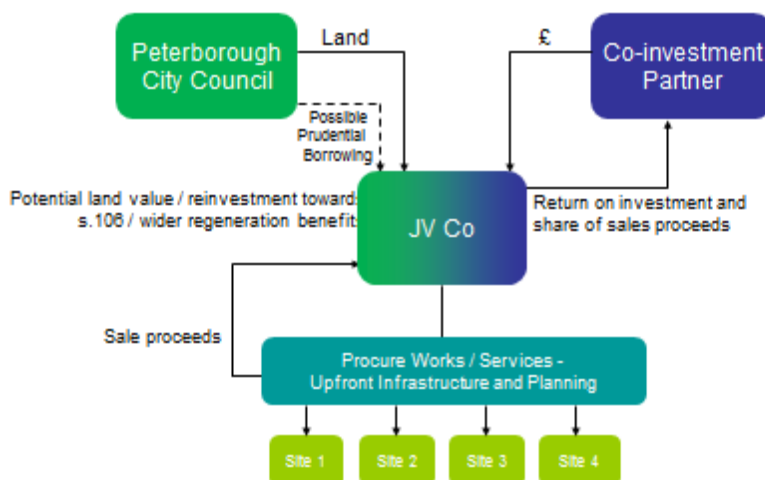
FEATURE/ISSUE	COMMENTS
Nature of vehicle	Commonly these are set up as Limited Liability Partnerships which are tax efficient. An analysis on powers is necessary but as a general point, the LLP route should be available here.
Decision making	It is likely that the vehicle will be a 50/50 deadlock structure. This means that neither party can force a decision through that the other does not wish to take, but equally either party can veto a proposal that it is not comfortable with.
Land	The public sector partner can contribute land to the vehicle (likely in tranches upon satisfaction of preconditions). The value of the land contributed is anticipated to be in cash (or a promise to pay cash when needed) by the PSP. The vehicle is thus endowed with land plus cash, enabling it to take forward the promotion of the land.
Business planning and objectives	The Corporate Partnership will adopt business plans which will underpin its business activities. These business plans have at their heart the objectives that the parties have agreed on Day One, which will reflect the public sector's own objectives.
Governance	The agreed governance structure, processes and procedures for the IP would be set out in a Members' Agreement (MA), which is the equivalent of a Shareholders' Agreement in the context of an LLP structure. The MA will determine the terms of reference for the Board, who oversees the operation of the

	<p>partnership, the decision-making process and the day to day operation of the Corporate Partnership.</p> <p>Key decisions, including approval to bring a site forward, and approval of a business plan for any given site, are reserved to the two partners represented by their members.</p>
Ability to adapt	Because the Corporate Partnership is a standalone business entity in its own right, it can make decisions and adapt to changing circumstances (whether internal or external).
Profit sharing	Assuming that the vehicle is a 50/50 structure, profits are distributed on a pari passu basis to reflect the 50/50 nature of the vehicle. Profits are typically distributed proportionately to the relative investments of the partners in the vehicle.
Procurement issues	Because of the 50/50 nature of the vehicle, with no overall control for the public sector, the vehicle will be assumed to comprise a private sector entity and thus will not be bound by the Public Contracts Regulations 2015. This will need to be monitored as thinking develops, but this would be the starting assumption.

5.6 A detailed description of the pros and cons of each corporate partnership option is set out in the section below.

5.7 Option 1: Investment Partnership

Option 1 – case study: Peterborough



5.7.1 Key Features

- 5.7.1.1 The partners are creating an investment platform. The public sector partner is seeking an investment partner as its PSP, which is willing to share risk in relation to sites and to match the value of sites with cash.
- 5.7.1.2 The public sector partner is not procuring any works or services from the PSP: it is simply seeking its expertise in making joint decisions within the Corporate Partnership about how best to maximise the financial and economic value of sites.
- 5.7.1.3 Once these decisions have been made and an investment strategy adopted, the IP itself will put together its team of consultants in order to ready sites for the market, in whole or in parts. It will pay those third-party consultants in the usual way (service level agreements etc).
- 5.7.1.4 The IP may even decide that it is prudent to carry out some of the infrastructure works in order to maximise value: it would be open to it to assemble the delivery team to do this.
- 5.7.1.5 Profits generated to the partners will comprise the uplift in value of the land through getting planning permission etc.
- 5.7.1.6 Under the model, the Council can choose which site(s) it wishes to transfer to the IP. The Council, or the partner, can veto whether a scheme proceeds or not once it has been appraised. The Council retains control of the freehold of the land and its value as it can choose, or not, whether it requires the freehold to remain with the Council.

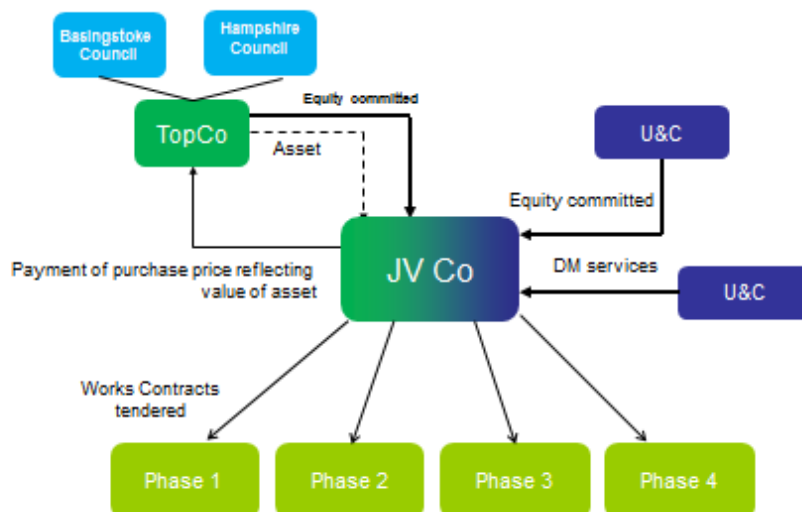
5.7.2 Pros and Cons.

PROS	CONS
No regulated procurement is required, as the public sector partner is not procuring works or services from its partner: it is simply identifying the right investor with the right skills to come up with a strategy together that will maximise the value of the proposition. That said, the public sector partner may want to run some form of competition to identify the right partner.	With limited risk comes limited up-side. This Option may limit the public sector's ability to share in full development returns from sites.
The process to put an Investment Partnership in place should be relatively quick and straightforward.	Integrated developers will not be interested in this Option. This will only be of interest to businesses that are not driven by the pipeline opportunity for delivery.
The public sector partner is not limited to one developer as it is the IP itself that will decide how best to bring forward sites (perhaps even by commissioning the infrastructure and then parceling up plots for disposal and development).	Given that it is the IP itself that will select the team of consultants to work with it to develop the proposition to the market and the overall strategy for sites, the public sector partner's control over this will be diluted to a "veto" right only (as opposed to being able to test all of this through the procurement process itself). So the public sector will have "50% control" over the selection of the design and delivery team: it

PROS	CONS
As such this Option limits the potential exposure of the IP as it is not taking development risk or end-occupier risk.	cannot control this through the process of selecting its PSP (as opposed to Option 2 and Option 3). Given the absence of a regulated procurement to select the PSP, it must be recognised that the Investment Partnership cannot be a way of the public sector buying development management services (the sourcing of which by a contracting authority is subject to the PCRs) from the PSP.

5.8 Option 2: Master Developer Partnership

Option 2 – case study: Basingstoke



5.8.1 Key Features

- 5.8.1.1 In this Option, the public sector partner is getting a PSP on board who can not only invest equity into the scheme, but can also provide master developer/development management services.
- 5.8.1.2 The Master Developer Partnership will obtain planning permission for sites and perhaps even put infrastructure in, creating serviced plots that can be marketed to occupiers/developers. The public sector partner may decide that it is happy for the Master Developer Partnership to take a ringfenced number of plots forward itself but must expose others to the market.
- 5.8.1.3 This Option is therefore interesting to the developer market that wants to have some "skin in the game" in relation to the developments they become involved with.
- 5.8.1.4 The PSP is paid not only through its ultimate equity return, but also under a Service Level Agreement to provide master developer/DM

services to the Master Developer Partnership.

5.8.1.5 Because the public sector partner is buying services from its selected PSP, this Option will involve a fully regulated procurement under the Public Contracts Regulations 2015.

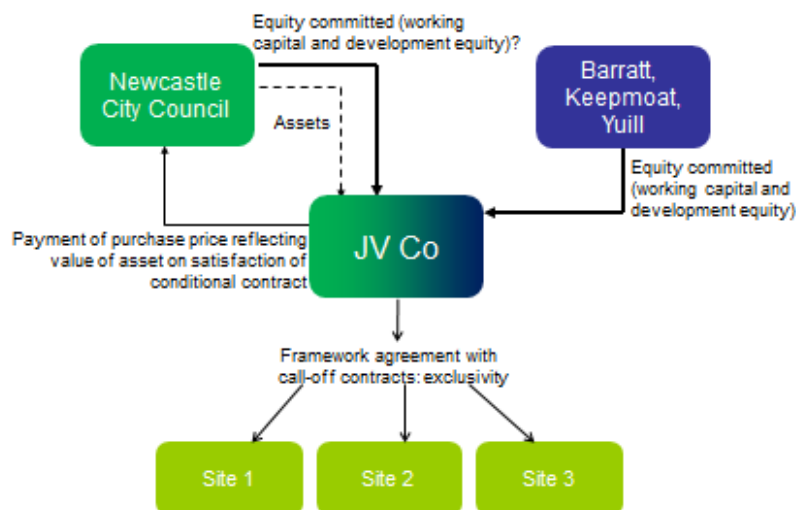
5.8.1.6 The Master Developer Partnership will make its returns through the planning uplift in land value, and enhanced value of serviced "oven ready" plots. It may also take development returns if it builds out any plots itself.

5.8.2 Pros and Cons

PROS	CONS
This model is interesting to a wider range of market participants than Option 1.	A fully regulated procurement is necessary – likely Competitive Dialogue or possibly Competitive Procedure with Negotiation.
The public sector partner can enshrine its objectives and any design requirements/standards into the procurement process and governance so that it has created the platform for a masterplan that it is comfortable with.	The public sector partner, through the vehicle, is sharing master developer risk (ie planning and infrastructure risk).
The public sector partner can test the development expertise of potential partners through the procurement process – helping it to get comfortable that it has the "right partner" on board who will deliver against its objectives.	

5.9 Option 3: Integrated partnership, known by the parties as a Joint Venture

Option 3 – case study: Scotswood



5.9.1 Key features

- 5.9.1.1 This model is what the Council understands as a “Joint Venture” or “JV”.
- 5.9.1.2 In this model, in addition to the roles for the PSP described in the Master Developer Partnership, the JV acts as a developer, and as a consequence the PSP will bring the supply chain (ie construction contractors etc) with it, and this will be tested/benchmarked as part of the procurement process.
- 5.9.1.3 A developer who has a supply chain within their group of companies, or a consortium, may become the PSP.
- 5.9.1.4 The PSP will act as master contractor for delivery of the project. It will typically use its established supply chain to maximise efficiencies and drive prices down for the JV. It is possible (and advisable) to carry out further benchmarking/market testing on a project by project, and/or periodic, basis, to ensure ongoing sufficiency of skills and resource from the PSP.

5.9.2 The PSP will take its return in three ways: -

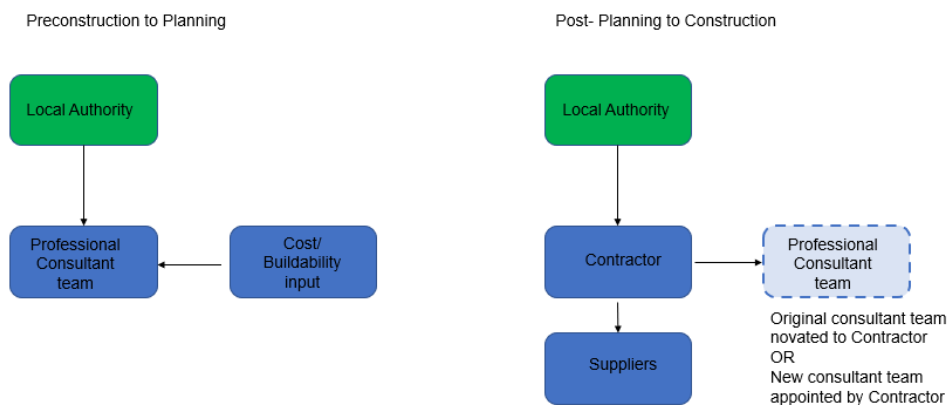
- It will take an equity return from the profits made by the JV itself.
- It will provide development and/or estate management services to the JV: it will charge a fee for this.
- It will also head up the supply chain (as building contractor) where again it will take a return for works carried out.

5.9.3 Pros and Cons

PROS	CONS
This model offers a "one stop shop" whereby the public sector partner is procuring all of the skills and resources needed to deliver the entire scheme in one exercise.	It can be difficult to demonstrate true value for money over time where the supply chain is part of the PSP's group – the PSP may try and obscure profits through its downstream arrangements for delivery. This needs to be fully tested through the procurement process.
Because the public sector partner is sharing in the full range of risks that can be involved, it has the potential to receive the greatest returns.	It can be difficult to secure top performance of the supply chain over time. We recommend KPI's are put in place which will regulate and monitor the performance of the construction supply chain. It is important to structure appropriate protections from “cross-default”, in order to protect the public sector partner (i.e. if the PSP is in default "wearing one hat", what should the consequence be for its other roles and the overall partnership?) This can all be

	worked through but is more complex than in the other models.
The public sector partner can enshrine its objectives and any design requirements / standards into the procurement process and governance so that it has created the platform for a masterplan that it is comfortable with.	The public sector partner is sharing in greater risk here – the whole range of risks that are represented through the life of a development (planning, ground risk, viability, construction and sales).
The public sector partner can test the development expertise of potential partners through the procurement process – helping it to get comfortable that it has the "right partner" on board who will deliver against its objectives.	A fully regulated procurement is necessary – likely Competitive Dialogue or possibly Competitive Procedure with Negotiation.

Self Delivery



5.10 Key features

5.10.1 In this model, the public sector landowner acts as a developer itself. It employs contractors and a professional team to deliver development on its own land.

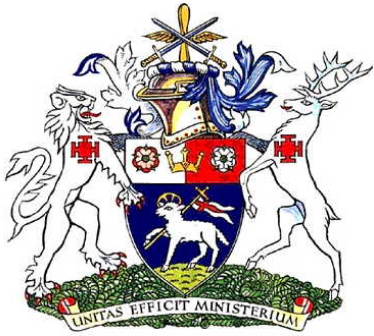
5.10.2 Traditionally, the Council's self delivery is usually by means of the Council appointing the design and development consultants directly for the pre-construction work up to the planning stage. Once planning permission has been granted, a Design and Build procurement route would see a contractor appointed by the Council as the single point of responsibility to undertake the detailed design then construction. The original professionals would then either be novated to the Contractor or the Contractor could appoint their own design team. This is widely used in the industry to safeguard quality as well as managing cost and risks.

5.11 Pros and cons

PROS	CONS
The landowner has control over delivery.	This option has already been tried by the Council through its previous self delivery plan

	but has proven not to be viable or deliverable in practice
A cohesive scheme can be delivered to the public sector's exact requirements	The Council takes all delivery risk (e.g. ground conditions, planning, construction risk, sales risk)
Minimises profit leakage to the private sector (save for the contractor's level of profit priced into building contracts)	This will be extremely resource-intensive, both in terms of procuring the contractor and professional team, but more importantly throughout the entire life of the project as the Council will need to be an "intelligent client" to the contractor and professional team, monitoring performance, giving instructions, and making payments. The Council will also need resource for the sales process
	Regulatory issues will apply to tenancies created through this model (e.g. right to buy and inability to hold PRS units for the Council)

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AGENDA ITEM 18

Housing and Growth Committee 23 March 2023

Title	Brent Cross Update Report
Report of	Chair of Housing and Growth Committee
Wards	Cricklewood
Status	Public with Exempt report (Not for publication by virtue of paragraphs 3 and 5 of Schedule 12A of the Local Government Act 1972 as amended as this relates to information of a financial nature and information in respect of which a claim to legal professional privilege could be maintained in legal proceedings).
Urgent	No
Key	Key
Enclosures	Appendix 1, Governance Assurance Board Meeting Presentation 08/03/2023 Appendix 2, Brent Cross West Station (BXW) Site Progress Photographs
Officer Contact Details	Luke Ward, Brent Cross Programme Director: luke.ward@barnet.gov.uk

Summary

This report updates on progress across the Brent Cross programme since the last update to this Committee on the 17th January 2023.

In particular it provides an update on the progress on site with the recent launch of the Brent Cross Town substation artwork which received wide ranging press coverage for the development.

The report also includes updates on the Brent Cross West station works, and recommendations seeking authority to enter into various agreements required to continue bringing forward the Brent Cross Scheme.

Officers Recommendations

That the committee:

1. Note the progress across the programme as detailed in the report.
2. Delegates to the Director of Resources in consultation with the Chair to finalise the heads of terms and to finalise and complete the required legal documentation to bring forward plot 22, as outlined in [paragraph 1.26](#)
3. Delegates to the Brent Cross Programme Director to finalise and approve minor variations to existing licences, Lot 2 agreements and plot headleases where required to improve the effective and efficient running of the development as explained in [paragraph 1.30-1.31](#)
4. Delegates to Chief Executive in consultation with the Chair to finalise and enter into the required legal agreement with BXSLP to undertake the works related to demolition of the low-rise Whitefield Estate subject to agreement with BXSLP, as explained in [paragraph 1.43-1.44](#)
5. Approves that home loss and disturbance payments for secure tenants of the Whitefield Estate Part 2 is to be administered by Barnet Homes for 91 properties as set out in [paragraph 1.38-1.39](#)
6. Delegates to the Brent Cross Programme Director to finalise and approve the relevant legal documents required to enter into a Memorandum of Agreement/Understanding with property owners and L&Q on terms to acquire existing property and roll-over value into new Shared Equity property on Plots 12 and 54 as explained in [paragraph 1.54-1.55](#)
7. Notes to strategy to finalise and approve agreements required to regularise the land boundary and secure the remaining Network Rail land required for the Waste Transfer Station as explained in [paragraph 1.63](#)

1. Why this report is needed

- 1.1. This report provides the quarterly update on progress on the Brent Cross Programme since the last update to this Committee on 17th January 2023.

<https://barnet.moderngov.co.uk/documents/s75818/PUBLIC%20-%20BX%20HG%20FINAL%2017%20Jan%2023%201.pdf>

- 1.2. Since the last report progress continues to be made across the development site. The key updates for the committee to note are as follows:
- The artwork wrap surrounding the new Brent Cross Town substation was publicly launched on the 19th January. The event was covered by both BBC and ITV London News as well as numerous positive newspaper articles and trade press publications.



- Above ground works on site for Plot 12 and 202 have continued to programme as can be seen from latest drone images ([January 2023 Drone Footage](#)) showing the building cores construction rising out of the ground and numerous tower cranes now erected around the site.
- The Reserved Matters planning application for Clitterhouse Playing Fields remains under consideration by the LPA following submission on 21st November 2022 following three rounds of public consultation.
- Works continue on the fit out of the new Brent Cross West Station with internal finishes such as ceiling panels, signage and paving stones now being installed.
- The councils joint venture partner, Related Argent are developing the next phase proposal and update to the Brent Cross Town business plan, which sets out the next plots to come forward in the scheme.



Brent Cross West Station February 2023)

Brent Cross West Station

Works Update

- 1.3. The latest site progress pictures can be seen in Appendix 2. The photographs show good progress with brickwork, granite paving, panelling, ceiling tiles, glazing as well as mechanical, electrical and communication cabling and equipment being installed. The project has hit its highest peak of resources so far with more than 200 operatives working on site.
- 1.4. Network Rail has completed its railways systems and sidings infrastructure physical works but continues to support VolkerFitzpatrick (VFL), the station contractor in delivery of the station project.
- 1.5. The photos also show good progress with some of the final finishes such as ceiling panels and floor tiles being installed in both east and west entrance boxes.

Programme Update

- 1.6. Having completed works in the last of the major railway possessions over the Christmas period the Mace Project Management team and VFL have recast the programme to complete the physical works, testing and commissioning, handback and entry into service and station opening.
- 1.7. The Steering Group of Key Stakeholders formed to oversee station completion and handback continues to meet to review readiness for station opening. Key Stakeholders include Network Rail (NR), Govia Thameslink Railway (GTR), Department for Transport (DfT), Related Argent, VolkerFitzpatrick Limited, MACE and London Borough of Barnet. The group most recently met on 23 February and concluded further certainty is required on the close out programme to confirm a specific opening date. A follow up meeting is scheduled in March to review the latest programme.
- 1.8. It is anticipated that physical works will now be completed in June 2023 with a period of testing and commissioning to follow which will dictate the formal opening date. The current working programme predicts an opening in late Summer/Autumn of this year.
- 1.9. As previously reported work is underway to develop a communications strategy and programme of events leading up to and including the station opening. This focuses on the practicalities of preparing for a station opening, the opening event and the events leading up to the opening. For these events to be planned effectively, a firm opening date is required, which is a key objective of the handback steering group as mentioned above. Agreeing a date for the opening of the station to the public and operation of train services is an area of key focus for the programme.
- 1.10. Site visits continue to be planned and arranged for stakeholders including local residents, schools, and local businesses, as well as national figures, industry partners, local councillors, MPs and press. It is anticipated that interest in visiting the station will increase as the station gets closer to completion. Further updates will be provided to the committee in the coming months.

Station Property Agreements / Operational Costs

- 1.11. The council continues to work with NR, GTR, Brent Cross South Limited Partnership (BXSLP) through the Estate Management Company (ManCo) and the DfT to finalise the property agreements required to manage the station on a day-to-day basis.

- 1.12. This will include a number of leases and easements that define the operational and maintenance responsibilities and limits of each party in the various parts of the station. These arrangements are required to be in place ahead of the station opening.

Western Public Realm

- 1.13. Construction works on the western public realm have commenced and are progressing to programme with construction works nearly complete. This includes ground levelling, drainage, paving, installation of the bicycle sheds, pedestrian wayfinding to and from the station and highways maintenance works deemed essential prior to station opening.
- 1.14. Officers are having ongoing coordination meetings with the London Borough of Brent to support placemaking initiatives in the area. Coordination meetings will continue as regeneration initiatives progress for the Staples Corner industrial area.

Brent Cross Town

- 1.15. Further progress is being made across the site as can be seen from the latest drone footage of the development area [January 2023 Drone Footage](#).
- 1.16. As reported to the committee in January, works on the first phase plots at Brent Cross Town are well underway. The building cores for plots 12 and 202 are now clearly visible from the surrounding areas, and there are now several tower cranes now on site (see image below). In addition to plots 12 and 202, plot 25 works are also underway with plot 13 due to commence imminently, Plot 14 in May 23 and plot 203 in December 2023.



First tower cranes constructed and core of plots 12 and 202 now visible above ground (Feb 23)

Brent Cross Town Primary Substation

- 1.17. As reported to the committee in January construction works on the new Brent Cross Town primary substation have completed including the artwork wrap designed by local artist Lakwena which surrounds the building. To publicly launch the artwork an event was held on the 19th January which was covered by both BBC and ITV London News channels. The artwork has also featured widely in news publications and industry

press. Proposals for the associated energy centre which will provide a district heating solution for the new town are currently being developed.



Brent Cross Town primary substation

Brent Cross Town Agreements

- 1.18. As development continues at Brent Cross Town, a number of legal agreements are required to be entered into to ensure progress on the scheme continues in line with the approved Business plan. All agreements are envisaged within the wider Brent Cross Project Agreement and are aligned to the obligations of the council and vision of the Brent Cross scheme.

Next Phase Proposal

- 1.19. BXSLP are currently developing the next Phase Proposal/s, following Phase One going unconditional in June 2022. Phase proposals are a requirement under the BX Project Agreement and ensure that the Brent Cross Town development comes forward in clearly planned out phases that achieve the goal of the masterplan.
- 1.20. The next phase proposal/s will include the details of the planned development within the Brent Cross Town and will set out the floorspace, uses, infrastructure, public realm and timetable for development as well as the council's potential entitlement to land value.
- 1.21. The next phase will build on the works already underway within the first phase of Brent Cross Town and is expected to include plots in the vicinity of the Brent Cross West station eastern entrance (Station Quarter), including plot 1 which already has reserved matters planning approval and a commercial tenant agreement in place. Geographically the plots in this phase are expected to bridge the gap between the early development plots of Brent Cross Town and the new Brent Cross West station. They will primarily be office plots, supplementing the residential plots underway in Phase One.

Next Phase Unconditional

- 1.22. Subject to the next phase proposal/s being accepted, the phase/s can go unconditional subject to confirmation that all the drawdown conditions are satisfied to meet the Phase Unconditional Long Stop. These conditions are set out in the report to this Committee in March 2016, but in summary these provide the necessary reassurance to the council and Related Argent that there is a viable scheme ready to be delivered, in order for Related Argent to formally commit to delivering the phase and the council formally committing the land.
- 1.23. It should be noted that during the Phase unconditional process for Phase 1 the council agreed to waive part of the highways condition and this or other conditions may be waived for future phase should there be a sufficient business case.

Plot 1 drawdown

- 1.24. As reported to the last committee, Following the approval of the Reserved Matters planning application for Plot 1 on 6th October 22, Related Argent announced that Sheffield Hallam university will open its first satellite campus outside of Sheffield in Plot 1, known as 3 Brent Cross Town. The University is scheduled to open from 2025/26, with the aim of reaching a target of up to 5,000 students by 2030.
- 1.25. Plot 1 falls within the next phase of Brent Cross Town which is subject to a phase proposal as set out above. Following approval of the phase proposal, legal agreements will be required to formally draw down the plot and allow works to commence.

Plot 22

- 1.26. Legal documentation is being progressed by BXSLP relating to a proposed commercial deal with a developer for Plot 22, which is expected to be a senior living plot. Heads of Terms have been developed between BXSLP and the proposed developer and council officers have provided input. The Council and BXSLP are now working towards finalising and exchanging legal documentation to enable the plot to come forward. It is envisaged this will follow a similar approach to the Plot 25 arrangement as approved by the committee on 25 January 2021. To secure this deal the Committee is asked to delegate to the Director of Resources in consultation with the Chair to finalise the heads of terms and to finalise and complete the required legal documentation to bring forward plot 22.

Interim Uses

- 1.27. As reported to the committee in January, the council secured vacant possession (VP) of Unit 2 on Brent Terrace North, one of the last industrial units still in operation in the area. Following achieving VP, the council granted a lease to BXSLP in December 2022. BXSLP have agreed a sub-lease with a leisure operator with the aim to upgrade the building for grass-roots sports use. Enabling works on the unit are underway ahead of fit out later this year.
- 1.28. As the development comes forward the council and BXSLP will continue to work on identifying opportunities to bring value to the area during the construction phase. This comes with the benefit of providing security and management from vacated premises, while also removing business rates liabilities and generating potential income streams. It also allows the development to come forward in a way that supports the long-term strategies and values of the scheme, placemaking and promoting footfall.

BXS Business plan update¹

- 1.29. The Brent Cross Town business plan sets out the wider strategy for delivering Brent Cross Town. As the development comes forward, it is envisaged that the business plan will be updated to reflect delivery, which could change over time as a result of market factors, definition of deliver strategy and updates to proposed development timelines. Once the next phase proposals have been developed, an update to the business plan will also be required, and is expected to be submitted to the council for approval later this year.

Variations to existing agreements

- 1.30. As the committee will be aware, numerous legal agreements are in place to allow the Brent Cross Scheme to become a reality. While authority has been delegated to enter into such agreements, due to the nature of the programme and changes in strategy, variations are at times required e.g., to respond to changing market conditions.
- 1.31. In order to improve the effective and efficient running of the development process in accordance with the Business Plan, the committee is requested to delegate to the Brent Cross Programme Director to finalise and approve minor variations to existing legal agreements where required to improve the effective and efficient running of the development process. Agreements that may require variations include infrastructure and compound licences (to consolidate existing licences in one master licence), minor amendments to Lot 2 agreements and changes to Plot 12 headleases.

Clitterhouse Playing Fields Update

- 1.32. As reported to the committee in January, following the conclusion of the final round of public engagement in October 2022 the full planning application for Clitterhouse Playing Fields was submitted by Related Argent on the 21st November. The full application documents and plans can be viewed on the [Barnet Planning portal](#) by using reference 22/5617/FUL.
- 1.33. Active dialogue ongoing with residents who have raised concerns to the scheme. Two meetings have been held with the Chair of Golders Green and Brent Terrace residents association on the 1st and 22nd Feb as well as the monthly drop in sessions. The LPA is continuing their review of the application with a recommendation anticipated to be made to the Strategic Planning Committee in May.

Claremont Road Utilities works

- 1.34. As part of service the new development utility works are being planned in Claremont Road in the vicinity of the Brent Cross Town pavilion which will require a temporary single lane closure. These works are being planned in a way to install several utilities simultaneously to avoid further disruption. More focused communications will be issued to affected residents and road users ahead of the works taking place, with specific communication with Whitefield and Mapledown Schools which are in the vicinity of the works.

Wider Economic Climate

¹ Brent Cross Town was formally referred to as Brent Cross South (BXS)

- 1.35. As reported to the committee in January, all stakeholders continue to monitor the ongoing economic turbulence as a result of recent national events brings uncertainty to investment markets which could result in challenges in the coming phases of the programme. Investment viability into the scheme is directly linked to interest rates which have been increasing over the past 6 months. The current projections for future increases are lower than previously thought, however increases to rates and market volatility will have an impact on investment viability for future phases. The council and Related Argent continue to closely monitor the latest developments and assess the potential impact on the development.

Plot 12 (Relocation of the Whitefield Estate Part 2 - High Rise)

- 1.36. As previously reported, Plot 12 works are underway with the completion of new homes expected in 2024. L&Q have completed the allocation process for the secure tenants, where tenants have been allocated a new home in accordance with their housing needs requirements. Currently, Barnet Homes is undertaking the nomination process for these tenants. Related Argent and L&Q have held tenant choices for the secure tenants at the Visitors Pavilion in January, and this exercise is now complete.
- 1.37. L&Q recently distributed an updated resident guide with an FAQ to secure tenants and leaseholders. The guide provides information on tenancy, rent, service charge and shared equity for Plot 12. L&Q are carrying out several engagement activities for leaseholders, and they are holding shared equity information drop-in sessions for the leaseholders on 14 March and 16 March 2023 at the BXT workshop.
- 1.38. Once construction is complete the Whitefield Estate Part 2 residents will be moving to the new homes. The secure tenants are effectively moving at the council's request and as a result it has a potential duty to make statutory home loss and disturbance payments to these tenants where they qualify under section 29 of the Land Compensation Act 1973. The council can make such payments pursuant to the statutory provisions referred to in the Legal section, at paragraph 5.11.
- 1.39. Approval is requested from the committee to appoint Barnet Homes to administer the home loss and disturbance payments on the council's behalf. The payments will be made to 91 secure tenant households in Autumn 2024. The home loss payments prescribed amount is £7,800 for each household which totals £709k (excluding disturbance payments). This amount may be increased by the government from time to time, most recently in October 2022, and allowances have been made within the budget to cover additional increases. Any monies owed by tenants on rent arrears to the council will be deducted from the payments. The cost is recoverable from Related Argent, and it has been reflected within the CPO2 Whitefield Estate Part 2 Property Cost Estimate.

Critical Infrastructure being delivered by the council

Plots 53 and 54 - Relocation of the Whitefield Estate Part 1

- 1.40. L&Q's contractor Bugler is continuing with the main construction works on Plots 53 and 54. The estimated completion of both plots has been delayed to Autumn 2023. Bugler and L&Q have reported several construction issues which have led to the overall programme delay mainly related to interfaces with utilities companies and poor weather conditions.

- 1.41. L&Q has sent letters and FAQ to the affected residents to inform them about the delays, and drop-in information session took place in early March at the Brent Cross Town Workshop.
- 1.42. Despite the overall programme delay, works are progressing well on the buildings. On Block B (Plot 53) the roof planks are now complete, and they have also screeded the roof with water proofing. Internally, the contractor has completed the metal stud walls and have commenced first fix works. On Block C (Plot 54) roof slabs are also complete, roof screeded, and water proofing works are due to commence shortly.



Internal fit out underway on plots 53/54 (Feb 2023)

Whitefield Estate Low Rise Demolition

- 1.43. Following completion of plots 53 and 54 and rehousing of residents, the demolition of the low-rise Whitefield Estate is programmed to commence. These works sits within the government grant funded package of infrastructure and is a responsibility of the council. Through the Integrated Programme Management Office, it has been identified that BXSLP may be best placed to manage these works. There are several benefits to this approach including;
 - Supply chain mobilised and familiar with the development area having undertaken demolition of the Claremont Industrial estate.
 - Security and logistics in place as part of wider development.
 - Site will be handed over the BXSLP post demolition – this approach removes additional handback / handover of land.
 - Easier to integrate programme with other BXT works and minimise disruptive works such as utilities.
- 1.44. The Brent Cross South Project Agreement includes a clause that allows the council to request BXSLP to undertake these works, subject to agreeing a side agreement. Initial discussions have been held and scope documents and governance practices are being developed. The committee is therefore requested to note the approach to request BXSLP to undertake the works related to demolition of the low-rise Whitefield Estate and, if agreed, to delegate to the Chief Executive in consultation with the Chair to finalise and enter into the required legal agreement to deliver the works.

New Waste Transfer Station

- 1.45. McLaughlin & Harvey have completed the RIBA Stage 3 design for the replacement Waste Transfer facility at Geron Way, incorporating the selected options from the value

engineering review. The price and programme to develop this design to RIBA Stage 4, construct and hand over into operation, is due by the end of March 2023. This will provide the Council with the required information to issue the Notice to Proceed to Stage Two of the Main Works Design & Build Contract, should the council choose to do so.

- 1.46. Since closure of the Hendon Waste Transfer Station, waste operations have been moved on a temporary basis to an alternative site in Wembley. North London Waste Authority have proposed this could be used as a more longer-term solution, and a workstream has been ongoing to review if this could be a viable option for Barnet.

Hendon Waste Transfer Station

- 1.47. As reported to the committee in January, the former Hendon Waste Transfer Station (HWTS) has been vacant since being procured by the council as part of the purchase of Network Rail land to facilitate the train station development. The environmental agency has confirmed that the environmental permit which covers the site has now been surrendered and the council are now free to implement the strategy for demolishing and clearing the site, as approved at the committee in January.

Highways Works

- 1.48. The committee has previously approved the appointment of Tarmac Kier Joint Venture (TKJV) under the Highways Maintenance Framework to provide highway design and construction services on the Brent Cross project.
- 1.49. The Brent Cross Regeneration team has started engagement with TKJV to support the programme on the following schemes:
- Brent Cross West Station western entrance public realm (Design and Construction)
 - A5 Edgware Road / Geron Way widening and improvements (Construction)
 - Brent Terrace north improvements (Construction)
 - Tilling Road / Claremont Road widening (Design and Construction)
 - Tilling Road West realignment and improvements (Design and Early contractor Involvement)
 - A5/A406/M1 junction improvement works (Design and Early contractor Involvement).

Brent Terrace North Improvements

- 1.50. The project team are working closely through the Integrated Programme Management Office to co-ordinate improvement works to Brent Terrace North ahead of this route being re-opened as a through route from Claremont Park and Brent Terrace South. Improvements will be made to the highway and footways with improved crossing provision. These works will be undertaken by TKJV through the councils framework and will be complete ahead of station opening.

164-168 Cricklewood Broadway

- 1.51. The Outline Business Case for the proposed use of the site at 164-168 Cricklewood Broadway was submitted to and approved by this committee in January. Future updates on this initiative will be reported through the Town Centre team with more detailed designs expected towards the end of 2023.

Land / CPO Matters

CPO 1 - Whitefield Estate Part 1 (low rise houses/blocks)

- 1.52. The council has sent communications to the remaining 5 freehold / leaseholder interests about the upcoming CPO vesting dates. The Council's property advisers have also undertaken a door knocking exercise to follow up on communications, and negotiations with these owners. The CPO vesting date is the date upon which the Council can take possession of the remaining freehold/leasehold interests, and falls in May 2023. The council is seeking to acquire the properties which are investor owned and possession will be taken on or around the vesting date with vacant possession. The units will then be either temporarily let to property guardians until required for demolition or boarded up if unsuitable for temporary letting.

Shared Equity Memorandum of Agreement

- 1.53. The remaining 3 owner occupiers in Whitefield Estate Part 1 have indicated an interest in acquiring a shared equity property on Plot 54 and progress is being made with L&Q on the allocation of new homes to these owners.
- 1.54. As approved in the Whitefield Estate Delegated Powers Report (dated 05.01.23), the Council will allow residents who wish to take up a shared equity property on Plot 54 the ability to remain in their existing property after the vesting date under the terms of a temporary licence/lease, until their new home is made available. In addition, the council is likely to be required to enter into a Memorandum of Agreement/Understanding with the owner and L&Q on the terms to acquire the existing property and outline details of the onward purchase of the new property on Plot 54.
- 1.55. The committee is therefore requested to delegate authority to Brent Cross Programme Director to finalise and approve the relevant legal documents such as Memorandum of Agreement/Understanding with an owner-occupier/L&Q on terms to acquire existing property and roll-over value into new Shared Equity property on Plots 12 and 54. This recommendation also applies to the Whitefield Estate Part 2, as the leaseholders opting for shared equity will also be required to remain in the vested properties until the homes are available to move into.
- 1.56. Where terms cannot be agreed with owner occupiers to move to Plot 54 and Plot 12, the Council will take possession of these units on or around the vesting date and either board up or temporary let the property to guardians ahead of demolition.
- 1.57. The council has served further CPO Notices of Intention to Enter (NOITE) on Whitefield Estate Part 1 freehold/leasehold units to ensure any other occupiers in the properties will vacate at the time of vesting.
- 1.58. Barnet Homes is continuing to work with the non-secure tenant households in Whitefield Estate Part 1, where they have been assessing needs and making offers of alternative housing. They are working in tandem with HB Public Law to secure possession orders to ensure that vacant possession of this part of the Estate can be secured. It is anticipated the low-rise blocks and houses should be vacant by November 2023 to allow for the demolition of these properties in this part of the Whitefield Estate.
- 1.59. The council as part of its communications approach continues to provide correspondence for freeholders/leaseholders on the CPO process and updates on the website. Officers (and its strategic property advisors) Newsteer Real Estate remains

available to discuss details with the CPO acquisition process. L&Q are actively engaged with parties seeking to take a shared equity unit and the Resident Independent Adviser (RIA) is also available to freeholders/leaseholders on the process.

CPO 2 - Whitefield Estate Part 2 (high rise blocks)

- 1.60. As previously reported, the CPO notices for this part of the estate are due to vest with the Council over March / April 2024. Newsteer are negotiating with leaseholders / agents to secure agreements for sale. The council has implemented an Advanced Acquisition Scheme, whereby any leaseholder wishing to sell in advance of vesting can do so. Several leaseholders have expressed an interest in the scheme and Newsteer Real Estate is currently undertaking updated valuations on these properties.

Notice to Treat

- 1.61. As part of the land acquisition strategy approved through Delegated Powers Reports on 25th March 2021, the council served Notices to Treat (NTT) in March/April/May 2021 on plots and parcels of land then needed for the scheme. The council is undertaking a review to assess whether all land subject to NTT is still required to assist with the delivery of Brent Cross Town.
- 1.62. Where NTT land is no longer required due to scheme updates and changes to strategy, the council will seek to withdraw NTT's and inform those with a land interest in the plots/parcels of land. It is prudent to ensure withdrawal of NTT's to landowners to clear up any uncertainty with compulsory acquisition and seek to limit potential future CPO costs around these plots/parcels of land.

Network Rail Land

- 1.63. The council has entered into undertakings with Network Rail Infrastructure Ltd (NRIL) which enable it to drawdown land required for the scheme. The council is engaging on variations to existing land drawdown agreements, as well as securing additional land around Geron Way to regularise the land boundary between the planned Waste Transfer Site (WTS) and railway lines. There is a small slither of land owned by NRIL which is outside of the CPO which needs to be acquired for the WTS. The terms for the acquisition are being worked up with NRIL but as the land sits outside of the CPO it needs to be brought into the scheme. Once finalised the Brent Cross Programme Director will approve the required agreements to secure the NRIL land required for the WTS as per the scheme of delegation.

CPO Property Advice

- 1.64. The council's CPO property advisers Newsteer Real Estate continue to negotiate terms on land acquired through the 3 CPO's. Agreements and compensation settlements will be agreed when terms are satisfactorily agreed. There still remains the possibility of claims being referred to the Upper Tribunal Lands Chamber for third party determination which will require both external surveyor/legal resource and cost to administer should references be made. The council's existing external consultant team are well versed in Upper Tribunal Lands Chamber process and will be engaged to assist the council should they be required. Funding remains available within the land budget should this be required.

Controlled Parking Zones

- 1.65. As reported to the committee in January the approach to implementing parking restrictions in the area have been split into two phases with an Experimental Controlled Parking Zone (ECPZ) in the areas directly in the vicinity of the new station and Claremont Park, followed by a full Controlled Parking Zone (CPZ) covering the wider development.
- 1.66. The programme team have been working with colleagues within the Barnet parking team on the process for implementing the ECPZ which has included resident engagement and setting up the required permitting system for this area. Installation of road markings and signage have been completed and the ECPZ came into force on the 20 March 2023.
- 1.67. A dedicated [Parking page](#) has been developed at TransformingBX.co.uk and will be updated with the latest information as the programme is implemented.
- 1.68. Further engagement and consultation on the wider CPZ area will take place later this year, while the live feedback from the ECPZ will also play an important role informing the approach to a permanent CPZ on the roads it will cover.

TFL Bus Route Consultation

- 1.69. As reported to the committee on the 16th November 2022, in June 2022 TfL started consultation on the Central London Bus Review. TfL are now consulting on proposed route changes to adapt and develop a bus network that connects people to and from the new Brent Cross West station, Brent Cross Town and other developments around Edgware Road.
- 1.70. The buses routes which are subject to the changes are: 102, 189, 210, 232, 266, 316, 326 and C11. The proposals are designed to be introduced over a period of time as the development expands, new roads are built, and people move into the area - with minimal disruption to current bus journeys.
- 1.71. Feedback can be provided directly to TfL through their website (<https://haveyoursay.tfl.gov.uk/brent-cross-bus-changes>). The website provides more detail on the proposed changes including maps and timetables for each route.
- 1.72. As well as the online survey, people will be able to submit their feedback by email, phone or attending one of the three planned consultation drop-ins held in the borough. Details on the drop-ins are also available on the TfL consultation website. The public consultation launched on Monday 6th March and closes Sunday 16th April.

Promoting skills employment and opportunities

- 1.73. A key part of our communications strategy is to promote the opportunities for local people and businesses during the construction phase of the development and beyond.
- 1.74. Social value teams across the development continue to support local schools and community groups. And over the coming months we will be increasing our communications activity around jobs and skills opportunities across our sites.
- 1.75. Skills, jobs and grant opportunities can also be found at www.transformingbx.co.uk/opportunities
- 1.76. Some highlights reported through the Employment and Skills team include;

- a) Brent Cross Town Contractor Galldris have reported Local labour now at 15.2% (Barnet) and 22.2% for the 3 home boroughs, with 6 Apprentices on site, all of whom will be retained and taken to other sites when Galldris finish at Brent Cross Town.
- b) Brent Cross Town Contractor Midgard have confirmed that both plots will generate 37 local jobs each for Barnet residents.
- c) Barnet officers joined Related Argent in a workshop with Sheffield Hallam University to begin to explore ideas for collaboration pre and post arrival at Brent Cross Town.
- d) We are planning to allow contractors from the Chase Homes development (Donoghues site) access to the E&S systems set up for Brent Cross Town to support delivery.

1.77. The team is continuing good work with focus in the upcoming year on;

- Continuous improvement of ESAPs, leading to more robust agreements with contractors.
- Creation of a comprehensive programme plan to frame future forecasting and reporting.
- Create and/or adopt a state-of-the-art reporting tool.
- Work more closely with Midgard to maximise their opportunities.
- Formalise plans and timetable to install Brent Cross Town Recruit.

Donoghue Site

1.78. As reported to the committee on the 5th September, the PB Donoghue waste management site on Claremont Road has been sold to Chase New Homes, an independent housing developer. A detailed planning application has since been submitted on 26th October 2022 under planning reference 22/5238/RMA.

1.79. Since the last committee, updated plans and documents have been submitted by Chase New Homes in respect of the Reserved Matters application in response to requests by Officers. Amendments are mainly to the design of the facades of the buildings as well as internal layouts of flats.

1.80. The LPA will now undertake a period of further public consultation for two weeks on the amended information before seeking to report the application to Strategic Planning Committee. The earliest available meeting is the 29th March. In parallel to the application for the Donoghues site, Officers are also considering the Reserved Matters submission for the improvements to Millennium Green and are expecting some minor updates to the plans for this green space in response to comments from the Millennium Green Trust.

Brent Cross South Retail Park

1.81. The Retail Park remains fully let.

1.82. Heads of Terms and the subsequent variation to the project agreement have been completed to provide the framework for bringing the Retail Park into the Brent Cross Town Joint Venture. Progress incorporating the Retail Park into the wider scheme will be reported to future meetings of the committee.

Brent Cross Shopping Centre

- 1.83. There is no further update since the last meeting of the committee. Hammerson have communicated they are developing some plans to implement some minor improvements to the area surrounding the shopping centre.

Programme Terminology

- 1.84. Brent Cross Town is part of the wider Brent Cross Cricklewood development, and while it is a major objective of the scheme, there are several other deliverables that form part of the comprehensive redevelopment of the area and are important to delivering the wider scheme benefits. Notably, the new Brent Cross West station as well as highway junction improvements already undertaken in Cricklewood sit outside of the delivery of Brent Cross Town.
- 1.85. Further to the above, it should be noted by the committee that the joint venture partnership between the council and Related Argent that is delivering Brent Cross Town is formally known as Brent Cross South Limited Partnership (BXSLP). Many of the legal agreements required to be entered into by the council are with BXSLP and therefore when delegations are required to enter into agreements the full legal entity will be referenced. In other instances where updates on progress are given, the name Brent Cross Town will be used to refer to the new town development.

2. Reasons for recommendations

- 1.86. The comprehensive regeneration of Brent Cross is a long-standing objective of the council and a key regeneration priority of the Mayor of London. The details of the scheme are set out in previous update reports to this Committee.

3. Alternative options considered and not recommended

- 1.87. None in the context of this report.

4. Post decision implementation

- 1.88. The council and its advisors will continue to progress all work streams to ensure delivery of the Brent Cross regeneration proposals as outlined in this report and approved by the Housing and Growth Committee.

5. Implications of decision

1.89. Corporate Priorities and Performance

- 1.90. The Brent Cross Town development will create 6,700 homes and workplaces for 25,000 people, set in around 50 acres of green parks and playing fields. Brent Cross Town will achieve net zero carbon by 2030 at the latest.

1.91. Resources (Finance & Value for Money, Procurement, Staffing, IT, Property, Sustainability)

- 1.92. The council has put in place procedures to ensure the effective monitoring of the financial performance of the Brent Cross Programme. The Brent Cross Governance

Board comprising senior officers of the council, including the Chief Executive and the Director of Finance, receives a detailed report each month setting out the financial performance of the Brent Cross Programme. This report includes a breakdown of the performance against the approved budgets and details of the individual Officers responsible for managing the budgets included within the Brent Cross Programme.

- 1.93. The overall Brent Cross Programme position forms part of the Financial Monitoring Report being presented at this Housing & Growth Committee.

Land Acquisitions

- 1.94. The approved budget is £65.962m. Cumulative spend to date is £59.156m. The current year forecast for 2022/23 is £4.311m.

Brent Cross Town Land Acquisitions

- 1.95. The approved budget is £33.657m. Cumulative spend to date is £16.836m. The current year forecast for 2022/23 is £1.143m.

Brent Cross West Station

- 1.96. The approved budget is £388.945m. Cumulative spend to date to is £327.280m. The current year forecast for 2022/23 is £41.329m.

Critical Infrastructure

- 1.97. The approved budget is £55.9m. Cumulative spend to date is £46.654m. The current year forecast for 2022/23 is £9.280m.

DLUHC Grant Funding

- 1.98. The total £416.573m grant has now been received (as of July 2022). The council continue to work with Department for Levelling Up, Housing and Communities (DLUHC) on closing off the DLUHC funded elements and will be updating further on the repayable element of the grant once income from the Brent Cross Town scheme starts to materialise.

Legal and Constitutional References

- 1.99. The council's Constitution, Article 7.5, states that the functions of the Housing and Growth Committee includes responsibility for overseeing regeneration schemes and asset management.
- 1.100. The council is obliged by the development documents to enter into the proposed property transactions included in this report.
- 1.101. Section 32 (7b) of the Land Compensation Act 1973 (the Act) provides that where a landlord obtains possession by agreement of a dwelling subject to a secure tenancy within the meaning of Part IV of the Housing Act 1985 and - (a) notice of proceedings for possession of the dwellings has been served, or might have been served, specifying ground 10 or 10A in Part II of Schedule 2 to that Act, or (b) the landlord has applied, or could apply, to the Secretary of State for approval for the purposes of Ground 10A of the development scheme including the dwelling, or part of it, the landlord may make to the person giving up possession or occupation a payment

corresponding to home loss payment or discretionary payment which they would be required or authorised to make to him if an order for possession had been made on either of those grounds.

- 1.102. All of the activity and legal transactions contemplated in this report will be carried out pursuant to and in compliance with all relevant statutory requirements, including all procurement activity which will be undertaken in accordance with the Council's Contract Procedure Rules and the Public Contracts Regulations 2015 (as amended) or any replacement public procurement regime that may become law in the UK as applicable.

Insight

- 1.103. None in the context of this report

Social Value

- 1.104. As indicated in sections within this report, the Brent Cross programme will secure wider social, economic and environmental benefits.

Risk Management

- 1.105. Risk management has been applied across all levels of the programme. Owners and mitigation plans are identified, and risks are measured against impact and likelihood to give an overall rating. High rating risks are escalated and reported through the defined reporting procedure with top risks reported to the Brent Cross Governance Board. Currently the high-level risks and mitigations are summarised below:
- 1.106. **Programme and funding** – There is a risk that BXN does not progress in the form currently proposed. Whilst the funding risk to the Station delivery has been significantly mitigated through the Revised Funding Agreement with Government, the delivery of the BXN proposals and delivery of infrastructure is an important part of the regeneration proposals.
- 1.107. **Station Delivery Date** – there is the risk that the station opening date may be delayed. The current programme forecasts completion of physical construction in early in 2023. There remains a risk of unforeseen delay due to cancelled railway possessions, industrial action, inclement weather etc. While the possession risk has been mitigated, railway possessions can, whilst unlikely, be cancelled due to unforeseen circumstances. The project team and Network Rail continue to work closely together to avoid, mitigate and/or manage the impact of possessions unavoidably lost. These are regularly monitored through both NR board and Rail operations assurance board.
- 1.108. **Station Franchise** – The current Thameslink franchise, operated by GTR, has been renewed which removes a risk of uncertainty on the station operator. There remains a small residual risk as the new station still needs to be formally accepted by the operator, however through consultation with DfT and GTR through the various project boards it has been made clear the station is to be considered as part of the franchise when it comes into use and a robust handover process has been developed with all industry stakeholders included.
- 1.109. **Brent Cross West delivery costs** – as with all major programmes there is the risk that costs will increase during programme delivery. As reported to previous committees the Brent Cross West budget is under pressure and this risk is being actively managed

with public sector partners and contractors. The contract between the council and NR is an Emerging Cost contract. As indicated in previous reports, all emerging cost contracts entered into will require strong contract management to ensure all costs incurred are reasonable. As part of the signed Implementation Agreement the council has open book access to all of Network Rail's financial information relating to invoiced costs incurred on the programme. This extends to Network Rail contractors where an emerging cost contract is in place. As referred to in the report to the former Assets and Regeneration and Growth Committee (ARG) in November 2018, the council also has the right (subject to notice and personal safety) to access the site and attend meetings. In this regard, the regular senior level meetings between Network Rail and the council/Mace delivery are continuing to review the costs each month. Similarly, there is an on-site presence by the council/Mace delivery team to be monitoring programme and work achieved, particularly during track possessions. As indicated within this report, delivery costs have increased and put pressure on the programme budget. A funding strategy has been developed and was approved by Policy & Resources Committee on 29 September 2022.

- 1.110. **Brent Cross West Station Operating Costs** – As part of the original station business case and grant agreement, it was agreed that the Council would take on the shortfall in operational cost of the station until it became profitable. Work is underway to confirm the ongoing operational cost of the station which will feed into an updated model that will provide further clarity on future cost risk. Discussions are ongoing with DfT on this topic.
- 1.111. **Resources** - The most important control mechanism for the council is to employ experienced staff who will provide diligent review and challenge of the NR cost base and reject any costs which are not reasonably and properly incurred. The council's Client and Brent Cross West delivery team comprises professionals used to working on the railway within Network Rail and are experienced in delivering large railway projects. There is a need to ensure resilience within the programme in the event that key persons depart the project as well as to update the succession planning strategy.
- 1.112. **Economic Change** – There is a risk that the prevailing economic position for the traditional retail sector will continue alongside residential and commercial given current market conditions. This could result in reduced demand for retail space and administration to existing retailers. To mitigate this both Brent Cross North and Brent Cross Town development partners are exploring/reviewing diversification of offer within the Brent Cross development area. Wider macro-economic shocks may also impact the residential and office markets in London.
- 1.113. **COVID 19** – In line with national statistics, this risk has reduced, but the team continues to monitor cases and impact on programme. So far programme has been maintained however the team do expect some additional challenges as impacts on the supply chain are understood. Cost impact to date is estimated at £4m. It should be noted that further risks are dependent on any changes to government guidelines which could impact the project. The project team is maintaining a COVID 19 impact tracker to ensure all unavoidable costs and delays are recorded.
- 1.114. **Availability of Materials** – Costs and availability of materials following the impacts of the pandemic and more recently the war in Ukraine is having an impact on supply chains across the world. For elements of the scheme that are close to completion such as the Brent Cross West station this is less of an issue, however for those that have yet to start construction such as the new Waste Transfer Station the impacts may be

significant. The programme team continues to assess the changing situation and are taking a pragmatic approach, considering alternative materials where possible if lead times are becoming an issue

- 1.115. **Retail Park Acquisition** - The key risk associated with the acquisition of the Retail Park is ensuring that the acquisition has no negative impact on the General Fund. The council has in place the required structures and will update as required to enable it to manage the Retail Park against these short-term variables such as Covid and Brexit to ensure that the council will secure the required returns so that there will be no gap or negative impact on the General Fund.

Equalities and Diversity

- 1.116. As previously reported, the Development Proposals support achievement of the council's Strategic Equalities Objective.
- 1.117. The development proposals for the Brent Cross scheme will make a significant contribution to the provision of additional, high quality affordable housing units in the Borough as well as providing employment through the creation of a new town centre with leisure, health and educational facilities. The delivery of the Brent Cross West station will enhance public transport provision and improve accessibility and provide greater choice for all. It should be emphasised that a fully integrated and accessible town centre will be created as part of these proposals.

Corporate Parenting

- 1.118. None in the context of this report.

Consultation and Engagement

Brent Cross Cricklewood programme-wide communications

- 1.119. We continue to work with our delivery partners to ensure residents living in the development area are kept up-to-date on the project, are given clear and timely construction updates, and are aware of opportunities available to them from employment and skills, funding and new amenities.

TransformingBX.co.uk and e-newsletters

- 1.120. Since transformingbx.co.uk launched in February 2020, to provide news and construction updates to residents, there have been over 61K unique users. In the last year alone there has been over 35k showing the growing interest in the development especially as we near closer to the completion of Brent Cross West.
- 1.121. Our [January e-newsletter](#) was sent to over 370 people covering the start of construction on new affordable homes, the unveiling of a new sustainable electrical substation at Brent Cross Town, construction vacancies and the Council's BarNET ZERO campaign.
- 1.122. Our [February e-newsletter](#) was sent to over 370 people and covered the Plot 19 consultation, the London Festival of Architecture community grant, Whitefield School's Good Ofsted rating and the introduction of the Experimental Controlled Parking Zone.

Construction updates and Brent Cross Town community newsletter

- 1.123. The latest three-month [construction update](#) was issued in December 2022 providing a forward look of construction activity for Brent Cross West, Brent Cross Town and Plots 53 and 54 (replacement homes for Whitefield Estate residents) until the end of the year. Our next construction update is due at the end of March 2023.
- 1.124. Brent Cross Town also distributed its [winter community newsletter](#) in December covering the latest updates on the development. Their next newsletter will be the Spring 2023 edition distributed in March 2023.

Good news stories from across the development

- **[Construction starts on new affordable homes at Brent Cross Town and new jobs created:](#)** We started the new year by announcing the first building to be constructed at Brent Cross Town will be a new affordable residential building. The building will create 120 new homes and will welcome Whitefield Estate residents late next year. The early delivery of affordable homes is a key part of our commitment to ensure that existing residents benefit first from our regeneration scheme.

Alongside this, construction is also progressing on the first homes to buy at Brent Cross Town. This new milestone will be bringing hundreds of new jobs and training opportunities to the area. In the construction of the buildings, up to 350 people will be working onsite at peak time, 20% of which will be recruited locally.

- **[New substation and Lakwena artwork unveiled:](#)** In January, we unveiled, with our partner Related Argent, a new artwork at Brent Cross Town with impressive green credentials. The 21-metre-high and 52-metre-long permanent public artwork called 'Here we come, here we rise' was created by London-based artist, Lakwena in collaboration with architects, IF_DO. Funded by central government, the public artwork wraps around a sustainable electrical substation which, in future, will power all of Brent Cross Town within its control from 100% renewables sources.
- **[Sustainability across the Brent Cross Cricklewood regeneration programme:](#)** As part of the Council's BarNET ZERO campaign, we shared some of the ways that sustainability is at the heart of the regeneration programme. For example, Brent Cross Town plans to be net zero carbon town by 2030 at the latest and is aiming to achieve that through multiple ways. Some include using 100% renewable energy and having the largest air source heat pump installation in Europe to provide low carbon heating and hot water for all residents and businesses. Brent Cross Town are also allocating more green space in the area, creating an improved network of walking and cycling routes and adopting sustainable construction practices.
- **[National Apprenticeship Week:](#)** In February we celebrated this year's National Apprenticeship Week by showcasing the multiple talents across the programme who we've had join us through apprenticeships or were apprentices beforehand. We hope their stories will encourage people to consider roles on the project as construction work continues.
- **[Barnet Nightingales launches London's largest girls-only football coaching academy:](#)** Barnet Nightingales, one of London's leading grassroots girls football teams, launched a unique coaching academy to provide girls with access to free football coaching. Brent Cross Town has sponsored Barnet Nightingales and enabled

it to establish the Community Training Programme, London's largest girls-only training programme from its home in Friern Barnet.

Community drop-in sessions and project inbox

- 1.125. We continue to run a monthly drop-in session on the third Thursday evening of every month at the Brent Cross Town Visitor Pavilion. Teams from Related Argent, Barnet Council and L&Q are on hand to answer questions from residents in the local area (particularly those most impacted by construction). This is in addition to regular opening hours at the Visitor Pavilion where Welcome Hosts are available daily to answer questions about the programme.
- 1.126. We also host ad hoc drop-in sessions and meetings for residents around specific consultations or projects. In February and March, Related Argent held drop-in sessions to review the Plot 19 consultation boards. L&Q, Barnet Homes and the BXC project team are also hosting specific drop-ins for the Whitefield Estate residents as part of the future move to Plots 53 and 54 and Plot 12.
- 1.127. Both community@brentcrosstown.co.uk and transformingbx@barnet.gov.uk also continue to be channels that residents contact us with any questions, requests or concerns about the project.

Consultations and engagement

- **[New office building \(Plot 19\) plans revealed:](#)** In February we shared the design plans for the new office building (referred to as Plot 19) at Brent Cross Town. The Plot 19 consultation ran from 20 February to 5 March 2023. Once feedback has been reviewed, a Reserved Matters Application (RMA), will be submitted to Barnet Council's planning department (expected spring this year.)
- **[Brent Cross TfL bus consultation:](#)** Transport for London is proposing changes to some bus routes in the Brent Cross Cricklewood regeneration programme. The public consultation launched on Monday 6 March. The proposals are designed to adapt and develop a bus network that connects people to and from the new Brent Cross West station, Brent Cross Town and other developments around Edgware Road.
- **[Experimental Controlled Parking Zone in the Claremont Park area:](#)** We sent letters on 20 February to residents in Brent Terrace, Clitterhouse Crescent, Clitterhouse Road and a section of Claremont Road to inform them of the upcoming controlled measures coming into effect from 20 March 2023. The introduction of the Experimental Controlled Parking Zone has been a long-coming commitment from us to address increasing parking issues since the opening of Claremont Park, and to prevent further parking pressures with the redevelopment progressing. Further information on the consultation process will follow on 13 March. A wider CPZ is due to go out for consultation in April.
- **[Clitterhouse Playing Fields:](#)** We continue to meet with local resident groups around the plans for the Clitterhouse Playing Fields and share comments and questions with the local planning authority.

Press Coverage

- 1.128. The new Lakwena artwork and electrical substation announcement generated national press coverage on local broadcast news on 19 January, including Good Morning

Britain (7am), ITV news (5.30pm) and BBC London news (6.30pm). Councillor Barry Rawlings, Leader of Barnet Council was also interviewed as part of the BBC news coverage.

1.129. As well as local broadcast, the substation unveiling was also featured in online and print media including the following outlets:

- [Evening Standard](#)
- [Architects Journal](#)
- [The Londonist](#)
- [UK Yahoo!](#)
- [London News](#)
- [London Live](#)
- [BCD Magazine](#)
- [Lighting Insight](#)
- [Tottenham Independent](#)
- [Dezeen](#)
- [It's Nice That](#)

1.130. The local Times newspaper series has carried several stories over the past couple of months about the project, alerting readers to events and announcements across the programme.

- [Construction begins on homes in Brent Cross Town](#)
- [Apprentices build a future](#)
- [Barnet set for new parking restrictions](#)

1.131. [The Evening Standard](#) also ran a feature on Sheffield Hallam University's campus (22 February) and Brent Cross Town was mentioned in the [MJ newsletter](#) (23 February) which covered the #BarNETZERO campaign.

Environmental Impact

1.132. Brent Cross Town vision includes a commitment to developing a net zero carbon town and achieving this aim by 2030. This will be achieved through a mix of low-carbon construction, renewable power, circular economy principles, carbon offsetting — and by empowering everyone who lives and works in the new town to make low-carbon lifestyle choices of their own.

1.133. The new Town will be served by a new train station with bus connections which will promote use of public transport and take cars off the road. The station creates a new walking route across the midland mainline railway making this a much more feasible journey for pedestrians and cyclists in the area. Improvements to previously congested road junctions will improve idling time and traffic flows in these areas.

6. Background papers

- Housing and Growth Committee, 17 January 2023, Brent Cross Cricklewood Update Report

<https://barnet.moderngov.co.uk/documents/s75818/PUBLIC%20-%20BX%20HG%20FINAL%2017%20Jan%2023%201.pdf>

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Brent Cross Government Assurance Board

8th March 2023

Brent Cross Town update

- Works on lot 2 plots progressing at pace.
- Ground works forming station interim interchange completed to create new site levels – infrastructure works on forming new roads underway.
- The planning application for Clitterhouse Playing fields under consideration by the LPA.
- Next Phase proposal and update to business plan is expected in the coming months.
- Detailed proposal also expected for ‘Northern Quarter’ including later living following initial discussions with Related Argent.
- First controlled parking zone (CPZ) installed as part of the Brent Cross Scheme – feedback and further consultation to take place on future roll out.



Site Photos



Station interchange
ground works

Lot 2 Plots

Site Photos



Site Photos



Brent Cross Town update

- Clitterhouse Playing Fields Update
- Application submitted on 21st November 22 following 3 rounds of consultation
- Active dialogue ongoing with residents who have raised concerns to the scheme.
 - Parking / drop off areas (Purbeck drive)
 - Playing pitch provision
 - Flooding concerns
 - Perceived private profit
- Currently anticipating May planning committee (subject to confirmation)



BXCI Construction update

Plots 53/54

- Whitefield estate replacement units - 47 homes, between Brent Terrace and Clitterhouse Crescent. To be the first completed homes of the Brent Cross development.
- Floor screed and first fix installation commenced on both plot 53 and 54.
- Programme for re-housing residents from Whitefield Estate in place for later this year.
- Some delays on site works in part due to adverse weather conditions.
- Completion date for plots is now October 2023 followed by rehousing programme.



Brent Cross West Station – Site works update

- **Rare Possession Access**: The ASLEF strike action provided a rare opportunity to introduce daytime possessions on both Wednesday and Friday. These were used to good effect by Architen, Landrell, Carvers, Fourways and VFL
- **Platform Works**: Encouragingly, the rate of PTFE canopy installation is improving, and the additional daytime possessions were a big help with the southern feature canopies, platform canopy CMS works, steel cover plate installation and tactile paving. Good progress with glazing to the slow platform waiting room, G30 panels installation and Adept boarding within the waiting rooms. Tiling works to the slow platform toilet areas also underway.

Brent Cross West Station – Site works update

- **Concourse and Overbridge:** Lindner's suspended ceiling is complete and looking impressive. Advanced Glass installing support rails to the back of house rooms, and back painted glass being installed. Balustrade installation has also continued, with Metal Tec installing the posts at concourse level. Fourways have been working in multiple areas, with the headline being commencement of the high-level lighting to concourse roof beams.
- **SEEB:** DMC have made good progress laying paving to the ground floor and stairway and have been prepping the mezzanine level area in readiness. Adept continue with ceiling grid installation below stairs and escalators, plus bulkhead works to multiple locations.
- **Western Entrance Building:** Caxton's brickwork complete and scaffold down. DMC started western paving works. Cycle shelter bike hoops installed; excavation of the Public Realm tree pit underway, in readiness of an Italian Alder tree. Fourways continue with CMS, light fittings, and ductwork to the WEB mezzanine level. Adept proceed with the high-level bulkhead installation.

BXW Update – Network Rail

- NR physical works on site complete
- NR still play a crucial role under the APA Agreement in relation to the Station Works (Access, QA pack approval, handback, EIS etc.)

BXW Programme Updates

- VFL and Mace have worked closely to update and agree programme through to station entry into service.
- Station Opening Steering Group met on 23 February 2023 to review updated programme – Verbal update

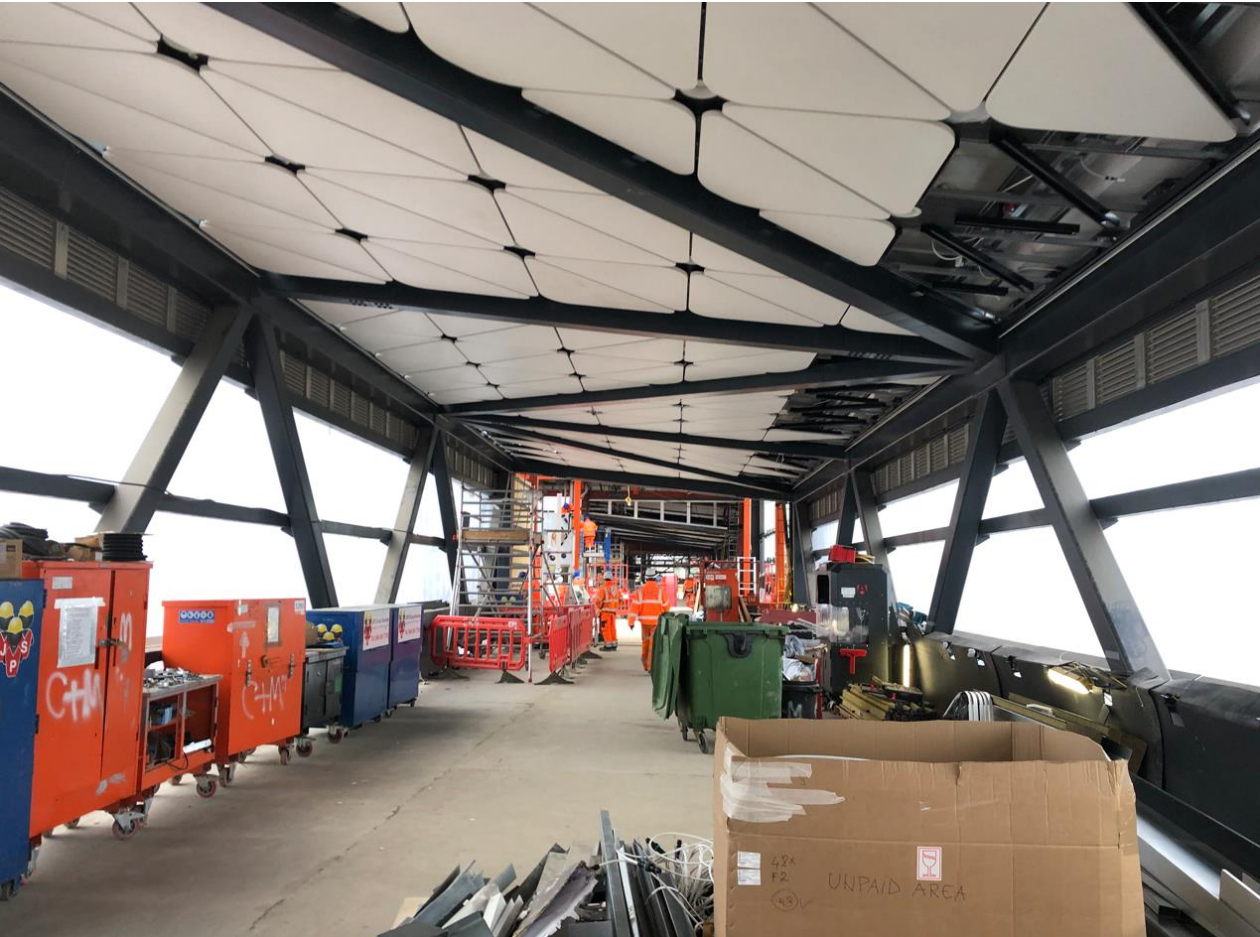
BXW Programme Updates - Pictures



BXW Programme Updates - Pictures



BXW Programme Updates - Pictures



BXW Programme Updates - Pictures



BXW Programme Updates - Pictures



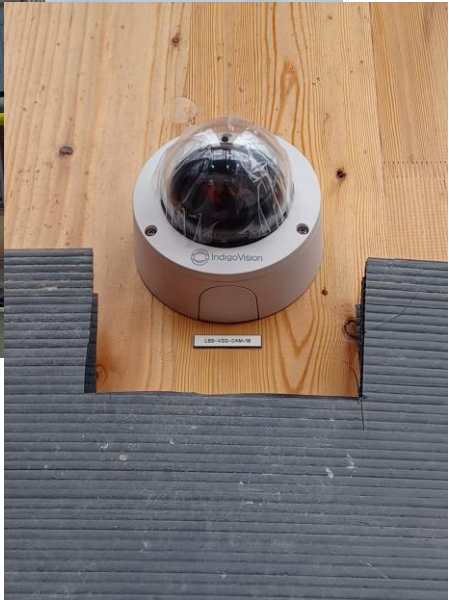
BXW Programme Updates - Pictures



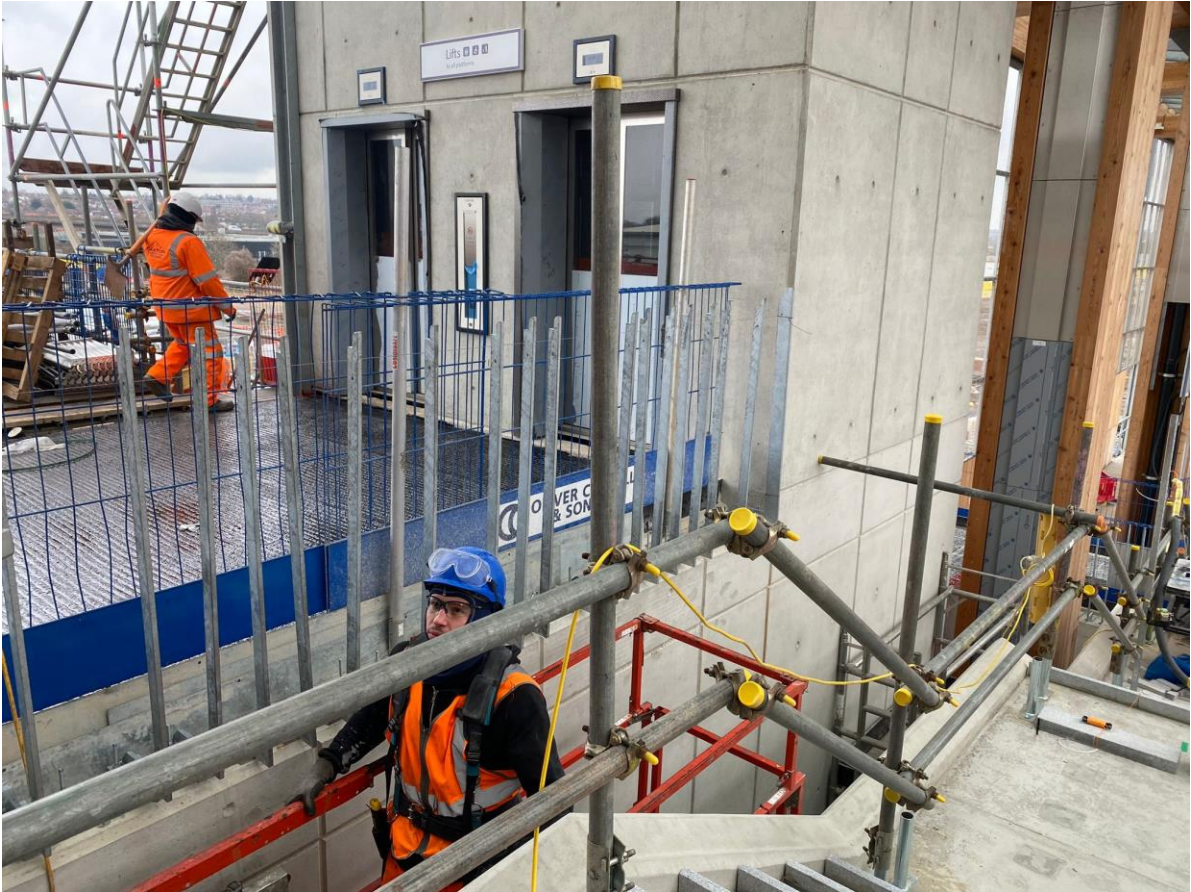
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BXW Programme Updates - Pictures



BXW Programme Updates - Pictures

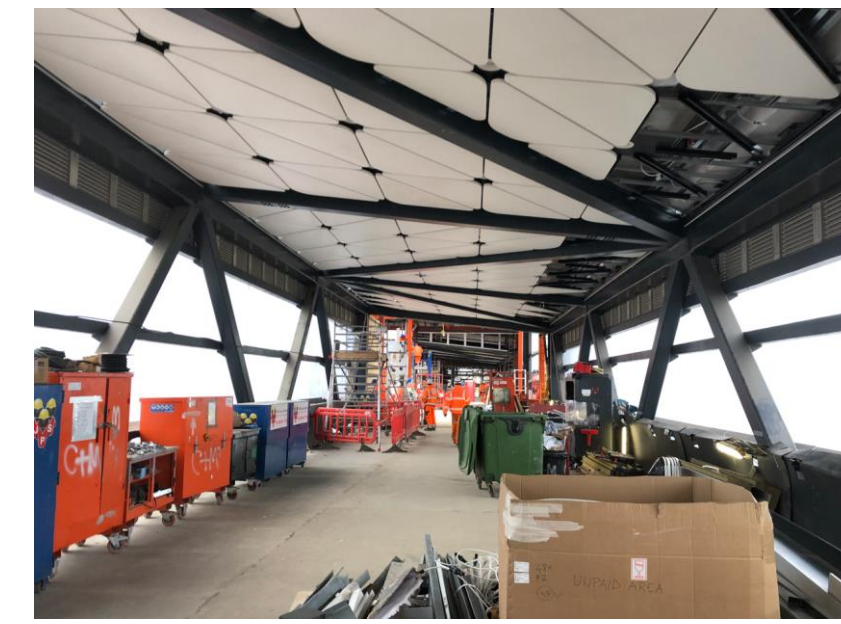
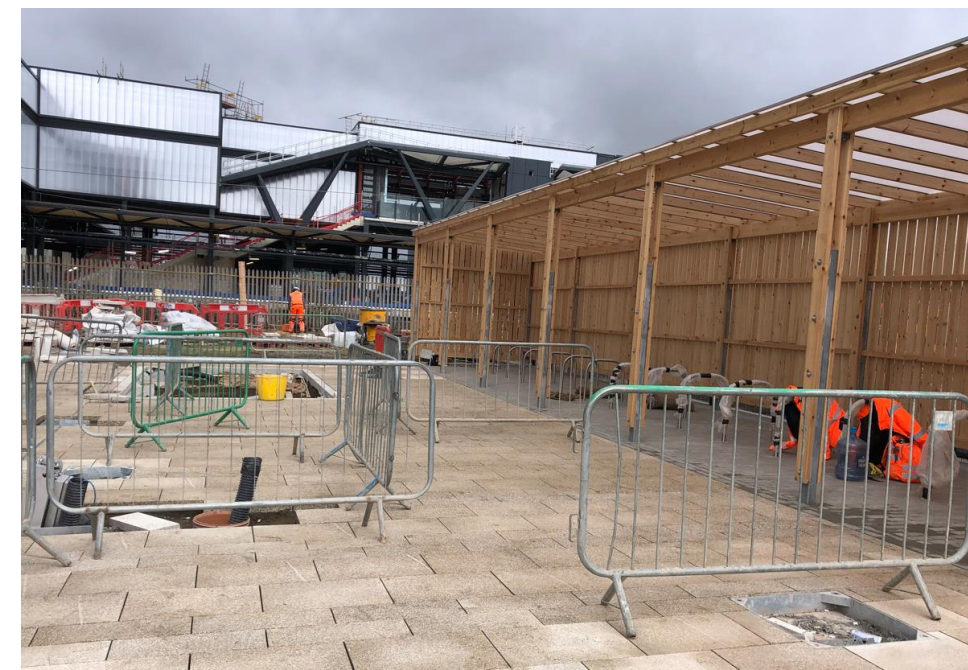
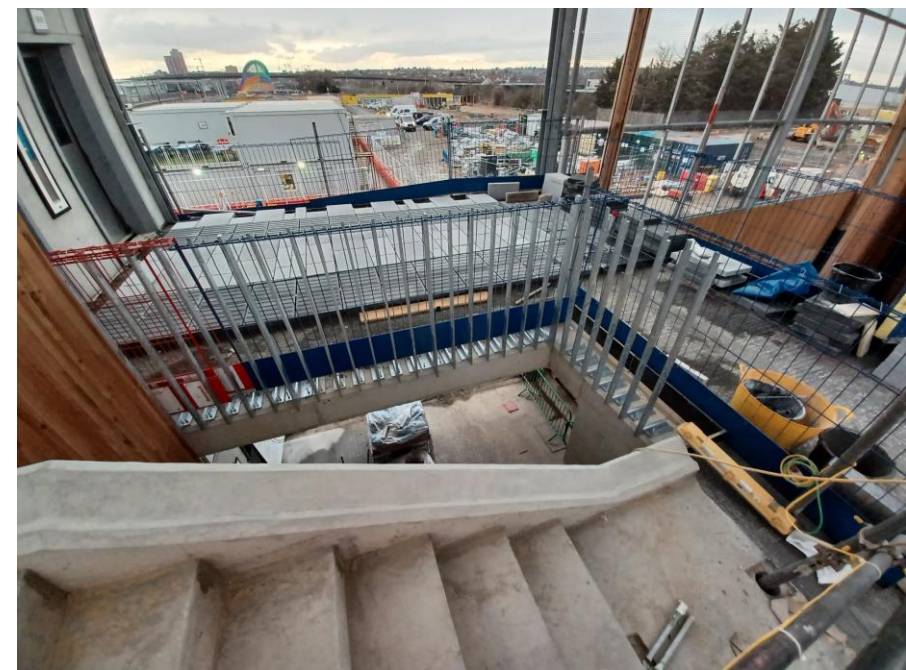


BXW Programme Updates - Pictures



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Brent Cross West Station Progress Pictures – February 2023



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Housing & Growth Committee AGENDA ITEM 19

23 March 2023

Title	Damp and Mould Response
Report of	Chair of Housing & Growth Committee
Wards	All
Status	Public
Urgent	No
Key	No
Enclosures	Appendix A – Damp and mould action plan update
Officer Contact Details	<p>Cath Shaw, Deputy Chief Executive, cath.shaw@barnet.gov.uk</p> <p>Susan Curran, Head of Housing and Regeneration Susan.Curran@Barnet.gov.uk</p> <p>Tim Mulvenna, Chief Executive, The Barnet Group Tim.Mulvenna@thebarnetgroup.org</p> <p>Belinda Livesey, Group Manager, Private Sector Housing, Re. Belinda.Livesey@barnet.gov.uk</p> <p>Nicola Bird, Housing Development and Regeneration Mgr. Nicola.Bird@barnet.gov.uk</p>

Summary

This report provides an update on damp and mould issues in Barnet since the last report to Committee in January, including progress with addressing this in council properties managed by Barnet Homes, and activity in relation to relevant Registered Providers (RPs) and across the private sector housing stock.

Officers Recommendations

That the Committee note the report.

1. Why this report is needed

- 1.1 This report provides an update on damp and mould issues in Barnet since the last report to Housing and Growth Committee in January, including progress across council properties managed by Barnet Homes, and activity in relation to relevant Registered Providers (RPs) and across the private sector housing stock.
- 1.2 Barnet's Housing Strategy is currently being refreshed, and the emerging themes presented to Housing and Growth Committee in October 2022 included a focus on "*ensuring safe, sustainable council housing*", and "*on raising quality and standards in the private rented sector*", which together will include raising awareness of, and where the council has authority to do so, tackling damp and mould issues.
- 1.3 The issue of damp and mould is one consideration in relation to a general assessment of property condition. Within council homes it is addressed in more detail through Barnet Homes' Asset Management Strategy 2022-27. Across the registered providers and within the private rented sector it is a matter that the council engages with as a point of escalation, when issues become an unresolved health and safety hazard.

Key local updates

Council Housing

- 1.4 The Housing and Growth Committee was updated on Barnet Homes' understanding of the condition of the council housing stock in January 2023. Of the retained council stock, 100% of external surveys and 80% of internal surveys to the properties were completed by the end of Q2 2022/23. The remaining 20% of the internal stock remains due to be surveyed in Q1 2023/24, with 20% of the stock surveyed annually thereafter. A programme for completing stock condition surveys of non-secure properties on regeneration sites with a vacant possession date more than five years away, is also well underway, with circa 160 properties on the Grahame Park Estate due to be surveyed by the end of March 2023.
- 1.5 There are often multiple factors involved in cases of damp and mould including inadequate ventilation, property condition issues, property age or construction challenges, potential overcrowding, and cluttering or hoarding. Presence of damp and mould may also be a cause or a symptom of health or social care issues. Whilst the stock condition data provides a programme of work to tackle the issue, incidences of damp and mould can occur anywhere and at anytime, so the initial focus must be on ensuring any reports of damp and mould can be dealt with robustly. To improve service provision in this area Barnet Homes is recruiting to a newly created Healthy Homes team which will provide dedicated resource to deal specifically with reports of and response to damp and mould. The role of Healthy Homes Manager has been appointed to with a highly experienced resource and the rest of the team are currently being recruited.
- 1.6 At present in Barnet Council's retained stock there are 11 cases of 'severe' damp or mould, which is defined as representing a failure to meet the Decent Homes

standard ([A decent home: definition and guidance - GOV.UK \(www.gov.uk\)](https://www.gov.uk/government/publications/a-decent-home-definition-and-guidance)). Severe (category 1) hazards are dealt with immediately by Barnet Homes' Repairs Team to maintain compliance with the Decent Homes standard. Of the 11, 5 have remedial works in progress. Despite repeated attempts to arrange inspections with tenants of the remaining 6, at the time of writing access had not been provided. Attempted liaison with these tenants continues and subject to access, Barnet Homes will complete assessments and works as quickly as possible.

- 1.7 There are also 729 cases of 'moderate' damp or mould, and a further 827 properties in the 'slight' category. Both categories are defined as indicating a pass of the Decent Homes Standard but are noted as an issue. Barnet Homes is in the process of developing a programme of work to address the Moderate (category 2, band D) and the Slight (category 2, band E) hazards. This focus requires significant additional investment, which is estimated to be in the region of £2m and which has been allocated within the latest version of the Housing Revenue Account (HRA) business plan.
- 1.8 Complaints regarding damp and mould are monitored, and when residents raise issues regarding this the damp and mould process is triggered. Between 1 June and 28 February 2023, 75 complaints that included an issue regarding damp, mould, or condensation were received (approximately 6.8% of all complaints received); an average of 8 per month in this period; this is a slight reduction from the 10% and 9 complaints per month that was reported to the Committee in January 2023. The majority of damp and mould complaints in this period were received from tenants occupying general needs homes (55), with 8 complaints from those living on regeneration estates with non-secure tenancies, 6 from leasehold properties, and 3 from tenants living in General Fund accommodation.
- 1.9 There are currently 622 live cases of damp/mould being actively managed through Barnet Homes' damp and mould process, inclusive of the 11 'severe' and a large proportion of the 'moderate' stock condition referrals outlined previously. The 622 live cases represent a significant increase from the 142 cases previously reported to the committee and is consistent with the general large increase in repairs-related demand experienced by Barnet Homes since December 2022. It is understood that this large increase in contact from residents is as a result of a heightened awareness around damp and mould, both with council tenants and households in the private rented sector and this has been a feature for many housing providers in recent months.

Registered Providers

- 1.10 In November 2022, Barnet Council emailed a damp and mould questionnaire to 40 registered providers in Barnet. As of 7th March 2023, 36 responses (90% response rate) have been received. Below shows the data collected from those responses:
 - The total number of units - 9359
 - Total number of complaints (1st April 2019 – present) - 223
 - Category 1 – 31
 - Category 2 – 44

- 1.11 The RPs that have larger stock in Barnet and have responded to the questionnaire are NHG, Peabody, MTVH, Homegroup, Network Homes and L&Q. They have reviewed their Damp and Mould policy and procedures to ensure that they are supportive and informative to residents at their first point of contact. This includes improvements across customer engagement, repair diagnosis and remediation, complaints, data and responsiveness. Please see below a summary of actions that have been taken:
- Providing specialist damp and mould training to a range of frontline staff and key contractors on damp and mould to increase the awareness. This ensures that everyone can help our residents at their first point of contact.
 - Dedicated teams to provide closer case management and technical support for more complex and escalated cases, proactive work associated with damp and mould prevention and early detection
 - Damp and mould dashboard that covers live jobs and flags high risk properties, blocks and estates
 - Introduced damp and mould specific questions to regular surveys, e.g., from perception and transaction, fuel poverty and completion text surveys which are sent to customers.
 - Damp and Mould communications with residents, including leaflets and websites to ensure they are informative, and resident focused. Advice on damp, mould and condensation and how to report issues

Private Rented Sector

- 1.12 A meeting was held between the Private Sector Housing Team, and Public Health to ensure that the enforcement and public health agenda are fully aligned. Off the back of this all key publicly available information has been through an initial joint review. Work has also been undertaken to align communication to tenants across sectors.
- 1.13 Refresher training is being set up of all staff in relation to damp and mould to ensure that key advice and messages are uniform and up to date.
- 1.14 The use of additional equipment to monitor temperature versus humidity in the home by tenants is being investigated.

Temporary accommodation

- 1.15 To ensure a comprehensive approach to 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), an additional Housing Enforcement Officer is currently being recruited to the Private Sector Housing Team.
- 1.16 This new role should enable the tenants applying for rehousing to be prioritised for an inspection, and more rapid engagement with landlords around improvement, so that the tenancy can be maintained where possible. This resource will also help put

a system in place to audit Temporary Accommodation to try to ensure appropriate minimum standards are being met. This new capacity will be a pilot, and as such the working process/requirements may be flexed, as necessary, over time. The position will be funded from the Housing General Fund.

Communications Plan

- 1.17 A two phased approach to external and internal communications is being taken forward. In the next few months, Barnet Homes will be undertaking communications with tenants and leaseholders about support available, including an article in the Barnet Homes resident magazine. A wider cross-cutting communications campaign supported by Public Health, the Private Sector Housing Team and Barnet Homes around links between health and damp and mould, focused on awareness raising and advice will commence in the spring and the autumn (to combine with the wider Winter Well campaign).

Action Plan

- 1.18 An action plan has been developed to focus the council's response to damp and mould. Updates against the actions are set out in Appendix A.

2. Reasons for recommendations

- 2.1 In November 2022, the committee asked for a report about the handling of complaints and issues by Barnet Homes and Social Housing Providers.
- 2.2 Further to the tragic death of Awaab Ishak, and the publication of the coroner's report on 15th November 2022, there have been several communications from government, regulators and the ombudsman with directions and advice for landlords and local authorities. These are captured below for reference.
- 2.3 On 19th November 2022, the Secretary of State wrote to local housing authorities to remind of the duty under the Housing Act 2004 ("the Act") to keep housing conditions in their area under review, with a view to identifying any action that may need to be taken by them under the Act (section 3(1)).
- 2.4 The Secretary of State has directed, under section 3(3) of the Act, that all local housing authorities in carrying out their duty to review housing conditions in their area must:
- have particular regard to high scoring (bands D and E) category 2 damp and mould hazards, as outlined in the guidance 'Housing health and safety rating system (HHSRS) enforcement guidance: housing conditions.'
 - supply the department with an assessment of damp and mould issues affecting privately rented properties in the authority's area, including the prevalence of categories 1 and 2 damp and mould hazards; and

- supply the department with an assessment of action the authority has identified that may need to be taken in relation to damp and mould issues affecting privately rented properties in the authority's area.

In addition, pursuant to the duties under section 3(3) of the Act, the SoS asked for the following data covering the last three 12-monthly reporting periods for privately rented properties in the authority's area:

- how many damp and mould hazards the authority has remediated, compared to your assessment of the prevalence of these hazards;
- how many times the authority has taken enforcement action to remedy damp and mould hazards and the form this has taken;
- how many civil penalty notices have been issued in relation to non-compliance with enforcement action over damp and mould hazards; and
- how many prosecutions have been successfully pursued in relation to damp and mould hazards.

Furthermore, the SoS asked local housing authorities to set out how they are prioritising enforcement of housing standards generally, across all tenures, including the plans in place to ensure adequate enforcement capacity to drive up standards in the private rented sector.

- 2.5 On 19th November 2022, the Secretary of State also wrote to Social Housing Providers to ask them to make an assessment of the prevalence of category 1 and 2 damp and mould issues in their properties, and to identify required actions; and to request they self-refer to the housing regulator if they are in breach of standards. The council has issued a survey to social landlords to gather such data from across the sector, in order to understand the scale of damp and mould issues locally.
- 2.6 On 29th November 2022, the Housing Ombudsman wrote to landlords to remind them about the Spotlight report from 2021 and its 26 recommendations. Two key elements were highlighted in this letter: (1) a recommendation for landlords to take a zero-tolerance approach to damp and mould, with dedicated policy for decisions and an urgent, proactive, approach; and (2) to remind landlords that inferring blame for damp and mould on tenants 'lifestyle choices' and 'behaviours' is deemed heavy-handed and may lay the landlord open to a potential finding of maladministration. The ombudsman also reminded landlords of the importance of having an accessible complaints procedure in place.
- 2.7 On 24th February 2023, The Regulator for Social Housing wrote to the council to advise that following the information provided in December 2022, the London Borough of Barnet's housing stock has a significantly above average prevalence of Category 2 damp and mould cases. The letter confirmed that the Regulator will follow up on this as part of their future planned regulatory engagement with the council.
- 2.8 This report captures the current status of services and casework relating to damp and mould.

3. Alternative options considered and not recommended

- 3.1 The instructions from the SoS are directives under the Housing Act, and therefore it is a requirement for the council to respond appropriately.
- 3.2 The action plan includes some steps that have been taken and completed, some that are in progress, and some future recommendations that are not implemented yet.

4. Post decision implementation

- 4.1 The council will coordinate delivery of the agreed action plan set out in Appendix A.
- 4.2 Barnet Homes will continue to progress the programme of works set out in in this report.
- 4.3 The council's Private Sector Housing team will continue to identify and classify damp and mould hazards in rented properties and arrange enforcement action where this is required to ensure compliance and remediation by landlords.
- 4.4 The council will ensure that the awareness of links between health and damp and mould is escalated through the Director of Public Health engaging with wider stakeholders, including local health care providers.

5. Implications of decision

5.1 Corporate Priorities and Performance

- 5.1.1 Barnet's Housing Strategy is currently being refreshed, and the emerging themes presented to the Housing and Growth Committee in October 2022 included a focus on ensuring safe, sustainable council housing, and on raising quality and standards in the private rented sector, which will include raising awareness of and, where the council has the authority to do so, tackling damp and mould issues.
- 5.1.2 The Barnet Homes Annual Delivery Plan 2022/23 sets out the framework for the delivery of Housing Management, Homelessness and Development services to be provided by Barnet Homes. It relates to the seventh year of the ten-year Management Agreement with Barnet Homes and commenced on the 1 April 2022. The Delivery Plan 2023/24 is due to be considered by Cabinet in June 2023 and will include a new performance indication in relation to the inspection of damp and mould cases.

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

- 5.2.1 Barnet Homes are recruiting additional and immediate resources to manage the current caseload of damp and mould. This will consist of 2 technical staff, 1 resident liaison officer and administrative resource, who will make up a 'Healthy Homes Team'. This is at a cost of circa. £0.200m per annum. The cost for 22/23 is approximately £0.035m and will be funded by the Housing Revenue Account revenue repairs budget. The ongoing cost has been factored into the latest update of the HRA business plan.

- 5.2.2 Around £2.200m is required to address the known issues of HHSRS category 2 damp and mould across the stock. This includes an additional £1.200m of revenue costs and £1m of capital works which have been factored into the latest update of the HRA business plan.
- 5.2.3 A Housing Enforcement Officer is being recruited to the Private Sector Housing Team. This should enable tenants applying for rehousing to be prioritised for an inspection and the tenancy maintained where possible. A system will also be put in place to audit Temporary Accommodation to try and ensure that appropriate minimum standards are provided. This will be a pilot post and as such working process/requirements will be flexed as necessary. The position is being funded from the Housing General Fund.
- 5.2.3 As part of the service delivery review into this area consideration is being given to the use of additional equipment for example hygrometers which may require some additional resource.

5.3 Legal and Constitutional References

- 5.3.1 The council's Constitution, Article 7.5 Committees, Forums, Working Groups and Partnerships, sets out the functions of the Housing & Growth Committee:

(1) Responsibility for:

- Housing (including housing strategy; homelessness; social housing and housing grants; private sector housing and leasing; housing licensing and enforcement; HRA Revenue Account and Capital Programme)
- Regeneration Strategy and Overseeing Major Regeneration Schemes
- Asset Management
- Development of Council Land
- Fire Safety
- Economic Development including Employment Strategy; Business Support and Engagement; and Town Centres

- (2) To submit to the Policy and Resources Committee proposals relating to the Committee's budget (including fees and charges) for the following year in accordance with the budget timetable.

- (3) To make recommendations to Policy and Resources Committee on issues relating to the budget for the Committee, including virements or underspends and overspends on the budget. No decisions which result in amendments to the agreed budget may be made by the Committee unless and until the amendment has been agreed by Policy and Resources Committee.

- (4) To receive reports on relevant revenue and capital expenditure, contracts, performance information and risk on the services under the remit of the Committee.

- 5.3.2 The Housing Act 2004 (sections 3 and 4) require local authorities to keep the housing conditions in their area under review and to inspect the same with a view to identifying any action that may need to be taken under the Housing Act 2004 and other legislation, and if it considers a Category 1 or 2 hazard (as defined by the Act) exists. The Act gives (a) powers to intervene where they consider housing conditions to be in breach

of the same and (b) under section 5, imposes a duty to take action where the authority considers that a Category 1 hazard exists on premises.

5.4 Insight

5.4.1 As set out in the report to Housing and Growth Committee in January 2023.

5.5 Social Value

5.5.1 Closer monitoring of damp and mould complaints should lead to a reduction in the incidence of properties that constitute a hazard to health and improve the social and wellbeing outcomes for residents that are currently living in unsafe properties.

5.6 Risk Management

5.6.1 The council has an established approach to risk management, which is set out in the Risk Management Framework. There is a risk that limited engagement with the housing sector could lead to their lack of compliance with government legislation/regulations resulting in potentially unsafe housing and harm to residents. There are controls/mitigations in place to manage the risk.

5.7 Equalities and Diversity

5.7.1 The Equality Act, 2010 outlines the provisions of the Public Sector Equalities Duty which requires Public Bodies to have due regard to the need to:

- Eliminate unlawful discrimination, harassment and victimisation and other conduct prohibited by the Equality Act 2010.
- Advance equality of opportunity between people of different groups.
- Foster good relations between people from different groups.

5.7.2 Relevant protected characteristics are: age, disability, gender reassignment, pregnancy and maternity, race, religion or belief, sex, sexual orientation.

5.7.3 There is high representation of some protected characteristics within the profile of Barnet Council tenants, and this is reasonably expected to be repeated within the demographic profiles of tenants living within social housing across the borough. Within homes rented from the council, those most likely to be disproportionately affected by damp and mould due to their high prevalence within the population compared to that of the borough (2021 Census results) include women, people from an ethnic minority background (particularly those from a Black or Black British background), and individuals aged over 45. It might reasonably be expected that those with a disability and those affected by socio-economic factors may also be disproportionately impacted, as these groups are more likely to be in need of social housing. In delivering the activities outlined within this paper to reduce the impact of and manage damp and mould within its properties, the council is observing its Public Sector Equality Duty.

5.8 Corporate Parenting

5.8.1 In line with Children and Social Work Act 2017, the council has a duty to consider Corporate Parenting Principles in decision-making across the council. There are no adverse implications for Corporate Parenting in relation to this report.

5.9 Consultation and Engagement

5.9.1 As noted in paragraph 1.10, a survey of registered social landlords operating in the borough was undertaken and this has secured a 90% response rate as of 7th March 2023.

5.9.2 There is ongoing engagement with the wider housing sector and landlords to monitor issues of damp and mould.

5.9.3 A new communications plan is being developed to ensure that the profile of this area is raised and appropriately targeted for maximum effect. This includes a cross sector campaign in the spring and autumn.

5.9.4 The Director of Public Health will increase engagement with other partners including local health care providers.

5.10 Environmental Impact

5.10.1 There are no direct environmental implications in relation to this report, however some of the works to properties may also support the journey to Net Zero.

6. Background papers

6.1 13th June 2022, Housing and Growth Committee, item 9, Barnet Homes Delivery Plan 2022/23, [Agenda for Housing and Growth Committee on Monday 13th June, 2022, 7.00 pm \(moderngov.co.uk\)](#)

6.2 17th January 2023, Housing and Growth Committee, item 8, Damp and Mould, [Agenda for Housing and Growth Committee on Tuesday 17th January, 2023, 7.00 pm \(moderngov.co.uk\)](#)

Appendix A: Mould and Damp Action Plan (March 2023)

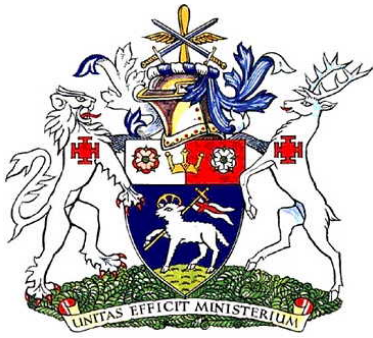
1.1 The table below captures only actions in relation to damp and mould

Action	Status	March 23 update
Council housing stock		
Barnet Homes to deliver training on damp and mould to all operational frontline teams that visit residents in properties, including all repairs operatives, gas engineers, housing officers, and resident liaison staff. This will be done to ensure they understand the impact damp and mould can have on residents' health and ensure we are providing compassionate advice as well as promptly and routinely reporting cases to the relevant teams where there is a need to do so.	In progress	A training provider has been identified and training of all staff as relevant is scheduled for Q1 2023/24.
Barnet Homes to incorporate an assessment of any current respiratory illness present in any household member that may be taken into consideration when assessments are undertaken for decants.	In progress	All initial assessments include screening on tenant household health issues, including respiratory illnesses. In depth medical assessment process is currently being developed.
Barnet Homes to re-survey and put together a schedule of works for all properties that displayed 'moderate' damp and mould (assuming money can be allocated from the HRA to do this work)	In progress	Healthy Homes Manager has been recruited and the procurement process for surveying and remedial works is in progress. A strategic asset management analysis of stock condition is in progress and scheduled for completion by end of March.
Barnet Homes to work with LBB provide additional advice to residents about how to avoid damp and mould and how to deal with 'slight' cases of damp and mould	In progress	Barnet Homes communication plan is in place, including digital, text and print to all residents. Wider Public Health led campaign to

Action	Status	March 23 update
		commence in the summer.
Barnet Homes to devise a set of measures to record cases of damp and mould and KPI's to demonstrate performance with dealing with those cases	Quarter 4 2022/23	KPI measures developed, IT system development in progress.
Registered Providers		
As part of the Annual Review of Registered Providers, the council will review and assess Registered Providers to ensure that they are appropriately capturing the rectification of issues relating to housing conditions.	Q3 2023/24	
Private Sector Residential		
Review data recording on data management system to specifically flag service requests linked to Damp and Mould.	In progress	
Liaise with the Barnet Group and Public Health to investigate opportunities for closer working in relation to housing disrepair, including Damp and Mould cases.	In progress	Initial meeting held, and Damp and Mould communications working group established.
Review documents, web pages and advice relating to condensation to ensure that it is appropriately worded	In progress	
To ensure a comprehensive approach to conditions in the private rented sector and try and reduce the number of homelessness applications due to poor housing conditions including those relating to Damp and Mould, a Housing Enforcement Officer is to be recruited to the Private Sector Housing Team. This should enable tenants applying for rehousing to be prioritised for an inspection and the tenancy maintained where possible. A system will also be put in place to audit Temporary Accommodation to try and ensure that appropriate minimum standards are provided. This will be a pilot post.	In progress	JD has been agreed and is being evaluated. Interim resource will be procured while the recruitment process takes place
Communications		

Action	Status	March 23 update
Cross sector council campaign raising awareness of the causes of damp and mould and providing advice to residents.	New	Spring 2023
Cross sector council campaign on damp and mould to link in with the seasonal vaccination programme	New	September 2023

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AGENDA ITEM 20

Housing and Growth Committee

23 March 2023

Title	Housing Revenue Account (HRA) Business Plan
Report of	Chair of Housing and Growth Committee
Wards	All
Status	Public
Urgent	No
Key	Yes
Enclosures	Appendix 1- Housing Revenue Account Business Plan
Officer Contact Details	Stephen McDonald, Stephen.mcdonald@barnet.gov.uk , 020 8359 2172 Nick Stylianou, Head of Finance, Customer, Place and Assurance, shaun.mclean@barnethomes.org

Summary

The Housing Revenue Account (HRA) is a ring-fenced budget that is used to manage income and costs associated with managing the council's Housing Stock and related assets including shops and garages on council housing estates. This report provides an update of the 30-year HRA Business Plan since it was last reported to the Housing and Growth Committee in November 2022.

There have been various impacts on the business plan due to wider economic issues; the 2 key issues since the last update are i) rent increase 'cap' was set at 7% by central Government, ii) the Awaab Ishak tragedy in Rochdale and the increased costings to better deal with damp & mould in the Council owned stock.

Officers Recommendations

1. That the Housing and Growth Committee approve the updated Housing Revenue Account Business Plan as attached in Appendix 1.

1. Why this report is needed

- 1.1 Expenditure and income relating to property and income listed in section 74 of the Local Government and Housing Act 1989 which includes housing held under Part II of the Housing Act 1985 must be accounted for in the Housing Revenue Account (HRA). The HRA is a ring-fenced budget.
- 1.2 From 2012, a national subsidy system for council housing was replaced with self-financing giving local authorities direct control over the income and expenditure associated with council housing. This settlement saw Barnet move away from having to pay circa. £11m of council rents it collected to the Treasury to a position whereby the HRA is self-sufficient and able to meet the on-going investment needs of council homes.
- 1.3 In addition, the settlement included a debt cap of £240m which provided the council with the opportunity to borrow an additional £38m from headroom generated by differences between the actual HRA debt and the amount assumed in the settlement.
- 1.4 In October 2018, the government removed the debt cap and the HRA is now subject to the prudential borrowing rules, similar to those for the General Fund with the primary difference being the absence of a statutory minimum revenue provision in the HRA.
- 1.5 The removal of the debt cap provides an opportunity to increase the supply of affordable homes and significant investment in the existing stock in the borough, as it means that the council can borrow more within a prudent limit to support the acquisition or building of new homes.
- 1.6 There have been recent changes to how Right to Buy receipts may be used, i.e., more of the receipt can be used for development, the period over which it must be used has been extended from 3 years to 5 years; both these changes come with a clear priority of new development, not acquisition.
- 1.7 The 30-year HRA Business Plan, attached at Appendix 1, has been updated to reflect the current year forecast. It continues to reflect the previously approved basis of how the council will manage and maintain the housing stock and priorities for investment going forward, including investment in fire safety improvements, compliance with new legislation for 'Building a Safer Future' and new affordable homes for rent.

2. Reasons for recommendations

- 2.1 The HRA Business Plan provides an important mechanism for ensuring that the council's housing stock is well managed and maintained, and that investment is made to ensure the safety of residents.

The HRA should be self-funding and continuous review of the position of the HRA is required to ensure this. This is particularly relevant in the current market conditions, particularly significantly higher interest rates currently and forecast has materially impacted the long-term position of the HRA. The recent tragedy in Rochdale relating to damp & mould has meant a significant increase in focus on this by the Regulator for Social Housing (under the Consumer standards which the Council has a duty to comply with) will mean significant increased spending is required. The result of this additional spending is that the current business plan will not be able to sustain the current policy of the minimum Reserve position

of increasing by CPI each year but will do so by year 11. However the current plan shows that the HRA will maintain positive reserves (the lowest level being £1.2m in year 7).

3. Alternative options considered and not recommended

- 3.1 The HRA Business Plan has been developed to support the priorities outlined in the council's Housing Strategy and Growth Strategy, and no other options were considered as these would have to mean a reduced level of service or quality of home for residents.

4. Post decision implementation

- 4.1 Proposals for building additional affordable homes for rent funded through the HRA will be developed as part of the council's development programme and be submitted to the Housing & Growth Committee for consideration.

5. Implications of decision

5.1 Corporate Priorities and Performance

- 5.1.1 The new Corporate Plan for 2023- 2026 has been published. The focus is on being a council that cares for people, our places, and the planet. Under the People priority, it aims to be family friendly, tackle inequality, and support health and independence. Under the Place priority, it aims to ensure safe, attractive neighbourhoods, quality homes, sustainable growth, and thriving town centres and make Barnet a fun place to visit. Under the Planet priority, it aims to focus on the council's journey to net zero, local environment, and green spaces.

- 5.1.2 In addition, the council agreed a new Housing Strategy in April 2019 which sets out the plans to meet housing need in the borough with a focus on the following priorities:

- Raising standards in the private rented sector
- Delivering more homes that people can afford
- Safe and Secure Homes
- Promoting independence
- Tackling homelessness and rough sleeping in Barnet

- 5.1.3 A new Housing Strategy is currently being prepared. The HRA Business Plan will continue to contribute to the Housing Strategy in several ways, including:

- Maintaining the quality and safety of the existing supply of council housing
- Investing in the delivery of new affordable homes for rent
- Increasing the supply of housing to help tackle homelessness
- Investing in new homes for vulnerable people, including wheelchair users and older people
- Ensuring that housing services funded through the HRA are efficient and effective

5.1.4 Barnet's Joint Strategic Needs Assessment highlights the fact that there is a long-term shift in housing tenure towards renting and away from owner occupancy (either outright or with a mortgage) reflecting a sustained reduction in housing affordability and an imbalance between housing demand and supply. Over three-quarters of older adults in Barnet are homeowners, indicating that a substantial majority of this age group are living in their own homes in the community, against a background of limiting long term illness and possible social isolation. The HRA Business Plan aims to increase the housing supply including the provision of specialist housing for vulnerable people.

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

5.2.1 The HRA Business Plan seeks to provide assurance that there is a viable plan in place for managing and investing the resources available to the council in the form of council rents and income from other HRA assets such as shops and garages. With the addition of £1.2m per annum of costs relating to the issue of damp and mould, the plan will need to drop below the Minimum Reserve Policy for the coming 9 years (though it never has negative reserves and requires no cross- subsidy support from the General Fund); from the 10th year it will be policy compliant again. This was approved at the Policy & Resources Committee meeting in February 2023.

5.2.2 New affordable homes built or acquired through the HRA will help to reduce costs to the council's general fund by providing an alternative to short term temporary accommodation, which falls outside Part II of the 1985 Act, and which has a net cost to the council in excess of £3,400 a year per unit.

5.2.3 The delivery of extra care housing and wheelchair adapted homes will help the council to meet savings targets for social care budgets by providing a more affordable alternative to residential care as a well as delivering a better outcome for vulnerable residents.

5.2.4 The HRA Business plan has been detailed in Appendix 1 to show the 2022/23 forecasted position along with the following five financial years concerning both revenue and capital. The main changes since the November 2022 update relates to the rent 'cap' at 7% and an additional £1.2m of costs relating to damp & mould. This updated forecast has been prepared collaboratively between the council and The Barnet Group.

5.3 **Legal and Constitutional References**

5.3.1 The Localism Act 2011 reformed the way that council housing is financed in England and Wales. The national HRA subsidy system ended in April 2012 and was replaced with self-financing.

5.3.2 Under the Local Government & Housing Act 1989, a local housing authority has a duty to keep a Housing Revenue Account (which is ring-fenced) and to formulate and implement proposals to ensure that for each financial year it does not show a debit balance. These proposals need to be considered regularly and adjusted as needed.

5.3.3 Article 2 of the council's Constitution defines a 'key decision' as 'one which will result in the council incurring expenditure or savings of £500,000 or more or is significant in terms of its effects on communities living or working in an area comprising two or more

Wards'. Key decisions are to be taken by the relevant Committee unless reserved to full Council (Article 10.3).

5.3.4 Article 7 of the council's Constitution states the Housing and Growth Committee's functions include responsibility for:

(1)

- Housing (including: housing strategy; homelessness; social housing and housing grants; private sector housing and leasing; housing licensing and enforcement; ; HRA Revenue Account and Capital Programme);
- Regeneration Strategy and Overseeing Major Regeneration Schemes
- Asset Management
- Development of Council Land
- Fire Safety
- Economic Development including: Employment Strategy; Business Support and Engagement; and Town Centres

(2) To submit to the Policy and Resources Committee proposals relating to the Committee's budget (including fees and charges) for the following year in accordance with the budget timetable.

(3) To make recommendations to Policy and Resources Committee on issues relating to the budget for the Committee, including virements or underspends and overspends on the budget. No decisions which result in amendments to the agreed budget may be made by the Committee unless and until the amendment has been agreed by Policy and Resources Committee.

(4) To receive reports on relevant revenue and capital expenditure, contracts, performance information performance) and risk on the services under the remit of the Committee.

5.4 **Insight**

5.4.1 No specific insight data has been used in the updating of the HRA Business Plan.

5.5 **Social Value**

5.5.1 Social value considerations will be considered in the individual investment decisions.

5.6 **Risk Management**

5.6.1 There is a risk that costs assumed in the HRA Business Plan will be higher than anticipated, particularly wage inflation which is subject to national negotiations. Further amendments to the Rent Standard could impact income negatively. Changes to interest rates also have a material impact on the HRA. Mitigations will be sought but the adverse changes in the last 6 months (interest rates and rent 'cap') mean that there is very limited resilience in the business plan.

- 5.6.2 The HRA has over £400m of debt, just under 50% of this needs to be refinanced within the 30-year business plan. Projected interest rates at the time of refinancing (approx. 2040 onwards) are significantly higher than previously anticipated and if they are (as treasury advisors have forecast) at 5.5% this would lead to the Minimum Reserves Policy being breached. Mitigating actions will be considered closer to the refinancing periods.
- 5.6.3 The macro-economic environment is creating cost pressure for all households, especially our residents. This will likely lead to increased arrears and possibly bad debts.
- 5.6.4 The additional investment in Grahame Park, fire safety and improvements to the quality of the council social housing has meant that the HRA has significant debt meaning that delivery of EPC B targets by 2030 and 'net zero' by 2050 will require significant levels of government support via grants, low interest loan or other similar support; these cannot be funded from the HRA alone.

5.7 Equalities and Diversity

- 5.7.1 Under s.149 of the Equality Act 2010, the council must, in the exercise of its functions have due regard to the need to: a) eliminate discrimination, harassment, victimisation and any other conduct that is prohibited by or under the Act; b) advance equality of opportunity between those with a protected characteristic and those without; c) foster good relations between those with a protected characteristic and those without. The 'protected characteristics' referred to are: age; disability; gender reassignment; pregnancy and maternity; race; religion or belief; sex; sexual orientation. It also covers marriage and civil partnership with regard to eliminating discrimination.
- 5.7.2 Investment in existing council housing stock will impact positively on existing council tenants who are generally more diverse than the population of the borough as a whole. New family sized housing that is being delivered through the HRA Business Plan will be available to households in need, including homeless applicants who are likely to be more ethnically diverse and younger than existing council tenants. The HRA will also be used to support vulnerable older people and wheelchair users. The council will have proper regard to any Equality Act issues arising from any proposals coming forward.

5.8 Corporate Parenting

- 5.8.1 In line with Children and Social Work Act 2017, the Council has a duty to consider Corporate Parenting Principles in decision-making across the council. The HRA Business Plan proposals will ensure that existing council properties in the HRA, some of which are used to provide housing for foster parents and care leavers are managed and maintained. In addition, the HRA Business Plan supports an increase in the supply of affordable housing, including larger properties, some of which will provide housing suitable for foster parents and care leavers.

5.9 Consultation and Engagement

- 5.9.1 The council consults with tenants, residents, and stakeholders on the Housing Strategy. This document has informed the HRA Business Plan to ensure that the available resources are used to help the council achieve its housing priorities.

5.10 Environmental Impact

5.10.1 The Business Plan as presented will ensure Council homes meet EPC C legal requirements by 2030 and there is some spending towards 'net zero'. Barnet Homes has already secured grant funding for stock retrofitting works, are awaiting the outcome of a bid to wave one of the Social Housing Decarbonisation Fund and plan to submit further bids in subsequent waves. The council have set very ambitious targets for the decarbonisation of the council housing stock, including achieving an average rating of EPC B by 2030 and net zero as soon as possible following that. To understand the work required to deliver these targets, it is first necessary to develop a detailed understanding of the stock. Barnet Homes are currently in the process of completing the third tranche of stock condition surveys and energy assessments, which will provide high quality data for 20% of the current stock. This will in turn, allow 3rd party experts to undertake an analysis of costed options to achieve the targets set. This also means Barnet Homes will have stock condition detail on 100% of the ongoing stock later in 2023.

6. Background papers

Meeting	Decision	Link
Housing & Growth Committee 16 November 2022	Approval of HRA Business Plan	Agenda for Housing and Growth Committee on Wednesday 16th November, 2022, 7.00 pm (moderngov.co.uk) Item 12
Housing & Growth Committee 17 February 2022	Approval of HRA Business Plan	Agenda for Housing and Growth Committee on Thursday 17th February, 2022, 7.00 pm (moderngov.co.uk) Item 13
Housing & Growth Committee 13 September 2021	Approval of HRA Business Plan	https://barnet.moderngov.co.uk/ieListDocuments.aspx?CId=696&MId=10846&Ver=4 Item 16
Housing & Growth Committee 14 June 2021	Approval of HRA Business Plan	https://barnet.moderngov.co.uk/ieListDocuments.aspx?CId=696&MId=10845&Ver=4 Item 9
Housing & Growth Committee 27 January 2020	Approval of HRA Business Plan	https://barnet.moderngov.co.uk/ieListDocuments.aspx?CId=696&MId=9931&Ver=4
Housing Committee 14 January 2019	Approval of HRA Business Plan	http://barnet.moderngov.co.uk/ieListDocuments.aspx?CId=699&MId=9488&Ver=4
Housing Committee 10 October 2018	Approval of draft Housing Strategy and Homelessness and	http://barnet.moderngov.co.uk/ieListDocuments.aspx?CId=699&MId=9487&Ver=4

	Rough Sleeping Strategy	
Housing Committee 23 October 2017	Approval of HRA Business Plan	http://barnet.moderngov.co.uk/ieListDocuments.aspx?CId=699&MId=9237&Ver=4
Council 20 October 2015	Approval of Housing Strategy and Business Plan	http://barnet.moderngov.co.uk/ieListDocuments.aspx?CId=162&MId=8340&Ver=4
Housing Committee 19 October 2015	Approval of HRA Business Plan	http://barnet.moderngov.co.uk/ieListDocuments.aspx?CId=699&MId=8268&Ver=4

Appendix 1 - HRA Business Plan – March 2023

1. Introduction

The council's Housing Revenue Account (HRA) is funded through rents and service charges received from council tenants and leaseholders, it meets the costs associated with maintaining and managing the council's housing stock and can also be used for funding the development or acquisition of new council homes and other related capital projects.

Since 2012, the HRA has been self-financing, although there have been restrictions on both the amount the HRA can borrow and the rents that can be charged.

The government removed the borrowing cap in October 2018 and borrowing in the HRA is now subject to the similar prudential guidelines as the General Fund, providing opportunities for increasing affordable housing supply supported by the HRA.

Recent changes in Right to Buy receipts has meant that receipts now have 5 years to be utilised for the provision of replacement homes, rather than the 3 years in the past and the amount that can be used has increased from 30% to 40% of the development spend.

The HRA Business Plan has been updated with support from housing consultants Savills and in partnership with Barnet Homes.

2. Executive Summary

Good progress has been made since 2015 on delivering the HRA business plan. Headlines include; the completion of 43 new council homes for rent, a 53-unit extra care housing scheme at Ansell Court in Mill Hill and the acquisition of over 140 properties in London to let at affordable rents to homeless applicants. Grant has been secured from the Greater London Authority under the Building Council Homes for Londoners Programme to support the building of 78 new council homes in Barnet, for the HRA 250 home programme which includes a scheme at The Grange estate in East Finchley and for the acquisition of up to 60 ex-Right to Buy homes.

The council and Barnet Homes have always taken fire safety very seriously and ensuring the safety of residents was already a top priority for our investment programme. Following the Grenfell Tower fire in 2017, the council has committed to going beyond its statutory obligations to meet best practise in fire safety measures, and a priority for the HRA business plan going forward will be to deliver this commitment through an investment programme totalling £82m (£52m for high rise/priority blocks and £30m for medium/low rise blocks), of which £52m has been spent to date. The five year programme to medium and low rise (lower risk) properties commenced this year.

The council has continued to invest in existing council homes which continue to be maintained to at least the Decent Homes standard.

Other projects to be supported by the HRA Business Plan include two additional extra care schemes, providing 126 new homes.

This updated plan identifies provision for building a further 250 new homes for rent in the borough, and investment of £32 million in properties that continue to be occupied on our regeneration estates at Grahame Park and Dollis Valley. Savills were commissioned to carry out a stock condition survey; which included estimating costs to achieve the EPC C requirement to retained council homes by 2030 and also the Government Clean Growth Strategy. Savills are currently carrying out further stock condition surveys which will also provide greater clarity on the potential costs of achieving EPC B SAP ratings of retained council homes by 2030.

The current year plan has also made provision for £12.9m of new spend for environmental works to shared and communal spaces as well as an initial £33m towards achieving carbon neutrality across the stock by 2050. The estimated costs for achieving carbon neutral by 2050 is estimated by Savills to be significantly higher than the initial £33m capital allocation, however there are numerous unknown factors which will impact the total cost over time, including technology options and grant funding from the Government.

National Policy Framework

From 2012 HRAs became self-financing with a restriction placed on their external borrowing. In October 2018, the government removed the debt cap and HRA borrowing is now subject to the similar prudential borrowing guidelines as the General Fund. The removal of the borrowing cap means that council has an opportunity to invest more in increasing the supply of affordable housing, but it needs to ensure it can meet the cost of the borrowing.

The Welfare Reform and Work Act 2016 introduced a 4-year requirement for social landlords to reduce their rents by 1% each year from April 2016. This requirement reduced the revenue available to the HRA. In October 2017, the government announced its intention to allow registered providers and local authorities to increase rents by the Consumer Price Index (CPI) plus 1% for at least five years from April 2020. The recent 'spike' in CPI has meant that central Government recently had a consultation on setting a rent 'cap' for 2023/24 (and possibly the following year). The consultation asked for inputs around different levels of maximum rent increases (3%, 5% or 7%). The Chancellor announced on 17th November 2022 announced that social housing rents would be 'capped' at 7% (this is the level the Council felt was most appropriate in their response). The Business Plan assumes that rents will increase 7% for 2023/24 and then 5% for 2024/25 (when CPI is expected to be around 10%) and then by CPI+1% for 5 years and then CPI only thereafter.

The roll out of Universal Credit for new applicants and where there is a change in circumstances for existing claims is now well underway in Barnet. The impact of this

on rent collection and associated bad debt is being closely monitored, with no specific trends to note this far.

Corporate Priorities

The new Corporate Plan for 2023- 2026 has been published. The focus is on being a council that cares for people, our places, and the planet. Under the People priority, it aims to be family friendly, tackle inequality, and support health and independence. Under the Place priority, it aims to ensure safe, attractive neighbourhoods, quality homes, sustainable growth, and thriving town centres and make Barnet a fun place to visit. Under the Planet priority, it aims to focus on the council's journey to net zero, local environment, and green spaces

In April 2019 the council agreed a new Housing Strategy which sets out the plans to meet housing need in the borough with a focus on the following priorities:

- Raising standards in the private rented sector
- Delivering more homes that people can afford
- Safe and Secure Homes
- Promoting independence
- Tackling homelessness and rough sleeping in Barnet

The HRA Business Plan complements the Housing Strategy in a number of ways, including:

- Maintaining the quality and safety of the existing supply of council housing
- Investing in the delivery of new affordable homes for rent
- Increasing the supply of housing to help tackle homelessness
- Investing in new homes for vulnerable people, including wheelchair users and older people
- Ensuring that housing services funded through the HRA are efficient and effective.

3. Maintaining the quality and safety of the existing supply of council housing

The council's housing stock is managed and maintained by Barnet Homes, an Arm's Length Management Organisation (ALMO) which was established in 2004 to improve services and deliver a programme of investment to bring the stock up to the Decent Homes standard.

Barnet Homes completed the Decent Homes programme in 2011, and now has a 30-year Asset Management Strategy in place which provides a framework for the effective and efficient management of the Barnet Homes housing stock, over the next five years, with particular emphasis on the following themes:

- Understanding our housing property assets

- Continue to maintain homes to ensure they are safe, energy efficient and provide a healthy and fit-for-purpose living environment for our customers
- Improving estates to make them places our customers want to live in

The Asset Management Strategy was developed using stock condition data from Savills (80% of retained properties) and will ensure the properties are maintained to legal standards as a minimum. The business plan also makes provision for further stock condition surveys to be carried out in future years to ensure 100% coverage of all stock on a continuous basis and the most efficient use of capital programme resources.

Costs to achieve either Carbon Neutrality or the Council target of EPC B by 2030 are not yet known. Initial estimates are that this will be more than £180m; which cannot be met within the HRA. Significant levels of grant or other central Government support will be required to achieve these targets and currently efforts are being focussed on securing funding through grant programmes where available.

Building and Fire safety

Following the Grenfell Tower disaster in June 2017, the council responded by developing a £52 million investment programme to improve fire safety in its housing stock, including the replacement of Aluminium Composite Material (ACM) on blocks at Granville Road (completed 2018), and the installation of sprinklers in high rise blocks (10 storeys and over). This programme is complete and a further £30m program for medium and low-rise blocks has also now been approved and has commenced.

'Building a Safer Future' (BSF) is a government-led initiative in response to the Grenfell Tower tragedy. It is a framework within which the shortcomings identified in the post-Grenfell review of Building Regulation and Fire Safety can be addressed. These shortcomings include the way high-rise residential buildings are built and managed. BSF is also intended to deal with situations where residents may raise concerns about the safety of their buildings, which they may feel are not taken seriously by their landlord.

Two key pieces of legislation support this initiative – the Building Safety Act and the Fire Safety Act. The Fire Safety Act received royal assent in April 2021, although is not yet in force. The Building Safety Bill received royal assent in July 2022 and does not come into force until 2023. The new Building Safety Regulator, working under the responsibility of the Health and Safety Executive and with responsibility for 'high risk' / 'in-scope' buildings (e.g. residential blocks over 18 metres, but other criteria may be defined through subsequent statutory instruments) is unlikely to be fully operational until 2023/24.

Following formal introduction of the Acts it is inevitable that there will be additional requirements for other enhanced aspects of building and fire safety and ongoing

management of our buildings and the wider housing stock within the borough. An additional £0.85m per annum has therefore been included as revenue expenditure within the plan to deliver the requirements of 'Building a Safer future' and associated legislation.

Estate Regeneration

The council recognises that its ambitious programme to regenerate its four largest council estates has taken much longer to deliver than originally envisaged. In view of this, significant investment is required by the council in properties at **Grahame Park** over the next 2 years. The council will ensure that homes at Grahame Park programmed to be occupied until 2024 remain compliant with statutory landlord health and safety compliance obligations. Properties due to remain occupied beyond 2024 will be improved to meet the Decent Homes standard. These works are summarised below:

Homes to continue in occupation to 2024	Compliance works, Electrical Rising Main, Electrical Testing and Rewires, Fire enhancement works, partial window replacements, ASB works such as external perimeter lighting, entry phones/renewal of entrance doors and Housing Health and Safety Rating System works.
Homes to continue in occupation beyond 2024	As above and including repair/renewal of bathrooms and kitchens, roof and windows replacement.

The council is exploring with Barnet Homes options for accelerating the regeneration in the North of Grahame Park.

Significant regeneration has taken place at Dollis Valley. The remaining council homes at **Dollis Valley** are due to be vacated up to 2025. These properties were built using the large panel system (LPS) method and in view of recent concerns raised about this type of construction and following discussions with Cadent Gas, Barnet Homes have replaced the gas fuel heating and hot water systems to homes in blocks of 5 storey and above with all-electric systems. Subsequently, piped gas systems have been disconnected. As running costs associated with the electric systems will be higher than gas, the council will need to compensate residents for any additional cost and adequate provision has been made in the plan for this.

The following table shows the total investment plans for the council's housing stock through to 2027 (at current values, no inflation):

Financial £'000	Year	2022.23 Fcst	2023.24 Budget	2024.25 Budget	2025.26 Budget	2026.27 Budget	Total
STOCK CAPITAL INVESTMENT							
Major Works		£14,378	£14,378	£14,378	£16,958	£16,958	£77,050
M&E/ GAS		£6,566	£956	£566	£2,114	£2,114	£12,316
Adaptations (voids)		£1,162	£1,162	£1,162	£1,200	£1,200	£5,886
Fire safety programme		£11,576	£5,900	£5,900	£5,900	£5,900	£35,176
Additional Regeneration		£17,683	£3,803	£2,652	£2,286	£1,452	£27,876
Neighbourhood works		£563	£2,063	£2,063	£1,641	£1,641	£7,971
Damp & Mould		£ -	£1,000	£1,000	£1,000	£1,000	£4,000
Carbon Neutral works		£500	£2,759	£2,759	£3,638	£3,638	£13,294
Totals		£52,428	£32,021	£30,480	£34,737	£33,903	£ 183,569

4. Investment in the delivery of new affordable homes for rent

New Build Programme

The council's Housing Strategy 2019-2024 sets out the need for more affordable homes in the borough. In order to deliver on this, local authority land, including land held in the HRA, can be made available to provide sites for new housing, either at affordable rent or for low-cost home ownership.

Barnet Homes completed the first tranche of 43 new council homes by Summer 2016 and in Autumn 2018 a GLA grant of £7.8m was secured for a further 78 new homes. Plans for the delivery of these properties are progressing.

Barnet Homes have established a Registered Provider (RP), Opendoor Homes, which is delivering 341 new affordable homes for rent on council land, primarily in the HRA. 299 of these have been completed and are now occupied.

This approach means that whilst the HRA supports the developments by providing land at nil cost, the development costs of the new homes are funded by a loan to Opendoor Homes from the council. The council retains 100% nomination rights to the properties that are built. Additionally, Opendoor Homes has delivered a policy compliant mixed tenure scheme at Hermitage Lane which produced a further 21 affordable homes.

Further work has been carried out on the capacity of HRA sites to deliver additional homes, and several sites have been identified which are expected to provide approximately 250 new council homes for affordable rent over the next five years.

The council will continue to work with Opendoor Homes, with a focus on mixed tenure developments outside of the HRA. However, the council will consider transferring HRA

land to the RP where there is a good case for doing so, for example where the HRA does not have the capacity to fund a development or where it is more suitable for a mixed tenure scheme.

Acquisitions Programme

To make effective use of the council's Right- to-Buy receipts, HRA funding has already been used to support the purchase 84 properties across London which have been let at affordable rents via the council's Housing Allocations Scheme.

The council's Housing Strategy has identified the need to maintain a supply of larger affordable units and will ensure that some of the units acquired have three or more bedrooms.

A new acquisition program for up to 120 units was approved at the November 2021 Housing & Growth Committee meeting. This is made up of 60 units of ex- Right to Buy units, whereby grant of £65k per unit has been secured. The other 60 units will be funded using RTB receipts. This program will primarily focus on larger units as there is significant demand for these types of units in the Borough.

5. Increasing the supply of housing to help tackle homelessness

The delivery of new affordable homes for rent, as described above, will help to reduce homelessness by providing an alternative to expensive temporary accommodation and offer households in this position a better outcome.

At present the average net annual cost of providing temporary accommodation is an estimated £3,400 per household, and this cost is increasing significantly due to continuing inflationary pressures in the housing market, reduction of private rental homes as private landlords exit the market, population growth and a limited supply of housing.

This means that for every 100-additional new affordable homes built or acquired, the council will save approximately £0.340m in temporary accommodation costs within the General Fund.

6. Investment in new homes for vulnerable people

The council has identified a need for additional extra care housing for older people and homes for wheelchair users. As a result, investment is being targeted in two particular areas set out below.

Extra Care housing

As well as providing better outcomes for users, additional supported housing will provide a more cost-effective alternative to expensive residential care. It is estimated

that around 35% of people admitted to residential accommodation by the council would have a better quality of life if there was availability within extra care housing. This equates to approximately 90 households every year.

Each client placed in extra care housing provides a saving of £10,000 a year compared to the cost of residential care. The first extra care scheme completed during 2019 at the 53-home extra care sheltered housing scheme at Ansell Court.

The council and Barnet Homes are progressing well with the next 51 home extra care scheme at Stag House in Burnt Oak and another 75-home scheme as part of community led development plans for the Upper and Lower Fosters estate in Hendon which started on site in March 2021. Both schemes will be funded through the HRA and with grant from the GLA.

Wheelchair housing

The council has identified a number of people currently in residential care, who would benefit from wheelchair adapted housing. It is estimated that for each person rehoused a saving of up to £50,000 will be generated in the General Fund. Barnet Homes has already built 29 wheelchair adapted homes as part of the 40 new council homes completed in 2016. Additional wheelchair adapted homes will be provided as part of the on-going programme of building affordable homes described in section six above. This complies with the local plan requirement that at least 10% of new homes should be wheelchair accessible or easily adapted for wheelchair users.

7. Efficient and Effective Services

The majority of services funded from the HRA are provided by the council's ALMO, Barnet Homes, including the management and maintenance of council housing and the provision of housing needs service, which is responsible for the assessment of eligibility for rehousing against the council's Housing Allocations Scheme.

During 2015, the council reviewed the services provided by Barnet Homes through a series of challenge sessions to ensure that the services were of a satisfactory standard and provided good value for money. This led to the development of a new ten-year management agreement, effective from 1st April 2016 and secured savings worth £2.15m over the first five years of the agreement. This sum is equivalent to a 10% budget reduction and has had minimal impact on the effectiveness of services, whilst freeing up HRA resources for investment in further new homes.

8. Right to Buy Receipts

The Right-to-Buy scheme was reinvigorated in 2012 through the introduction of more generous discounts for tenants wishing to buy their council property. As part of this, local authorities have been permitted to keep a larger proportion of the receipts

generated from Right-to-Buy sales on condition that these are spent on providing new affordable homes within 3 years. The council has so far made use of Right-to-Buy receipts to support the building and acquisitions programme described in section six above. An announcement in 2020 by the Department for Levelling Up, Housing and Communities (DLUHC) regarding Right to Buy receipts has meant that receipts now have 5 years to be utilised for the provision of replacement homes, rather than the 3 years in the past and the amount that can be used has increased from 30% to 40% of the development spend.

9. HRA 30 Year Business Plan

The council uses a spreadsheet model provided by Savills to project the HRA position over a 30-year period, considering changes in stock, capital programme requirements, and anticipated policy changes.

A baseline position has been established which takes account of the current capital programme, the loss of stock expected through estate regeneration and sales, and the latest government advice on rent setting. The baseline capital programme also includes: an agreed £82m investment in fire safety, £28m of investment in homes at Dollis Valley and Grahame Park, building of 337 new homes supported by the GLA grant and the acquisition of 171 properties for affordable rent.

It is recommended that the council proceeds with developing plans for implementing the programme described above. This will see an increase in borrowing from £360m currently to £829m at the end of the 30-year plan. This increase in borrowings means that the primary sensitivity to the business plan is interest rates.

Over the last few years (and particularly the last 12 months) the HRA has seen various adverse factors affecting the financial viability and sustainability of the Business Plan.

- Additional legislation regarding fire safety in buildings over 11 metres, has meant additional costs per annum of £0.9m
- Interest rate levels have more than doubled meaning additional interest costs to deliver the capita programs that have been agreed (£230m over 30 years).
- The rent cap for 2023/24 means an approximate 3% erosion of margins, as costs increase in line with CPI, but rents are limited to 7% (£1.5m per annum).
- Limiting utility costs for residents on estates where large panel or communal heating systems are in place, to equate rate rises to other residents (annual cost of between £1m to £2m depending on procurement prices).
- Inflation for repairs being double (and higher) than CPI, and also additional costs relating to disrepair claims promoted by legal services (£1.4m per annum).
- Most recently, an additional £1.2m of revenue and £1m of capital works to deal with damp and mould issues.

The result of all the above challenges means that the current business plan will not be able to sustain the current policy of the minimum Reserve position increasing by CPI each year, but it will do again by year 11. However, the current plan shows that the HRA will maintain positive reserves (the lowest level being £1.2m in year 7).

The amendment of the current policy of increasing the minimum reserve position by CPI each year was presented to Policy & Resources Committee in February 2023 and not opposed.

Other options/solutions are being reviewed, but any further reductions in cost, will currently, either mean reduced service levels, or additional pressure on the General Fund.

A summary of the proposed Capital programme is included at Appendix A and the updated HRA forecast for 2022/23 is included at Appendix B.

Appendix A- Proposed HRA Capital Programme to 2027 (at current values, no inflation):

Financial Year £'000	2022.23	2023.24	2024.25	2025.26	2026.27	Total
STOCK CAPITAL INVESTMENT						
Major Works	£14,378	£14,378	£14,378	£16,958	£16,958	£77,050
M&E/ GAS	£6,566	£956	£566	£2,114	£2,114	£12,316
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Damp & Mould works	£ -	£1,000	£1,000	£1,000	£1,000	£4,000
Carbon Neutral works	£500	£2,759	£2,759	£3,638	£3,638	£13,294
Total Investment in Stock	£52,428	£32,021	£30,480	£34,737	£33,903	£ 183,569
INVESTMENT IN NEW SUPPLY						
Cheshir House – Extra Care*	£ 3,086	£ 9,850	£ 8,852	£ 2,000	£ 328	£ 24,116
Stag House – Extra Care*	£ 6,271	£ 1,100	£ 226	£ -	£ -	£ 7,597
GLA Funded Programme	£ 3,936	£ 26,427	£ 5,153	£ 1,853	£ -	£ 37,369
New Build - 228 units*	£ 400	£ 3,862	£ 28,287	£ 22,793	£ 12,144	£ 67,486
The Grange	£ 1,472	£ 4,415	£ 2,943	£ 1,464	£ -	£ 10,294
120 acquisition program	£ 27,521	£ 23,713	£ -	£ -	£ -	£ 51,234
Small sites modular	£ -	£ 4,521	£ -	£ -	£ -	£ 4,521
Grahame Park NE*	£ 950	£ 2,483	£ -	£ -	£ -	£ 3,433
Dollis Valley Shared Equity	£ 750	£ 1,950	£ -	£ -	£ -	£ 2,700
Total Investment in New Supply	£ 44,386	£ 78,321	£ 45,461	£ 28,110	£ 12,472	£ 208,750
Total Capital Programme	£ 96,814	£ 110,342	£ 75,941	£ 62,847	£ 46,375	£ 392,319

*Subject to capital bids

Appendix B –HRA Forecast 2022/23 and Business Plan to 2026/27

HOUSING REVENUE ACCOUNT	2022/23	2023/24	2024/25	2025/26	2026/27
	Forecast £'000	Budget £'000	Budget £'000	Budget £'000	Budget £'000
Income					
Dwelling rents	(52,333)	(55,143)	(58,060)	(61,822)	(62,971)
Non-dwelling rents	(1,362)	(987)	(898)	(854)	(808)
Service Charges for services and facilities	(6,992)	(7,772)	(8,662)	(8,913)	(9,148)
Other Income	-	(227)	-	-	-
Total Income	(60,687)	(64,129)	(67,620)	(71,589)	(72,927)
Expenditure					
Repairs and Maintenance	9,562	10,993	12,003	12,265	12,460
Damp & Mould	50	1,200	1,320	1,346	1,373
'Building Safer Future' funding	850	935	1,029	1,049	1,070
General	24,803	24,065	25,908	26,474	26,829
Special	1,074	1,348	1,276	1,389	1,458
Depreciation and impairment of fixed assets	12,683	12,703	12,908	13,210	13,418
Debt Management Expenses	10,463	11,568	12,625	14,840	16,831
Revenue Contribution to Capital	181	-	-	-	-
Increase in bad debt provision	1,000	1,185	1,115	1,037	973
Total Expenditure	60,666	63,997	68,184	71,610	74,412
Net (surplus)/deficit of HRA Services	(21)	(132)	564	21	1,485
Interest and investment income	(105)	(62)	(69)	(61)	(62)
(Surplus) or deficit	(126)	(194)	495	(40)	1,423
Accumulated Reserve	(4,146)	(4,340)	(3,845)	(3,885)	(2,462)
Policy Reserve Minimum	(4,146)	(4,559)	(5,015)	(5,115)	(5,218)



Housing & Growth Committee

23 March 2023

Title	Q3 2022/23 Contracts Performance Report
Report of	Chair of Housing & Growth Committee
Wards	All
Status	Public
Urgent	No
Key	No
Enclosures	None
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Summary

This report provides an overview of Quarter 3 (Q3) 2022/23 performance for the contracted services delivered by Regional Enterprise (Capita) and Barnet Homes (The Barnet Group) that fall under the remit of this committee.

Overall, performance is going well, with most KPIs achieving their targets. The council continues to work with its contracted partners to address areas of concern, particularly on ensuring that progress is being made where backlogs have occurred due to the impact of the Covid-19 pandemic.

Officers Recommendations

The Committee is asked to note the Quarter 3 (Q3) 2022/23 performance for the contracted services delivered by Regional Enterprise (Capita) and Barnet Homes (The Barnet Group) that fall under the remit of this committee.

1. PURPOSE OF REPORT

Introduction

- 1.1 This report provides an overview of Quarter 3 (Q3) 2022/23 performance for the contracted services delivered by Regional Enterprise (Capita) and Barnet Homes (The Barnet Group) that fall under the remit of this committee (listed in alphabetical order):

Regional Enterprise (Re)

- Private Sector Housing (Enforcement)
- Private Sector Housing (Grants)
- Regeneration

Barnet Homes

- Homelessness
- Quality Housing
- Safe and Secure Homes

- 1.2 The report does not include budget information, which was provided separately to Policy and Resources Committee in February 2023.

Overview

- 1.3 Re services have performed well in Q3 2022/23 with all quarterly measured KPIs for Housing Enforcement, Housing Grants and Regeneration achieving target. Two annual measures in Private Sector Housing (Enforcement) were off track for meeting the end of year target and continued to be affected by the backlogs created by Covid-19 restrictions. One annual measure in Regeneration was also off track, as a result of the economic downturn, interest rate rises, construction supply chain delays, and reports received from developers regarding financial viability.
- 1.4 Barnet Homes performance was mixed, with three of the nine KPIs not achieving target in Q3 2022/23. This was attributed to two major factors: firstly, procuring affordable private rented properties has become increasingly challenging within London, with demand far outstripping supply; and secondly, the expected increase in homelessness demand from families in the private rented sector (due to Covid-19 and the ongoing cost of living crisis) has just started to materialise in Q3 2022/23.

Notes on tables

- 1.5 The targets listed for Re are both for the year 2022/23 and the current reporting period, Q3 2022/23. Several KPIs are reported annually but monitored on a quarterly

basis; for this reason, they are included in the performance tables but are not given a RAG rating until the end of the year.

- 1.6 The targets for Barnet Homes are cumulative unless otherwise stated and so both the annual targets and incremental targets for the current period have been included in the performance tables.
- 1.7 Performance is shown for the current reporting period, Q3 2022/23 and the same period last year, Q3 2021/22, along with the Direction of Travel (DoT).

2. REGIONAL ENTERPRISE

Private Sector Housing (Enforcement)

Indicator	Polarity	Unit	Target	Current Period Actual	Actual for Same Period Last Year	DoT on Last Year
Number of empty properties brought back into residential use	Bigger is Better	Number	125	18	1	Improved
Number of private tenanted properties with Category 1 hazards reduced (to Category 2 hazards)	Bigger is Better	Number	200	28	44	Worsened
Compliance with Environmental Health Service standards (Priority 1 incidents and service requests)	Bigger is Better	%	100	100	100	Same
Compliance with Environmental Health Service standards (Priority 2 incidents and service requests)	Bigger is Better	%	95	96.3	87.3	Improved
Compliance with Licensing Requirements for Houses in Multiple Occupation (HMOs) - Licenced HMOs meeting legal standards	Bigger is Better	%	72	72.7	65.0	Improved

- 2.1 There are five KPIs for Private Sector Housing (Enforcement). Three achieved the Q3 2022/23 target. Two are 'monitor only' for the quarter, one of which improved and the other worsened when compared to the same time last year.
- 2.2 Performance on empty properties and private tenanted properties with Category 1 hazards has been affected by vacancies / recruitment difficulties and the legacy of Covid-19.
- 2.3 There was an increase in damp and mould cases brought forward from tenants following the high-profile case of Awaab Ishak in Rochdale. The Department of Levelling Up, Housing and Communities has conducted a data collection exercise related to this, which was responded to in full in January 2023. Following meetings with Barnet Council, Re and Barnet Homes, an additional post has been agreed in Public Sector Housing for homeless applications to Barnet Homes to try and improve accommodation and decrease homelessness applications. This post will also audit Barnet Homes inspections of temporary accommodation.

Risks

- 2.4 There was one high-level (scoring 15+) joint risk related to Private Sector Housing (Enforcement) in Q3 2022/23, which is being managed in accordance with the council's risk management framework.

Title	Description	Score	Review Summary
Unsafe/unhealthy living accommodation in private rented sector	A backlog of HMO licensing casework built up during the pandemic and work on the Homes for Ukraine project could lead to identification of issues being slower and all proactive activity to search for unlicensed properties being delayed resulting in residents being exposed to unsafe/unhealthy living conditions.	16	Contractual arrangements are in place for additional resourcing for backlog and additional licensing workstreams. Recruitment continues to be a significant challenge in this sector. Confirmation of the accelerated return of service to LBB alongside a recruitment protocol between LBB and Capita would likely reduce the barriers to recruitment. Engagement between Barnet HR and Environmental Health Services has begun, to ensure that job descriptions are agreed and recruitment to vacancies proceeds ahead of the return of services. Although it is likely that outcomes envisaged in the SPIRs over the next three months may be limited by the extent of the staffing challenges.

Private Sector Housing (Grants)

Indicator	Polarity	Unit	Target	Current Period Actual	Actual for Same Period Last Year	DoT on Last Year
Reduction of unit costs of disabled adaptations	Smaller is Better	£	£12,500	£9,036.43	£9,297.36	Improved

2.5 There is one KPI for Private Sector Housing (Grants) which represents the average unit cost of disabled adaptations. This measure was reported as £9,036.43 for Q3 2022/23, achieving below the target of £12,500, and has improved on last year (£9297.36 in Q3 2021/22).

Regeneration

Indicator	Polarity	Unit	Target	Current Period Actual	Actual for Same Period Last Year	DoT on Last Year
Delivery of affordable housing completions	Bigger is Better	Number	370	315	212	Not comparable
Regeneration budgetary and financial controls (% of invoices sent within timescales)	Bigger is Better	%	85	100	100	Same
Delivery of Regeneration projects' deliverables and milestones to meet outcomes and achieve benefits	Bigger is Better	%	90	100	133.3	Worsened

2.6 There are three KPIs for Regeneration. Two achieved the Q3 2022/23 target and one was 'monitor only' for the quarter. *(The delivery of affordable housing completions is an annual KPI reported quarterly. As the programme changes year-on-year, comparative data is provided for information only).*

2.7 There were 88 affordable housing completions in Q3 2022/23, and 315 for the year to date. As a result of the economic downturn, interest rate rises, construction supply chain delays, and reports received from developers regarding financial viability, the annual target (of 525) may not be met. However, units that are onsite but not delivered to target in this financial year will be delivered in the next financial year.

2.8 Regeneration of budgetary and financial controls achieved 100%, with all invoices being raised within two months of the end of Q2 2022/23 (this measure is reported one quarter in arrears).

3. THE BARNET GROUP

3.1 The Annual Delivery Plan sets out the framework for the delivery of housing services provided by Barnet Homes, including for the following strategic priorities:

- Tackling and preventing homelessness and rough sleeping
- Ensuring decent quality housing that buyers and renters can afford, prioritising Barnet residents
- Safe and secure homes.

3.2 The Annual Delivery Plan for 2023/24 is being presented at this committee.

Homelessness (Tackling and preventing homelessness and rough sleeping)

Indicator ¹	Polarity	Unit	Annual Target	Year to Date Target	Year to Date Actual	Actual for Same Period Last Year	DoT on Last Year
Number of homelessness preventions	Bigger is Better	Number	1450	1080	796	952	Worsened
Number of households in Temporary Accommodation	Smaller is Better	Number	2400	2350	2111	2142	Improved
Households placed directly into the private sector by Barnet Homes	Bigger is Better	Number	615	457	254	437	Worsened
Rough sleeper count (every other month)	Smaller is Better	Number	N/a – snap shot	20	8	9	Improved

3.3 There are four KPIs for the Homelessness service. Two achieved the Q3 2022/23 target and two did not.

3.4 The number of homelessness preventions remained below target in Q3 2022/23 and this will continue in Q4 2022/23. The targets for 2022/23 were based on projections of significant increased demand compared to the previous year, and this began to materialise in Q3 2022/23. In addition, procuring affordable private rented properties became increasingly challenging within London, with demand far outstripping supply. Many landlords exited the private rented sector, and those landlords remaining were less receptive to previously successful negotiation and mediation strategies to sustain tenancies. With cost-of-living pressures expected to increase the service is projecting homelessness demand to accelerate significantly in Q4 2022/23 and into 2023/24.

3.5 The number of households in temporary accommodation increased in Q3 2022/23 (2111), from 2076 in Q2 2022/23, and remained below the year-to-date target of 2350. This is due to a combination of previously reported factors; stable demand from the private rental sector (PRS), effective prevention, support through BOOST (employment, benefit advice, skills and wellbeing project run by The Barnet Group) and effective affordable housing supply. However, with a cost-of-living crisis being faced by many households and the lack of affordable housing supply to facilitate placements into the PRS, it is expected that there will be significantly increased demand for the remainder of the year.

¹ These indicators are reported on a cumulative basis – i.e. year to date

- 3.6 63 households were placed directly into the private rented sector by Barnet Homes in Q3 2022/23, bringing the year-to-date total to 254 against the target of 457. This continued to represent a challenging year for Barnet Homes with mainly external factors contributing. Procuring private rented properties has become increasingly challenging with demand across the market far outstripping supply, and landlords therefore have a greater pool of potential tenants to choose from. Landlord incentive rates were reviewed to ensure they remained competitive with other London Local Authorities, but this remains a dynamic area with boroughs increasing rates consistently.
- 3.7 Rough sleeper numbers have decreased to 8 from 14 in Q2 2022/23 and remained below the year-to-date target of 20. Numbers of rough sleepers across London remained high with approximately 700 accommodated during the last Severe Weather Emergency Protocol initiated in December 2022.

Risks

- 3.8 There was one high-level (scoring 15+) joint risk related to Homelessness in Q3 2022/23, which is being managed in accordance with the council's risk management framework.

Title	Description	Score	Review Summary
Increased demand for temporary accommodation	Failure to prevent households becoming homeless and a lack of suitable affordable accommodation options could lead to detrimental impacts to affected residents wellbeing, and an increased demand for expensive temporary accommodation resulting in increased budget pressures in the General Fund.	16	Whilst overall numbers in temporary accommodation remained relatively stable at historically low levels in Q3 2022/23, the significant reductions in available supply of Private Rental Sector (PRS) properties available to rent coupled with PRS rental inflation is creating challenges in finding suitable affordable accommodation for those who need it and is preventing prevention related KPIs from being met. Increased demand for homelessness services linked to the cost of living/inflationary pressures on household finances, and slowing of acquisition activities due to market challenges and interest rate increases continue to keep the risk rating high.

Quality Housing (Ensuring decent quality housing that buyers and renters can afford, prioritising Barnet residents)

Indicator ²	Polarity	Unit	Annual Target	Year to Date Target	Year to Date Actual	Actual for Same Period Last Year	DoT on Last Year
Number of homes purchased for use as affordable accommodation	Bigger is Better	Number	125	85	87	77	Improved
Supply a range of housing available for care leavers, in particular for those ready to move into independent living	Bigger is Better	Number	62	45	33	58	Worsened
Affordable housing delivered on council owned land (TBG schemes)	Bigger is Better	Number	45	45	56	56	Same

3.9 There are three KPIs for Quality Housing. Two achieved the Q3 2022/23 target and one did not.

3.10 Q3 2022/23 saw the completion of a further 26 properties for use as affordable accommodation, through a combination of 11 Housing Rent Account acquisitions and 15 purchases by Opendoor Homes. This, added to the 61 completions from previous quarters brought the total to 87 units, exceeding the year-to-date target of 85 units.

3.11 12 care leavers were housed in Q3 2022/23 bringing the year-to-date total to 33, which is below the target of 45. This has been impacted by the reduced supply of one-bedroom properties this year (85, compared to 121 in the same period last year). Of the 85, only 35 have been suitable to offer care leavers (two of which were under offer at the end of Q3 2022/23 but not occupied, and therefore were not included in the result). The remaining 50 properties have been either adapted with level access showers or offered to highest need housing applicants in Band 1. A project group was set up to explore options for increasing the supply to care leavers, and this is expected to yield results in Q4 2022/23. With wider demand pressures and limited supply this indicator may remain below target in Q4 2022/23.

3.12 The completion of Summers Lane and Hermitage Lane schemes in Q3 2022/23 added a further 29 new homes for affordable rent and six shared ownership completions, bringing the total of affordable housing delivered on council owned land to 56. There are no further completions due this financial year and the target has been met.

3.13 Overall, the acquisitions and development programmes are subject to increasingly adverse market conditions, particularly build cost inflation and increasing interest rates. This is particularly relevant to the Opendoor Homes acquisitions programme which is at risk of needing to pause as a result of higher interest rates on future loan drawdowns.

² These indicators are reported on a cumulative basis – i.e. year-to-date

Safe and Secure homes

Indicator ³	Polarity	Unit	Annual Target	Current Period Target	Current Period Actual	Actual for Same Period Last Year	DoT on Last Year
Scheduled fire risk assessments completed (council housing) on time	Bigger is Better	%	100	100	100	100	Same
Priority 0 and 1 fire safety actions completed on time	Bigger is Better	%	92.5	92.5	100	96	Improved

3.14 There are two KPIs for Safe and Secure Homes. Both achieved the Q3 2022/23 target.

3.15 Performance in relation to the completion of fire risk assessments at council housing blocks within the specified target timescale has remained strong in Q3 2022/23, in line with historical performance. Similarly, the completion of high priority actions resulting from fire risk assessments within target timescales has continued to remain above the 92.5% target. Close monitoring of risk assessments and resultant actions have continued to ensure lead-in timescales for ordering relevant building components has been actioned as early as possible.

3.16 More generally, during Q3 2022/23 good progress has been made with the delivery of the fire safety investment programme to high priority homes. The recently approved programme to low and medium rise blocks will commence in Q4 2022/23.

Risks

3.17 There was one high-level (scoring 15+) joint risk related to Safe and Secure Homes in Q2, which is being managed in accordance with the council's risk management framework.

Title	Description	Score	Review Summary
Health, safety and compliance issues	Barnet Homes' failure to achieve regulatory requirements for the housing stock could lead to health, safety and compliance issues resulting in harm to residents, staff and public, legal challenges and financial costs.	15	Good progress on delivery of the £52m fire safety programme continued during Q3 2022/23 and is on track for completion by the end of the year. Risk mitigation works at Large Panel System (LPS) blocks Stanhope and Holmsdale in N11 are complete but awaiting electrical substation works to be finalised before final project completion. Lead and ward member briefings in respect of redevelopment proposals for LPS blocks were completed in Q3, with recommendations for resident consultation presented to the Housing and Growth Committee in November 2022. Report on mould and damp submitted to Housing and Growth Committee in January 2023, and action plan for resolving issues agreed.

4. REASONS FOR RECOMMENDATIONS

³ These indicators are reported on a quarterly basis

4.1 This report provides an overview of Quarter 3 (Q3) 2022/23 performance for the contracted services delivered by Regional Enterprise (Capita) and Barnet Homes (The Barnet Group) that fall under the remit of this committee.

5. ALTERNATIVE OPTIONS CONSIDERED AND NOT RECOMMENDED

5.1 None

6. POST DECISION IMPLEMENTATION

6.1 None.

7. IMPLICATIONS OF DECISION

7.1 None.

8. Corporate Priorities and Performance

8.1 Performance monitoring is essential to ensure robust management of the council's strategic contracts and supports commercial discussion and decision-making. It also ensures resources are adequately and appropriately directed to support delivery and achievement of corporate priorities.

8.2 Relevant council strategies and policies include the following:

- Re Contract
- Barnet Homes Management Agreement and Annual Delivery Plan

9. Resources (Finance and Value for Money, Procurement, Staffing, IT, Property, Sustainability)

9.1 The report does not include budget information, which is provided separately to Policy and Resources Committee.

10. Legal and Constitutional References

10.1 Section 151 of the Local Government Act 1972 states that: "without prejudice to section 111, every local authority shall make arrangements for the proper administration of their financial affairs and shall secure that one of their officers has responsibility for the administration of those affairs". Section 111 of the Local Government Act 1972 relates to the subsidiary powers of local authorities to take actions which are calculated to facilitate, or are conducive or incidental to, the discharge of any of their functions. Robust contract management assists with ensuring the proper administration of the council's financial affairs.

10.2 The council's Constitution, Article 7.5 Committees, Forums, Working Groups and Partnerships, sets out the functions of the Housing and Growth Committee.

(1) Responsibility for:

- Housing (including housing strategy; homelessness; social housing and housing grants; private sector housing and leasing; housing licensing and enforcement; HRA Revenue Account and Capital Programme);

- Regeneration Strategy and Overseeing Major Regeneration Schemes
 - Asset Management
 - Development of Council Land
 - Fire Safety
 - Economic Development including Employment Strategy; Business Support and Engagement; and Town Centres
- (2) To submit to the Policy and Resources Committee proposals relating to the Committee's budget (including fees and charges) for the following year in accordance with the budget timetable.
- (3) To make recommendations to Policy and Resources Committee on issues relating to the budget for the Committee, including virements or underspends and overspends on the budget. No decisions which result in amendments to the agreed budget may be made by the Committee unless and until the amendment has been agreed by Policy and Resources Committee.
- (4) To receive reports on relevant revenue and capital expenditure, contracts, performance information and risk on the services under the remit of the Committee.

11. Insight

- 11.1 The report identifies performance information in relation to the council's strategic contracts for Quarter 3 (Q3) 2022/23. The report covers delivery from Regional Enterprise (Capita) and Barnet Homes (The Barnet Group).

12. Social Value

- 12.1 The Public Services (Social Value) Act 2012 requires people who commission public services to think about how they can also secure wider social, economic and environmental benefits. Before commencing a procurement process, commissioners should think about whether the services they are going to buy, or the way they are going to buy them, could secure these benefits for their area or stakeholders. As set out in the council's Contract Procedure Rules, commissioners should use the Procurement Toolkit, which includes Social Value guidance. The Contract Management Toolkit should also be used to help ensure that contracts deliver the expected services to the expected quality for the agreed cost. Requirements for a contractor to deliver activities in line with Social Value will be monitored through the contract management process.

13. Risk Management

- 13.1 The council has an established approach to risk management, which is set out in the Risk Management Framework. Risks are reviewed quarterly (as a minimum) and any high-level (scoring 15+) joint risks with strategic contractors are included in this report, as well as being reported to Policy and Resources Committee as part of a wider corporate risk report.

14. Equalities and Diversity

- 14.1 The Equality Act 2010 requires organisations exercising public functions to demonstrate that due regard has been paid to equalities in:

- Elimination of unlawful discrimination, harassment and victimisation and other conduct prohibited by the Equality Act 2010.
- Advancement of equality of opportunity between people from different groups.
- Fostering of good relations between people from different groups.

14.2 The Equality Act 2010 identifies the following protected characteristics: age; disability; gender reassignment; marriage and civil partnership, pregnancy and maternity; race; religion or belief; sex and sexual orientation; marriage and civil partnership.

14.3 In order to assist in meeting the duty the council will:

- Try to understand the diversity of our customers to improve our services.
- Consider the impact of our decisions on different groups to ensure they are fair.
- Mainstream equalities into business and financial planning and integrating equalities into everything we do.
- Learn more about Barnet's diverse communities by engaging with them.

This is also what we expect of our partners.

14.4 This is set out in the council's Equalities Policy, which can be found on the website at:

<https://www.barnet.gov.uk/your-council/policies-plans-and-performance/equality-and-diversity>

15. Corporate Parenting

15.1 In line with Children and Social Work Act 2017, the council has a duty to consider Corporate Parenting Principles in decision-making across the council. There are no implications for Corporate Parenting in relation to this report.

16. Consultation and Engagement

16.1 Obtaining customer feedback is part of the contract management process to inform service delivery, service development and service improvement.

17. Environmental Impact

17.1 There are no direct environmental implications from noting the recommendations. Implementing the recommendations in the report will lead to a positive impact on the Council's carbon and ecology impact, or at least it is neutral.

18. BACKGROUND PAPERS

18.1 As referenced in 1.2, budget information was presented at Policy & Resources Committee on 22 February 2023:

<https://barnet.moderngov.co.uk/documents/g11162/Public%20reports%20pack%2022nd-Feb-2023%2019.00%20Policy%20and%20Resources%20Committee.pdf?T=10>

18.2 As referenced in 3.1, the Barnet Homes 2022-23 Delivery Plan can be found at:

https://barnet.moderngov.co.uk/documents/s72881/20220613HAG_Barnet%20Homes%202022-23%20Delivery%20Plan.pdf

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