

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.

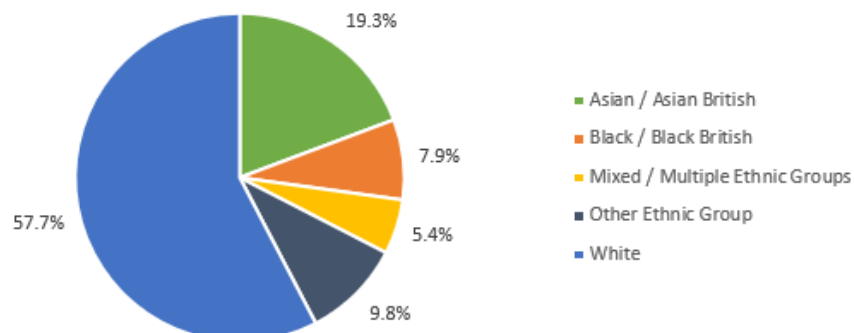
Population Breakdown	Barnet	London	England
Total Population 2021	389,340	8,799,800	56,489,800
Total Population 2022	406,061	9,145,214	57,282,105
Total Population 2023	408,821	9,188,317	57,557,521
Total Population 2024	411,198	9,224,542	57,816,890
Total Population 2025	413,257	9,255,002	58,060,235

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.

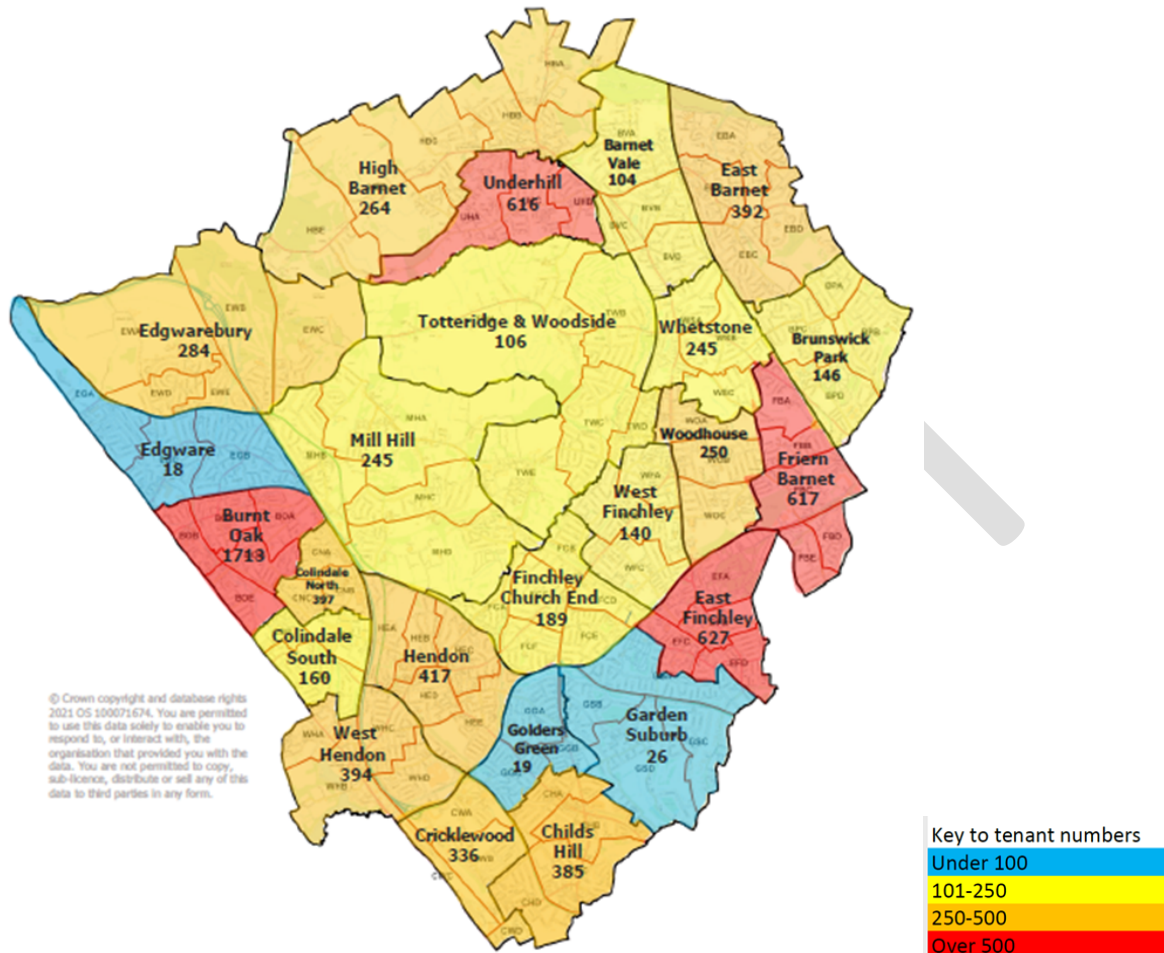
- 8.2 Tenants who claim benefits in under-occupied units are subject to the Spare Room Subsidy (also known as the bedroom tax), which can have a negative impact, making affordability an issue and having a detrimental effect on health and wellbeing. Consequently, moving to a smaller property may be necessary 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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