



## RUSHMOOR BOROUGH COUNCIL

# COMMUNITY POLICY AND REVIEW PANEL

*at the Council Offices, Farnborough on  
Thursday, 14th September, 2017 at 7.00 pm*

**To:**

Cllr M.D. Smith (Chairman)  
Cllr S.J. Masterson (Vice-Chairman)

Cllr M.S. Choudhary  
Cllr R. Cooper  
Cllr J.H. Marsh  
Cllr Marina Munro  
Cllr J.J. Preece  
Cllr M.J. Roberts  
Cllr P.F. Rust

Enquiries regarding this agenda should be referred to the Panel Administrator:  
Marion Young, Democratic and Customer Services, Email:  
marion.young@rushmoor.gov.uk Tel: 01252 398827.

# **A G E N D A**

1. **MINUTES – (Pages 1 - 4)**

To confirm the Minutes of the Meeting held on 15th June, 2017 (copy attached).

2. **HOUSING AND HOMELESSNESS STRATEGY UPDATE – (Pages 5 - 154)**

To note Report No. EHH 1711 which provides the Panel with an overview of the progress made in the delivery of the Housing and Homelessness Strategy over the six-month period from March to September 2017.

3. **HAMPSHIRE COUNTY COUNCIL - CONSULTATION ON OVERNIGHT RESPITE FOR CHILDREN WITH DISABILITIES – (Pages 155 - 186)**

To note Hampshire County Council's Consultation (copy attached) on proposals to close overnight respite services at Sunbeams in Aldershot, and to consider any response the Panel may wish to make by the deadline of 2nd October, 2017.

4. **WORK PROGRAMME – (Pages 187 - 194)**

To note the Community Policy and Review Panel's updated work programme for 2017/18 (copy attached).

## **MEETING REPRESENTATION**

Members of the public may ask to speak at the meeting on any of the items on the agenda by writing to the Panel Administrator at the Council Offices, Farnborough by 5.00 pm three working days prior to the meeting.

Applications for items to be considered for the next meeting must be received in writing to the Panel Administrator fifteen working days prior to the meeting.

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# COMMUNITY POLICY AND REVIEW PANEL

Meeting held on Thursday, 15th June, 2017 at the Council Offices, Farnborough at 7.00 pm.

## Voting Members

Cllr M.D. Smith (Chairman)  
Cllr S.J. Masterson (Vice-Chairman)

Cllr M.S. Choudhary  
Cllr R. Cooper  
Cllr J.H. Marsh  
Cllr Marina Munro  
Cllr J.J. Preece  
Cllr M.J. Roberts  
Cllr P.F. Rust

### 1. APPOINTMENT OF CHAIRMAN

**RESOLVED:** That Cllr M.D. Smith be appointed Chairman for the 2017/18 Municipal Year.

### 2. APPOINTMENT OF VICE-CHAIRMAN

**RESOLVED:** That Cllr S.J. Masterson be appointed Vice-Chairman for the 2017/18 Municipal Year.

### 3. MINUTES

The Minutes of the Meeting held on 6th April, 2017 were approved and signed by the Chairman.

### 4. HOUSING SERVICES PRESENTATION

#### (1) Housing Strategy Overview

The Panel welcomed Ms Qamer Yasin, Head of Environmental Health and Housing, who introduced the presentation on Housing Service and explained that the other elements to the presentation were all linked to the Council's overall Housing and Homelessness Strategy.

#### (2) Housing and Homelessness Strategy

The Panel welcomed Ms Sally Ravenhill, Strategy and Enabling Manager, who provided an interim update on the Housing and Homelessness Strategy which had been adopted by the Council in February 2017, subject to the Panel considering changes in two areas:

- Housing and Income Data
- Definition of Affordable Housing

The Panel considered and provided comment on the Housing and Income Data supplied, noting that recently published data would form part of the next update. It was noted that using official figures provided by the Department for Communities and Local Government (DCLG), Valuation Office Agency (VOA) and the Office for National Statistics (ONS) ensured consistency and allowed comparisons over time, whilst local figures helped to provide context.

The Panel asked that the presentation be circulated to them after the meeting. Comments made at the meeting would be taken on board for consideration at the next Panel meeting in September 2017, when the Housing and Homelessness Strategy would be discussed in more detail as part of one of two scheduled progress and update sessions on the Strategy to come to the Panel during the Municipal Year.

### **(3) Registered Providers' Review Report**

The Panel welcomed Ms Zoe Paine, Strategy and Enabling Manager, who gave a presentation on the Review of Registered Providers (RPs) in 2016/17, to complement Report No. EHH1714 which was circulated as part of the agenda papers. The presentation and Report covered:

- Purpose of the Annual Reviews
- Process undertaken
- Key issues identified during neighbourhood visits

The Panel provided feedback on the issues identified in respect of the four Housing Providers reviewed during 2016/17: Society of St James (SSJ); Sanctuary Housing; Thames Valley Housing; and Ministry of Defence.

The Panel was advised that, where the Council was aware of complaints against an RP, it could assist by guiding residents on what avenues were open to them to resolve these complaints. The Council could also raise issues directly with the RP, with serious, unresolved complaints being referred to the Homes and Communities Agency, which regulated RPs.

### **(4) Private Sector Housing Survey Report**

The Panel welcomed Ms Hilary Smith, Private Sector Housing Manager, who gave a presentation on the Private Sector Housing Survey, to complement Report No. EHH1715 which was circulated as part of the agenda papers.

The Panel noted the background to and aim of the survey, as well as the findings and remedial actions taken to improve problem areas. The Panel was pleased to note that the original aims of the survey had been met, and information gathered would help to improve housing standards and safety for residents. It also noted that, whilst follow-up work was scheduled, it was not necessary for further survey work to be carried out at this time.

The Panel was advised that further resources might be required in order to develop policies and processes to implement the Housing and Planning Act 2016 once guidance was received on its implementation.

#### **(5) North Lane Lodge**

Ms Qamer Yasin then gave a presentation on North Lane Lodge. The Panel noted and provided feedback on the background to and implementation of this supported accommodation project for vulnerable homeless people.

The Panel was pleased to note the success of this pilot project in terms of engaging with the nine previously identified rough sleepers, with the aim of using the lessons learned to help to develop a future resource to meet the complex needs of the street homeless people in the Borough.

The Chairman thanked the Officers for a comprehensive and professional presentation.

### **5. APPOINTMENTS**

The Panel agreed the following appointments for the 2017/18 Municipal Year:

#### **(1) Mid-Cycle Meetings –**

**RESOLVED:** It was agreed that Cllr P.F. Rust would attend the mid-cycle meetings in 2017/18 as a representative of the Labour Group, along with the Chairman (Cllr M.D. Smith) and Vice-Chairman (Cllr S.J. Masterson).

#### **(2) Health Issues Standing Group –**

**RESOLVED:** That the Chairman (Cllr M.D. Smith) and Vice-Chairman (Cllr S.J. Masterson) and Cllr P.F. Rust be appointed to the Health Issues Standing Group for the 2017/18 Municipal Year.

#### **(3) Housing Strategy Standing Group –**

**RESOLVED:** That the Chairman (Cllr M.D. Smith) and Vice-Chairman (Cllr S.J. Masterson) and Cllrs R. Cooper, A.H. Crawford and M.J. Roberts be appointed to the Housing Strategy Standing Group for the 2017/18 Municipal Year.

#### **(4) Welfare Reform Task and Finish Group –**

**RESOLVED:** That the Chairman (Cllr M.D. Smith) and Cllrs Jennifer Evans, A. Jackman and M.J. Roberts be appointed to the Welfare Reform Task and Finish Group for the 2017/18 Municipal Year, with attendance by the Cabinet Member for Concessions and Community Support (Cllr G.B. Lyon) as required by the Group.

(5) **Registered Providers of Social Housing Review Group –**

**RESOLVED:** That the Chairman (Cllr M.D. Smith) and Vice-Chairman (Cllr S.J. Masterson) and Cllrs R. Cooper, Jennifer Evans and M.J. Roberts be appointed to the Registered Providers of Social Housing Review Group for the 2017/18 Municipal Year.

(6) **Vivid/Rushmoor Borough Council Joint Business Meeting –**

**RESOLVED:** That the Chairman (Cllr M.D. Smith), Vice-Chairman (Cllr S.J. Masterson), and Cllr M.J. Roberts and the Cabinet Minister for Health and Housing (Cllr Barbara Hurst) be appointed to the Vivid/Rushmoor Borough Council Joint Business Meeting for the 2017/18 Municipal Year.

6. **WORK PROGRAMME**

The Panel noted that the work programme would be reviewed at the next mid-cycle meeting of the Municipal Year.

The meeting closed at 9.00 pm.

CLLR M.D. SMITH (CHAIRMAN)

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**COMMUNITY POLICY & REVIEW PANEL**

**14<sup>th</sup> September 2017**

**Councillor Barbara Hurst**  
Portfolio Holder for Health and Housing

**Qamer Yasin**  
Head of Environmental Health & Housing Services

**REPORT NO: EHH 1711**

**HOUSING AND HOMELESSNESS STRATEGY UPDATE  
SEPTEMBER 2017**

**1. SUMMARY**

- 1.1. This report provides the Panel with an overview of the progress made in the delivery of the Housing and Homelessness Strategy over the six-month period from March 2017 to September 2017. The Strategy is designed to be a rolling document to enable it to be adapted to reflect changes in national housing policies.
- 1.2. Members are asked to note that the council has, over the given period, made good progress in delivering its housing objectives and targets and, in view of the progress to date, together with changing policy contexts, has updated the strategy and delivery plan.

**2. BACKGROUND & INTRODUCTION**

- 2.1. The Housing and Homelessness Strategy was approved by the council in February this year. For reference, a copy of the Housing and Homelessness Strategy document is attached at **appendix 1**, whilst the associated Delivery Plan is given at **appendix 2**.
- 2.2. With reference to policy and local context, the strategy sets out the council's housing objectives for Rushmoor; whilst the delivery plan sets out the steps to be taken to deliver and monitor the council's objectives. Collectively, these are established under the following strategic housing themes;
  - (a) The right homes in the right places;
  - (b) Making the best use of housing stock;
  - (c) Helping people solve their housing problems and provide a suitable home when needed; and
  - (d) Enabling people to live in good quality accommodation that is right for their needs.
- 2.3. Generally, delivery of the strategic themes, objectives and plan is undertaken by the council's housing officers in association with partners. Together, progress is subject to review at six weekly housing strategy meetings.

Monitoring is also undertaken by the Portfolio Holder for Housing and Health, who receives a monthly briefing.

- 2.4. However, as part of the approval of the strategy, a commitment was also given to report updates and delivery progress twice yearly to the Community Policy and Review Panel. This report is submitted in part fulfilment of this commitment and provides an overview of key achievements, opportunities and challenges arising for each strategic theme over the first six month period since adoption of the current strategy.

**NB:** In providing a summary update on these issues, it is not the intention of this report to cover any specific housing issues or projects in detail. However, the Housing Service can provide supplementary reports on any specific issues as required. The next update is scheduled to come to Community Policy and Review Panel in March 2018.

### **3. ACHIEVEMENTS, OPPORTUNITIES AND CHALLENGES**

#### **3.1. Theme 1: The right homes in the right places**

##### **What has changed? Achievements and opportunities**

- (a) An increasing number of affordable homes being completed. Rushmoor's Strategic Housing Market Assessment (SHMA), published in 2016, set an affordable housing delivery target of 163 homes a year. The Affordable Housing Delivery programme for 2017/18 indicates that the council is on target to deliver 229 homes, compared with 106 units in 2016/17 and 54 units in 2015/16 with 313 units provisionally programmed for 2018/19 onwards. (Action 2.4)
- (b) Housing and planning officers are working closely to secure policy compliant schemes supported by the publication of the Affordable Housing Development Guidance note in August 2017. (Action 4.1) **Appendix 3.**
- (c) Good sized housing sites are being brought forward through the planning process, for example Queensgate, Farnborough providing a further 80 new homes. (Action 2.6)

##### **What has changed? - Challenges**

- (a) Removal of prioritisation for those buying shared ownership (other than those from a military background), except on schemes with a section 106 agreement already in place. (Action 1.3)
- (b) Universal Credit, which affects being able to deliver homes for under 35 year olds. Mainstream, preferred partner Registered Provider's (RP's) are pulling out of this area and officers are looking at who will deliver this in the future. Changes to the supported housing funding model, also makes this form of housing less attractive for RP's to deliver. (Action 4.2 and 4.7)



- (c) Viability challenges by developers seeking to reduce or eliminate affordable housing. Housing and Planning are working to secure policy compliant schemes wherever we can.

### **3.2. Theme 2: Making the best use of housing stock**

#### **What has changed? Achievements and opportunities**

- (a) Local housing income research has been completed and was presented to the Community and Policy Review Panel in June 2017, details are included in appendix 4 of the Housing and Homelessness Strategy. (Action1.1)
- (b) RP's have agreed in principle to share household profiling data which will help improve understanding of the make-up of households living in the affordable housing stock. (Action1.2).
- (c) Lettings plan targets have been achieved on the Maida phase of Wellesley ensuring maximum movement/occupancy for each unit available. (Action 3.2)
- (d) In August, a new Empty Homes Policy was published. Officers across the council are providing additional support in the form of making inspections and providing information to empty homes lead officer. The policy is attached as **appendix 4** and will form part of the strategy when it is next updated in March 2018. (Action 4.1)
- (e) Dialogue has started with Hampshire County Council on the Open House Scheme, to let the properties of those going into residential care to homeless households. (Action 4.5)

#### **What has changed? Challenges**

- (a) Mismatch between household sizes and accommodation available; under occupation in the owner-occupied sector and overcrowding in the private rented sector. A new project will be scoped at the end of the financial year to provide advice and support to people wanting to downsize. (Action 5.3)

### **3.3. Theme 3: Helping people solve their housing problems and provide a suitable home when needed**

#### **What has changed? Achievements and opportunities**

- (a) Trailblazer project roll-out in Hart and Rushmoor to prepare for the Homelessness Reduction Act 2017 and develop a person-centred approach to homelessness prevention. This project includes the recruitment of new staff, the Trailblazer manager and three health and well-being officers all funded by DCLG and detailed on pages 31-32 of the Rushmoor Housing and Homelessness Strategy. (Action 1.2)
- (b) Scheduled officer and member review meetings should improve understanding of the demand from armed service personnel. (Action1.3)

- (c) The private tenancy officer is working with landlords to secure private rent properties, including identifying vacated private rent properties from households being housed through the allocation pool, detailed on page 31 of the Rushmoor Housing and Homelessness Strategy. (Action 2.1)
- (d) North Lane Lodge has been open for seven months and has achieved positive outcomes for street homelessness in Aldershot town centre, detailed on page 32 of the Rushmoor Housing and Homelessness Strategy. (Action 3.3)

#### **What has changed? Challenges**

- (a) The introduction of the Homelessness Reduction Act 2017, notably around the lengthening of the trigger time for the statutory homelessness duty from 28 to 56 days and a widening of the duty to encompass those who are not in priority need and those who are homeless because of their own actions (intentionally). This widening of the statutory duty is likely to increase the numbers of people approaching the council for advice, assistance and temporary accommodation. (Action1.1)
- (b) Increasing vulnerability of clients; including their ability to be able to access employment to improve their own circumstances. (Action1:1)
- (c) The Vine Day Centre now only accepts clients proactively engaging. (Action 3.2)

### **3.4. Theme 4: Enabling people to live in good quality accommodation that is right for their needs**

#### **What has changed? Achievements and opportunities**

- (a) In April 2017 the Home Improvement Agency contract ended and the caseworker was TUPE'D across to the council as a grant support officer supporting vulnerable residents through the Disabled Facility Grant process. (Action 2.1)
- (b) A Financial Assistance Policy is being drafted to enable the council to extend the scope of works that can be carried out with grant assistance.(Action 1.1)
- (c) The Private Sector Housing Survey was completed in March 2017 and presented to Community and Policy Review Panel in June 2017. (Action 3.1)

#### **What has changed? Challenges**

- (a) Time spent dealing with fire safety issues following the Grenfell Fire.
- (b) Evidence from the Private Sector Housing Survey suggests Welfare Reform is pushing people into cheaper, poor quality accommodation. (Action 3.1)
- (c) There is a general lack of understanding about tenants' rights and responsibilities.

- (d) The Housing and Planning Act 2016. Central government guidance on the implementation of both civil penalties and rent repayment orders and a policy will need to be published on this in due course. (Action 3.5)
- (e) Awaiting guidance on the extended Mandatory Licencing Scheme for HMOs. (Action 4.2)

#### **4. FINANCIAL IMPLICATIONS**

- 4.1. There are no direct financial implications associated with this report.

#### **5. CONCLUSION**

- 5.1. Over the past six months, the housing team has made good progress toward the delivery of its housing objectives and targets. There are however a number of notable challenges to the delivery of the original strategy. These arise mainly on account of changes to Government policy and will continue to necessitate some review. As the Strategy is a rolling strategy, the main strategy and delivery plan have consequently been amended to reflect progress and the changing policy context as outlined in this report.

#### **6. RECOMMENDATIONS**

- 6.1. Members are asked to note the content of this report.

**Qamer Yasin**  
**Head of Environmental Health & Housing Services**

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**Background papers:** Housing and Homelessness Strategy 2017-22; Housing and Homelessness Delivery Plan; Affordable Housing Development Programme

**Report Author:**  
Zoë Paine

Draft 1 – 26/07/17 ZP

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## **Appendix 1**

### **Foreword**

Welcome to Rushmoor Borough Council's Housing and Homelessness Strategy 2017.

As the Cabinet Member for Health and Housing, I understand the importance that housing plays in the wellbeing of our residents. Ensuring there is a mix of housing types, from supported housing and starter homes through to larger family and executive homes, is important for individuals and families. It also builds strong neighbourhoods and inclusive communities, and supports the economic prosperity of the borough.

The national policy environment has changed since 2011 when we published the 2011-2017 strategy. There have been some big challenges around the introduction of the affordable rent model in 2014, around reduced grant funding for new homes and support services and the introduction of Universal Credit.

We have seen house prices and rents rise, leaving more households needing help to access all forms of housing and, sadly, increasing numbers of homeless people.

Despite these challenges, the council is meeting its housing responsibilities with the support of several committed partners. I believe this strategy gives us the opportunity to see how we might build on our recent achievements and do things differently to achieve better housing choices and outcomes for our residents.

**Councillor Barbara Hurst**

**Rushmoor Borough Council Cabinet Member for Health and Housing**

# The Rushmoor Housing & Homelessness Strategy 2017-2022

## Executive summary

Housing is more than bricks and mortar, it is fundamental to both our quality of life and our ability to engage in a thriving community and local economy.

Our purpose and priorities as set out in our corporate plan include.

***Rushmoor Borough Council, working with others to improve the quality of people's lives.***

Supporting Values:

People have an equal right to live healthy lives, in safe, clean and sustainable places. We want to address the cause of inequality and help create opportunities for local people to fulfil their aspirations targeting our resources to where they are most needed.

The strategy sets out our approach to housing across all tenures and meets our duty to have a homelessness strategy and tenancy strategy. Comprehensive housing needs data from our Strategic Housing Market Assessment (SHMA) and homelessness review provide the data and evidence to support our work.

Over the next five years we will continue to strive to meet housing needs and our aspirations for Rushmoor by focusing on four strategic themes.

- The right homes in the right places
- Making the best use of the housing stock
- Helping people solve their own housing problems and provide a suitable home when needed
- Enabling people to live in good quality accommodation that is suitable for their needs

Each theme has a vision, which is the housing reality that we seek, objectives, measures and action points set out how we will work to achieve this, the detail of this is contained in the delivery plan.

<b>Theme</b>	The right homes in the right place	Making the best use of the housing stock	Helping people solve their own housing problems and provide a suitable home when needed	Enabling people to live in good quality accommodation that is suitable for their needs
<b>Vision for theme</b>	Having well designed and appropriately located homes in sufficient numbers to meet the needs of our residents and support the economic future of the borough.	Capacity within existing housing assets is maximised across all tenures and that work in tackling under occupation and empty properties is prioritised.	That all who need it have access to housing advice and assistance that will help them resolve their housing problems and that homelessness is reduced significantly. Suitable temporary accommodation is available when needed and B&B is used as an exception. Vulnerable people are able to receive support that helps them sustain their housing	The housing stock is in good condition, not overcrowded and meets housing standards, and that people with disabilities receive the right support, advice and assistance to allow them to live independently in their own home.

As a non- stock holding authority, we deliver homes and housing services with the support of a range of partners. This strategy provides a framework for everyone involved in Rushmoor’s housing; housing providers, charities, private developers, investors, regulators, private landlords neighbouring local authorities and of course our residents and local councillors.

We will update the strategy every six months, reporting progress to councillors and publishing an updated document on our website.

[www.rushmoor.gov.uk](http://www.rushmoor.gov.uk)

## Introduction

The council's previous housing and homelessness strategy covered 2011 to 2016 and was successful in delivering our objectives in a time of change in policy direction and challenging financial conditions. At this point, we are able to evaluate the full impact of the 2011-16 strategy and a summary of our achievements is contained in Appendix 1.

The aim of the strategy is "***to make sure Rushmoor's residents have access to good quality homes, which are affordable and appropriate to their needs,***" As we do not own not own any housing stock, we work with housing association partners as well as private and charitable organisations to deliver a range of homes in the borough. This strategy provides a framework for the delivery of different types of housing and housing-related services.

It is backed up by data on housing need published in our Strategic Housing Market Assesement (SHMA) HM A 2014, as well as information gathered through consultation with residents and partner organisations. Our plan for delivering new homes locally; providing housing advice; tackling homelessness and poor housing conditions and making the best use of existing social and privately-rented housing stock is based around four themes:

- Getting the right homes in the right places
- Making the best use of the housing stock
- Helping people solve their own housing problems providing a suitable home when needed
- Enabling people to live in good quality accommodation

Background information and a delivery plan for each theme is included for the next five years to meet the theme objectives.

## Policy and Context

### National policy

Nationally, there is a recognised need for housing that is not matched by the supply of new homes. This is reflected in the increased profile of government policies, Private Members' Bills and white papers addressing the housing crisis.

Housing affordability remains a challenge, particularly for first-time buyers. Following the 2008/9 financial crash, mortgage criteria are now so restrictive that those who previously could secure a mortgage can no longer do so, even with historically low interest rates.

The number of people buying with a mortgage has declined for the first time in decades and there has been a corresponding rise in the number of people in privately-rented homes.



Recent government policy has focused on:

### **Increasing home ownership**

- Support for shared ownership – part rent, part buy. A long-standing affordable home ownership product offered by housing associations
- Starter homes initiative – a new route to home ownership aimed at first-time buyers
- Right to Buy for housing association tenants – an extension to the Right to Buy that exists for council tenants
- Custom build – aimed at people who wish to build their own home

### **Making good use of existing stock**

- Fixed-term tenancies – tenancies of two years or more that are reviewed on renewal to make sure that they offer the most suitable housing option for the tenant
- Pay to stay – proposals to make sure that higher earning tenants pay a higher rent, based on a sliding scale

### **Initiatives for dealing with homelessness**

- Discharge of homelessness duty into the private rented sector
- Homelessness prevention fund

### **Dealing with non-compliant landlords**

- The Government is proposing to extend mandatory licensing to cover all relevant Houses in Multiple Occupation HMOs, regardless of the number of storeys. They are also proposing a national minimum bedroom size as part of a drive to prevent landlords creating homes with very small rooms
- Under the Housing and Planning Act 2016, the Government is also creating a database of landlords and letting agents convicted of certain offences to be updated by local authorities; banning orders for ‘the most prolific and serious offenders’; and new civil penalties of up to £5,000.

### **Homes and Communities Agency (HCA)**

The HCA has been responsible for regulating Registered Providers (RPs) of social housing and providing funding to support the delivery of affordable housing. RPs are currently delivering homes funded by the HCA 2015 – 2018 Affordable Housing Programme. Unless the Government adopts a change in approach, this is expected to be last programme that will deliver funding for general needs affordable homes for

rent, except for some types of supported housing.

<https://www.gov.uk/government/organisations/homes-and-communities-agency>

## Local policy context

### Enterprise M3 Local Enterprise Partnership (LEP)

Rushmoor sits within the M3 Local Enterprise Partnership (Enterprise M3) area. The partnership drives the economic growth of the area by working with businesses, key delivery partners and the Government. This includes signposting opportunities for business and organisations, including funding; sharing information and data; and bringing the different sectors together for the benefit of the area. One of the issues consistently raised by businesses in the LEP area is the importance of housing for their workforce and how the lack of affordable housing is affecting their ability to recruit and retain the right talent. Enterprise M3 has recognised that the provision of housing is key for a successful economy and is working with partners in both the public and private sector to explore how the delivery of new homes can be accelerated.

A housing evidence study commissioned by Enterprise M3 was published in 2014 to support its work in this area.

<https://www.enterprisem3.org.uk>

### Rushmoor Strategic Partnership (RSP) and Rushmoor Sustainable Community Strategy 2010 - 2026

The partnership's vision for Rushmoor is:

***Rushmoor 2026 will be:*** *A thriving, innovative and attractive borough, proud of its heritage.*

#### ***Rushmoor, a place:***

- *Where people are happy, healthy, safe and have a bright future*
- *Which is green, open and bright*
- *Which is easy to get around*
- *Which has great places to go and lots to do*
- *With a prosperous and sustainable economy*

To deliver this vision, the Rushmoor Strategic Partnership (RSP) has five sub groups with representation from a wide range of partner agencies. The work of each sub group recognises that appropriate housing is central to the health and wellbeing of every individual, as well as to the economic prosperity of the borough. The sub groups are:

- Rushmoor Strategic Partnership

- Rushmoor Health and Wellbeing Partnership
- Rushmoor Children and Young People's Partnership
- Rushmoor Crime and Disorder Reduction Partnership
- Neighbourhood renewal

The provision of good quality housing underpins many of the aims of the community strategy by providing residents with a secure home from which to achieve educationally and economically. Housing is also significant in contributing to health and wellbeing.

<http://www.rushmoor.gov.uk/rsp>

## **The Rushmoor Local Plan**

The council has in place an adopted Rushmoor Core Strategy, which includes several policies on the provision and location of new housing:

<http://www.rushmoor.gov.uk/corestrategy>.

Work is now under way to produce a new local plan that will set out a spatial vision for the borough for the period to 2032. The document will set out our approach to planning for the delivery of sufficient housing, the right types of housing, and the tenure mix to meet the borough's housing needs. Consultation on the draft concluded on 31 July 2017, and responses are being processed. The expected plan submission date is November 2017 and the public hearing held by the planning inspector is expected to be early 2018 <http://www.rushmoor.gov.uk/rushmoorplan>

## **Rushmoor Corporate Plan: purpose and priorities**

### Our purpose

Rushmoor Borough Council, working with others to improve the quality of people's lives.

### Supporting values

People have an equal right to live healthy lives, in safe, clean and sustainable places. We want to address the causes of inequality and help create opportunities for local people to fulfil their aspirations, targeting our resources where they are most needed.

Our purpose is underpinned by four corporate objectives:

- Sustaining a thriving economy and boosting local business
- Supporting and empowering our communities and meeting local needs
- Cleaner, greener and more cultural Rushmoor
- Financially sound with services fit for the future

## Our priorities

Under each of these broad headings are a number of actions and activities that we know from consultation with our residents, businesses, local groups and our partners are important. The housing strategy's objectives are consistent with our corporate values and contribute to our corporate priorities.

<http://www.rushmoor.gov.uk/corporateplan>

## **Assessing housing needs**

We regularly update our housing needs information by carrying out surveys on housing needs and conditions and analysing data from our housing allocations pool, the Government's Continuous Recording system (CORE) and from housing providers. Going forward, in response to financial restrictions, we will need to carry out more internal, desktop assessments rather than commissioned surveys.

## **Strategic Housing Market Assessment (SHMA)**

This is an essential part of the evidence base for the council's local plan and the formation of housing policy, as it includes an assessment of affordable housing need. It is a comprehensive analysis of data to determine future housing need generated by demographics, housing market signals, employment growth and migration trends into and out of the borough.

The SHMA covers a housing market area rather than individual districts, and includes data for the administrative areas of Rushmoor, Hart and Surrey Heath. The last SHMA was completed in 2016. Its principal findings for Rushmoor were:

- A total need for 436 homes per year for the period 2014-32
- A need for 163 of these home to be made available as affordable rented homes per year for the next 18 years, in order to address the backlog of housing need and deal with newly arising need

<http://www.rushmoor.gov.uk/shlaa>

## **Needs of specific groups**

From time to time, we have commissioned or carried out assessments on the housing needs for specific groups.

The last of these was an accommodation assessment for Gypsies and Travellers and Travelling Showpeople. This identified a need for two further plots to meet the needs of the borough's long-established community of Travelling Showpeople. New government guidance has removed the need for separate studies for these groups. Going forward, work on identifying their needs will take place as part of the wider housing needs assessments required by the Housing Act 1985.

In relation to other specific groups in the housing market, the key findings of the SHM A 2016 are set out on the following page.

## Older people

- At 12.2%, the proportion of Rushmoor's population aged over 65 is lower than regional or national averages. The size of the older population increased by 8.6% between 2001 and 2011 (Source: Census 2001 and 2011). Using population projections, the number of people aged 55+ is expected to increase by 57% between 2012 and 2034, with the biggest increase being in the number of residents aged over 85.
- The majority of older people are owner-occupiers. The number of older people living in social housing decreased between 2001 and 2011, although the proportion in social housing is higher for the oldest of our residents, perhaps reflecting people living in sheltered or specialist housing.
- Older people are more likely than others to be under-occupying their home and although overcrowding among older people is generally low, in Rushmoor this appears to be higher than in our neighbouring districts and has grown significantly over the last ten years. Our targeted survey has identified that overcrowding amongst older people is mainly amongst older Gurkha veterans living in the borough. More details of the survey are contained in theme 4
- The expected increase between 2011 and 2031 in those over 65 experiencing dementia and mobility problems is 137% and 108% respectively, suggesting a need for specialist accommodation, particularly sheltered housing and extra care housing.

## Disabled people

Information on these groups is limited to Census data, which records the number of people with long-term health problems or disabilities. This shows 13.3% of Rushmoor's population fall into this category and the oldest age groups have a higher percentage of people affected.

## Black and Minority Ethnic (BME) households

Rushmoor's population is largely white British (80%). Of the remaining 20%, 3% are categorised as 'white other', which may indicate the extent of European migration, and 7.6% are 'Asian other' which is thought to represent Nepali migration. In Rushmoor, there is strong representation of BME households in the private rented sector - those classified as 'Asian other' are more likely to be living in overcrowded conditions.

## Armed Forces

We are working with Stoll Housing, Haig Homes, Riverside Housing Association and Gurkha Homes to provide a range of specialist accommodation for armed forces

veterans in response to the Armed Forces Covenant. We also work with the MOD to advise and support Army leavers.

## **Housing allocation pool**

Our aim is to help people address their housing problems. When we are unable to do this in a short timescale and the only reasonable housing solution is social housing, we place people in our housing allocation pool. People in the pool are then able to bid for social housing through Rushmoor Homefinder however, the supply of homes is limited. Analysis of the household characteristics of those in the allocation pool helps to guide us when seeking new affordable housing, or trying to achieve turnover in the existing housing stock.

## **Consultation**

### **Housing strategy consultation with partner forum**

Held in April 2016, the forum met to discuss the main housing issues in the borough and sought to establish some key themes and priorities for the strategy. Those present represented the council's key partner organisations. The output from the forum was the suggestion of the four themes for the strategy to shape a strategic response to current housing issues. Outcomes from the forum are attached as appendix 2.

### **Online questionnaire**

During June 2016, we carried out an online survey, giving our residents the opportunity to tell us what their housing priorities were. A total of 222 people responded. A copy of the survey questions and the survey report are attached as appendix 3.

Overall, respondents thought Rushmoor did need new homes, with 79.4% disagreeing with the statement 'Rushmoor doesn't need any new homes'. There was also a strong feeling that new homes should be more affordable, with more low cost housing to buy (81.0% agreed), and more affordable homes for rent with housing associations (79.9% agreed).

Respondents agreed with several statements about which groups the new homes should be for, with the highest level of agreement for first time buyers (86.9% agreed), followed by people who need affordable homes to rent because they have low incomes, are homeless, in crisis or living on the streets (80.1% agreed).

Respondents also answered questions about which types of household should be prioritised for housing. The highest level of agreement was for households where someone is disabled and needs a home to accommodate a wheelchair and/ or specialist equipment (85.6% agreed). There was also strong agreement for ex-

armed service personnel having priority (68.9% agreed), followed by older people who want to downsize because their current home is too large (68.0% agreed).

When it came to the location of new homes, there was agreement that they should be located on brownfield sites and an even response to locating the homes in Farnborough (76% agreed) or Aldershot (75% agreed).

### **Portfolio holder consultation**

We have worked with our portfolio holder to ensure the structure and content of the strategy respond appropriately to changing government policy and also reflect the sort of issues our elected members help residents with at their surgeries.

### **Housing Strategy Standing Group**

This is a group of councillors appointed to work on the detail of the strategy before it is submitted to the Cabinet. The group met to consider the outcomes of the housing forum, proposals for the structure of the strategy and the online consultation. The group supported the housing team to develop the strategy using the four themes.

### **Community Policy and Review Panel**

Panel members were provided with an overview of the homelessness review, a statutory requirement for the homelessness section of the strategy, They were also consulted on the format of the strategy, themes, challenges, objectives and its production timetable.

## THEME 1

### The right homes in the right place

#### Introduction

This section of the strategy deals with making sure that we provide the right amount and types of new homes in locations that are suitable and sustainable.

We do this by considering the housing needs of the borough, as required by the Housing Act 1985, and then planning to make sure that we address these needs through policies and procedures, working with partners, and investing in new homes.

#### Vision for this theme:

*Having well-designed and appropriately-located homes in sufficient numbers to meet the needs of our residents and support the economic future of the borough.*

#### Background and issues

There are a number of issues that affect our ability to achieve this vision.

#### Housing demand and affordability

The borough has a high level of demand for housing in general, but particularly for affordable subsidised housing. Our SHMA suggests that to meet the current need for housing, we will need to build 436 new homes every year until 2032. Although, compared with neighbouring districts, household income to house price ratios are lower in Rushmoor, they are still high enough to be a barrier to residents buying a property or renting privately. Affordability is a real issue, particularly for those on lower incomes, and is likely to become more of an issue as the welfare benefit cap has been reduced to £20,000 a year. Our data on average income levels in table 3 on the following page indicates many households are likely to be paying more than 35% of their gross income on housing costs.



**Table 1 Rushmoor: Income needed to buy at lower quartile house prices**

House type	Lower quartile prices for existing dwellings (May 2017)	Deposit required (10% of purchase price)	Mortgage required (minus 10% deposit)	Household income required (assuming borrowing 3.5 x income)
Detached	£390,000	£39,000	£351,000	£100,285
Semi Detached	£301,750	£30,175	£271,575	£77,592
Terraced	£260,000	£26,000	£234,000	£66,857
Flats	£160,000	£16,000	£144,000	£41,142

Source: Land registry

Anecdotal evidence from local agents suggests these are conservative figures

**Table 2: Median rents and income levels required to support them**

House type	Median private rents pcm	Annual income required if rental accounts for 35% of monthly gross income
Room	£433	£14,840
1 bed	£725	£24,857
2 bed	£875	£30,000
3 bed	£1,100	£37,700
4 bed	£1,495	£51,257

Source: Valuation Office Agency Private Rental Market 1 April 2016 – 31 March 2017 -Anecdotal evidence from local agents suggests that these are conservative figures

**Table 3: Income of Rushmoor residents and the monthly amount they can spend on housing costs (at 35% of gross monthly income)**

	Annual gross income	35% monthly gross income 2016
Mean	£30,000	£875
Median	£25,200	£735
25 <sup>th</sup> centile	£15,870	£462

Source: Annual Survey of Hours and Earnings (ASHE) 2016 Provisional - rounded to nearest £10 - figures are per person not household. (ASHE 2017 figures will be available for the March 2018 update)

These tables provide the most up to date government statistics, locally collected data is set out in Appendix Four.

The relationship between the cost of housing and incomes drives the demand for both social-rented homes and reasonably priced private-rented homes, as well as for low-cost home ownership options.

## **Providing housing for those most in need**

There are people who, for a range of reasons, will continue to need subsidised rented homes and who receive priority in our housing allocation pool. In some circumstances, a degree of housing-related support helps an individual or household sustain their tenancy and it is important to emphasise the need for specialist housing to ensure that those with specific needs can be housed.

The council has a statutory duty to help those who are accepted as homeless. This includes securing suitable accommodation, which, in Rushmoor, could be either a place in temporary accommodation or bed and breakfast. In 2010, research reported by the Department for Communities and Local Government (DCLG) estimated that the cost to councils of each homelessness case was just over £5,300 (Demonstrating the Cost Effectiveness of Preventing Homelessness: DCLG).

It is important to make sure there is a continuing supply of affordable housing so people can move on from temporary accommodation and bed and breakfast, and costs to the council and the negative impact to households are minimised. As well as maximising the number of lettings that come through re-lets from Registered Provider landlords, there needs to be a minimum level of new subsidised, rented housing to maintain stock levels and to meet the backlog of need evidenced by the SHMA.

## **Low cost home ownership**

Many households, who are not able to buy a home of their own, will be able to rent privately. However, the number of people registered with the Home Buy agent and the responses to our online survey clearly show that many people want to buy a home of their own. They may have secure and regular incomes but are unable to get a mortgage or raise a sufficient deposit.

A range of tenures can help meet this demand, some offered by housebuilders under the Help to Buy scheme and others by Registered Providers of social housing. The Government has recently introduced starter homes through the Housing and Planning Act 2016, although we have yet to see how popular these are with developers and residents.

## **The housing stock**

The borough has approximately 30,000 homes. There is a higher proportion of semi-detached homes and purpose-built low-rise flats than the average for England, and a smaller supply of larger, detached homes. This means that Rushmoor does not currently offer a complete housing ladder and higher income households tend to move to neighbouring boroughs when they require a larger property. Some rebalancing of the housing stock is taking place at Wellesley.

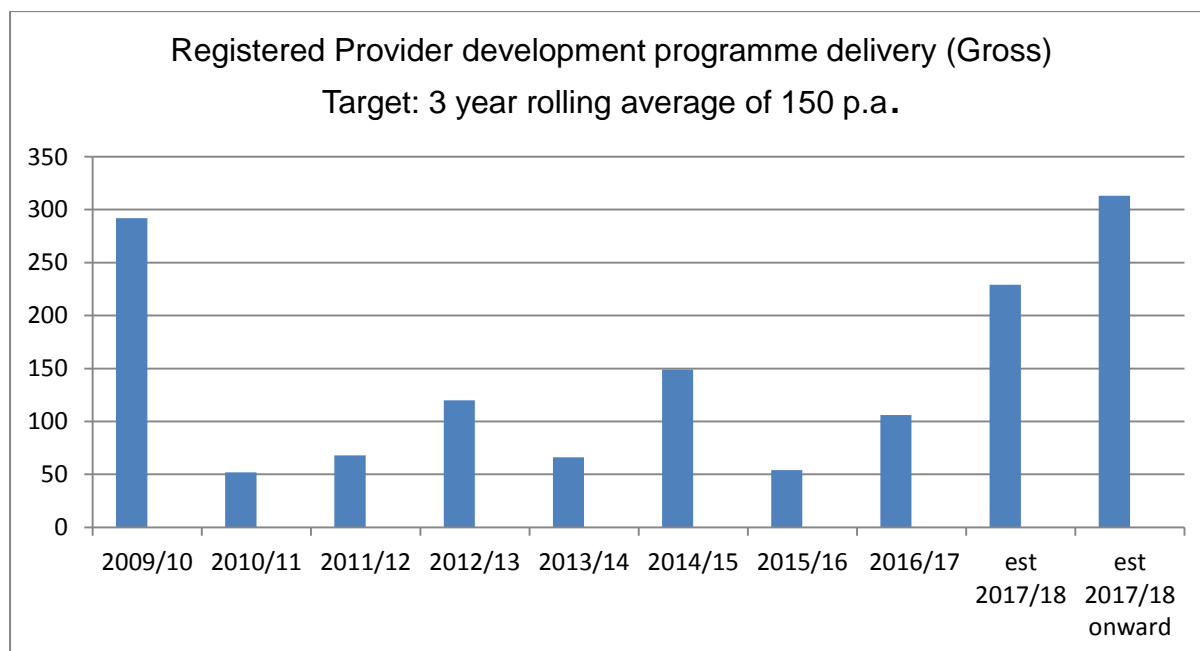
## Housing delivery

We provide for future housing growth through our Local Plan and we use data from the SHMA to draft policies that will seek a mix of house types and tenures to meet the borough's housing needs in the context of the wider market area. The local plan also sets the overall number of new homes to be provided, indicating where these homes could be located.

### Housing delivery achieved in the borough

Completions	2013/14	2014/15	2015/16	2017/18 (Projected)
Gross	286	361	282	380
Net	194	299	173	364

Our current policies in the adopted core strategy seek 35% affordable housing on sites of more than 15 units, with 60% of these homes as affordable rent and 40% for intermediate tenures, e.g. shared ownership. We also provide guidance on density and design, parking and energy efficiency to ensure good quality homes in good environments.



As the borough is urban and constrained, most housing supply comes from brownfield sites, which often have higher costs of development. Because the borough is covered by a European conservation designation to protect endangered

species of bird, the Special Protection Area (SPA), housing developers must pay Special Protection Area (SPA) charges which are an added cost to development. We take a pragmatic approach to situations where viability is an issue, but will require evidence to justify any case made by a developer or housebuilder for reduced affordable housing contributions on these grounds.

In situations where it is not appropriate for affordable housing to be provided on the site, we may seek a financial payment, or commuted sum, that can be used to provide affordable housing elsewhere.

### **Key development sites**

Wellesley in Aldershot will provide most new homes for the future, delivering up to 3850 homes, including 1347 affordable. The completion of regeneration at North Town, Aldershot, provided 243 new homes in the first two phases and will deliver a further 213 by winter 2017, followed by an additional 266. These will be a mixture of homes for rent, shared ownership and outright sale. Other homes will be built on smaller, brownfield sites where we will seek to work with developers to provide a range of housing.

### **Housing to achieve regeneration and support the economy**

Providing a range of house types from executive homes to those for people on low incomes, is critical to supporting the local economy so that those on higher incomes, and their spending power, remain in the borough, and people on low incomes are able to live near their workplace.

We are leading the regeneration of both Aldershot and Farnborough town centres. The delivery of new homes generates value that can help achieve other uses, for example retail and leisure, for the benefit of the towns and their residents. It is important that we seek to harness this potential value and examine carefully our priorities when seeking s106 developer contributions from regeneration schemes.

More information about the regeneration of our town centres is available on the council's website <http://www.rushmoor.gov.uk/farnboroughtowncentrespd>

<http://www.rushmoor.gov.uk/article/8832/Aldershot-Town-Centre-Prospectus---supplementary-planning-document>

### **Registered Providers of social housing**

We rely on Registered Providers of social housing for a continuing supply of affordable housing. Policy and budgetary pressures are affecting their ability to fund and develop the number and type of homes needed in the borough. The Homes and Community Agency's ability to help with funding has diminished and Registered Providers are losing rental income, against which they are able to secure private

finance, because of the national policy to reduce rents by one per cent a year over the next four years.

We will consider the types of tenure that can generate income/cash receipts to provide subsidised housing for rent with Registered Provider partners.

### **Alternative vehicles for delivery**

We need to consider making the most of our own assets to generate income to support subsidised housing and deliver new housing. We are progressing work on an appropriate investment and management model to achieve this.

### **Housing and Planning Act 2016**

The Government's reformed approach to housing is embodied in the Housing and Planning Act 2016, with its emphasis on starter homes and the Right to Buy as a way of boosting home ownership. It also puts forward a range of steps to tackle non-compliant landlords to support those living in the private rented sector. The Act provided little detail and we await publication of the regulations. This presents challenges for the council, Registered Provider partners and developers in terms of forward planning for affordable housing needs.

## **Theme 1 Summary of challenges:**

- Significant need for all types of housing
- As an authority with no housing of our own, we are reliant on housing needs being met by third parties, such as Registered Providers and private developers
- Current imbalance in the housing stock in favour of smaller homes, which means we don't have a full housing market offer.
- Limited land availability
- High costs of development because of costs of mitigation for SPAs
- Viability challenges from developers/housebuilders resulting in reduced provision of affordable housing
- Lack of subsidy (grant) for affordable rented homes
- Challenges of the Housing and Planning Act 2016 and emphasis on the development of home ownership products

## **Theme 1 objectives and actions:**

- Make sure that we have an accurate picture of housing needs
- Develop plans and policies that encourage the delivery of a diverse range of housing types and tenures, including those for older people
- Use housing to achieve regeneration and economic benefits
- Provide housing to help those most in need

## **OBJECTIVE ONE Housing needs**

**Outcome:** The council has sufficiently accurate housing needs data to plan for housing provision.

**Measure:** Subject to the availability of funding, data on housing need is no more than five years old.

### **Actions:**

- Use data from the updated SHMA to inform policies that secure a range of house types and tenure that meets a range of housing needs
- Use our Housing allocation pool as a data source
- Use data from Help to Buy South
- Prepare a plan for assessing the housing needs of specific groups
- Share and exchange data with our partners

## **OBJECTIVE TWO: Maximise housing delivery**

**Outcome:** Local plan housing targets are achieved.

**Measures:** Analyse the number of housing completions, percentage of tenures and types of homes delivered against our policy requirements.

Seek to achieve an average of 150 new affordable homes over a rolling three year period.

### **Actions:**

- Support the planning department with the preparation and adoption of the Rushmoor Local Plan
- Prepare policies and procedures to support housing delivery required by the plan
- Update affordable housing advisory note for developers of affordable housing
- Use our policies and work with developers to achieve a mix of house types and tenures that meet local needs including the needs of an ageing population and other specific groups
- Encourage developers to offer a range of home ownership products
- Use our policies to achieve good quality housing and good design
- Secure commuted sums where housing proposed is of a type or in a location where affordable housing would not be appropriate for meeting local needs.
- Scrutinise viability assessments

## **OBJECTIVE THREE: Deliver housing to achieve regeneration and to support the economy**

**Outcome:** Housing is secured as an element of regeneration schemes

**Measure:** Both the Aldershot and Farnborough regeneration schemes include a range of house types to support the labour force and meet identified housing needs.

### **Actions:**

- Champion the fact that housing contributes value to regeneration schemes
- Consider corporately a mechanism for considering the relative priority of s106 contributions requested for regeneration schemes, including the provision of affordable housing
- Make sure that town centre schemes provide good quality living environments for a range of household types

- Provide a housing offer that will retain higher paid workers in the borough
- Provide properties of a size and tenure that allows lower paid workers to remain in the borough

## **OBJECTIVE FOUR Housing to help those most in need**

**Outcome:** The stock of housing available to those most in need remains at or exceeds current levels.

**Measures:** We will monitor the levels of affordable housing stock in the borough and work to maintain the level of housing stock available to people in need.

### **Actions:**

- Continue to seek a proportion of affordable housing on new developments as affordable homes for rent
- Negotiate provision of specialist housing as part of new housing schemes
- Enable specialist housing in the existing housing stock or custom-built new specialist projects
- Secure delivery of specialist housing where appropriate.
- Provide a contribution to funding to secure housing to meet specific needs
- Explore options for direct procurement of affordable housing to meet local needs
- Put in place an appropriate scheme to achieve residential development for income generation, regeneration and to cross-subsidise housing to meet housing needs
- Develop shared housing options for single under 35s



## THEME 2

### Making the best use of the housing stock

#### Introduction

Making best use of the borough's housing stock has become increasingly important as the delivery of new, affordable homes becomes ever more challenging. In the previous housing and homelessness strategy, this issue was embedded in our approach to homelessness prevention. As a result of our consultation process, we have prioritised this as one of our key strategic themes. We believe our approach to tackling empty properties and supporting our residents with a range of options to help reduce under-occupation; will allow improved stewardship of the existing stock for present and future generations.

This will help us to assist more people into suitably sized accommodation. By making the most of existing housing assets, more people will have access to the larger or smaller accommodation they need, creating movement in both the social housing and private rented sectors.

#### Vision for this theme

Capacity within existing housing assets is maximised across all tenures and work in tackling under-occupation and empty properties is prioritised.

#### Background and Issues

##### Empty properties

We have a good track record for tackling empty properties. Since 2011, we have brought 94 empty properties back into use. These include:

- Forty-two empty street properties
- Conversion of a disused Sergeants' Mess in Aldershot to provide 45 units of much-needed temporary accommodation, in partnership with Grainger Trust and Oak Housing Ltd
- Seven units of empty sheltered accommodation now being used as supported accommodation in partnership with Hyde Housing Association and Society of St James

We work in a supportive way with homeowners and partners through voluntary negotiations. When this does not work, we have powers available to help us bring empty properties back into use:

- Housing Health and Safety Rating System (HHSRS) under the Housing Act 2004
- Empty Dwelling Management Orders (EDMO) under the Housing Act 2004

- Compulsory Purchase Orders (CPOs) under the Housing Act 1985 or the Town and Country Planning Act 1990
- Enforced sale

We tackle empty property cases in order of priority, inspecting and assessing each case reported in terms of the nuisance and risk it poses to neighbouring properties. We offer advice and help to the property owner and the person reporting the property as empty. Details of our approach are contained in the Rushmoor Empty Property Policy. During the period of the new strategy, we will take steps to improve the way we draw on the expertise of officers across the organisation to access a range of incentives and enforcement powers.

### **Under-occupation**

A proactive approach to tackling under-occupation, outside of the issues created by the social sector size subsidy, would contribute to meeting housing need. During the previous strategy period, we achieved good results with chain lettings where older people, who were under-occupying, moved into smaller properties within the social sector and several homes along the chain were then available to larger households. We will continue to work with partners to achieve maximum letting opportunities wherever possible.

Tackling under-occupation in the private sector is more challenging, as many homeowners choose, and can afford, to under-occupy. The 2011 Census showed that across the strategic housing market area, 12,480 properties had an under occupancy rating of 2+ bedrooms, 94% of them owner-occupied, 2% privately rented and 4% in the social sector.

If homeowners currently under-occupying were to downsize, this could potentially reduce pressure on the private rent and social sectors by releasing more family homes to the market. Generating a demand for downsizing requires a range of housing choices and options for older people. The SHMA identifies overall targets for smaller homes with 30% being one bed and 30% being two beds. It also identifies the need for suitable accommodation for older people. We will continue to seek opportunities to develop good quality homes for older people to improve the choice of those wanting to move.

### **The council's tenancy strategy**

The Localism Act 2011 introduced the concept of fixed-term tenancies for Registered Providers of social housing. It also required each council to publish a tenancy strategy to help Registered Providers prepare their tenancy policies. Although each Registered Provider develops its own tenancy policy, it is required to have regard to the council's tenancy strategy.

Most of our Registered Provider partners offer fixed-term tenancies which gives them greater flexibility to manage their stock. We support the use of fixed-term tenancies and our partners have policies in place that help:

- Meet housing needs
- Make best use of stock
- Recognise housing aspiration
- Create successful and sustainable communities

To secure these objectives, our strategy on tenancies supports:

- The use of fixed-term tenancies
- A minimum tenancy term of five years
- Protection for vulnerable people, with lifetime tenancies for certain categories of tenant
- A presumption in favour of renewal of tenancies to provide stability for both households and the community in which they live
- Registered Provider tenancy policies that make sure tenants are provided with good information about their tenancy type, the processes around review and renewal of their tenancy, and their right to appeal
- The development of working protocols with Registered Providers especially where tenancies are to end

Vulnerable people, whose circumstances are unlikely to change, need more security. Registered Providers should consider offering lifetime tenancies to:

- Tenants of sheltered housing
- People over state retirement age, in general needs housing, occupying property appropriate to their needs
- Tenants of supported housing and people with a long-term medical or welfare need for secure accommodation, whose circumstances are not expected to change, including, but not limited to:
  - Tenants who are disabled
  - Tenants with a terminal illness
  - Tenants who already hold a lifetime tenancy and downsize to a development specifically built to be allocated to under-occupiers or who downsize under the council's under-occupation scheme
  - Ex-service personnel who have been medically discharged

The first fixed-term tenancies, granted in 2012, will start to expire during 2017/18. Together with Registered Providers, we will monitor the impact of reviews and renewals on households, stock turnover and the effect on lettings available to the housing allocations pool.

## **Pay to Stay**

Pay to Stay is a government policy intended to make sure that social housing is available to help those who need it most. Registered Providers considering the scheme will need to take account of the potential for increased income, the costs of administration and the impact on their tenants and communities, before deciding whether to implement it.

Income generated from Pay to Stay will subsidise the development of new homes. If our Registered Providers choose to introduce Pay to Stay, it should be combined with a robust housing options approach so tenants moving on from social housing receive advice on the alternative housing options available to them. We are not aware that any of the Registered Providers in the borough are intending to implement Pay to Stay.

## **New approaches**

We will look at new approaches to supporting owner-occupiers to make the most of the housing capacity in their own homes. These include promoting the benefits of renting out a spare room, including information on tax and benefits, as well as mortgage and insurance company requirements, and appropriate referral processes.

We will also explore working with Hampshire County Council Adult Services to deliver a keeping house scheme. This is where a housing association leases a property from an older person moving into residential care. The scheme makes sure the property is well maintained, and in some cases improved, rather than left empty. It also provides an income to the family towards the cost of their loved one's care, safeguarding the family asset, and a home for a household in our housing allocation pool.

Safeguarding tenants, those letting rooms or properties and the council's reputation will be paramount in the design of any new schemes. We will also need to ensure appropriate resources are made available to monitor the success of the scheme, and provide advice and support to householders should problems arise.

## **Theme 2 summary of challenges:**

- Overcrowding and the low numbers of re-lets of larger properties
- Under-occupation and the lack of appropriate stock to encourage downsizing
- The balance between generating lettings and turnover in the stock, and creating settled communities
- Limited funding
- The need to continue to improve joint working, particularly with our Registered Providers

## **Our objectives and actions:**

To get movement in the housing stock across all tenures by:

- Understanding both the profile of the housing stock and the profiles of current tenants to improve our information on housing need.
- Work with Registered Providers and private developers to encourage the delivery of a range of appropriate and affordable homes that are attractive to downsizers.
- Generating maximum lettings opportunities through our housing allocation scheme, the use of fixed term tenancies, lettings plans and chain lettings.
- Maintaining an empty property programme, ensuring a corporate approach and undertaking more proactive work to prevent properties from becoming long-term empty homes.
- Exploring how practical support and advice might encourage increasing number of people to downsize or to feel confident about renting out a spare room.

## **OBJECTIVE ONE Housing needs and household profiles**

**Outcome:** Working with our partners we have access to a range of data on our needs, stock and household profiles.

**Measure:** Data on housing need is kept up-to-date and is no more than five years old.

### **Actions:**

- Ongoing interpretation of the housing allocations pool data.
- Partnership working with Registered Providers and letting agents to understand better their tenant profiling and stock occupancy levels
- Understand the needs and aspirations of under-occupying homeowners to help developers and housebuilders provide attractive homes for downsizers

**OBJECTIVE TWO Delivery of a range of appropriate, affordable properties for people to downsize to.**

**Outcome:** Where people wish to downsize, they have the opportunity to do so.

**Measures:** Number of properties let to downsizers and the number of lettings achieved from chain lets of properties released by downsizers.

**Actions:**

- The housing team will work with planning colleagues and development partners to ensure opportunities for appropriate housing units are delivered for people to downsize into, considering the location, design and affordability
- Assess the effectiveness of the housing allocations policy in creating movement in the housing stock through the under-occupation scheme

**OBJECTIVE THREE Maximising the turnover of vacancies using fixed-term tenancies, lettings plans and chain lets.**

**Outcome:** The majority of new lettings of social housing in the borough are let on fixed term tenancies.

**Measures:** The number of lettings achieved from fixed-term tenancies ending, lettings plans and chain lettings.

**Actions:**

- Continue to encourage all Registered Providers operating in the borough to base their tenancy policies on our tenancy strategy and to provide fixed term tenancies
- In the social housing stock, continue to use lettings plans and chain lettings to achieve the maximum movement for each new unit available to us
- Explore how a planned lettings approach might work with private landlords
- Collect lettings data to illustrate the impact of the above
- Consider borough-wide lettings targets for specific property types in partnership with our partners
- Monitor compliance with, and effectiveness of, nomination agreements
- Provide housing advice with partners for Pay to Stay cases
- Make sure our housing allocation scheme supports these actions

## **OBJECTIVE FOUR Empty properties**

**Outcome:** By working with property owners, long term empty properties are brought back into use and, where necessary, enforcement powers are used.

**Measure:** That year –on- year, the number of long-term empty properties in the borough reduces.

### **Actions:**

- Develop a consistent, corporate approach to prioritising and dealing with empty properties within limited resources
- Improve collaborative working across the council on empty property work
- Develop an approach to prevent properties from becoming empty
- Publicise advice and options to property owners of empty properties
- Explore the use of a keeping house scheme
- Continue to capitalise on opportunities which arise from empty commercial or retail buildings in the borough that could be used for homes

## **OBJECTIVE FIVE: Supporting Rushmoor’s residents to downsize or let out spare rooms**

**Outcome:** Residents are empowered to respond flexibly to their need to reduce their housing costs.

**Measures:** The number of residents downsizing and units of accommodation generated.

### **Actions:**

- Determine what support people need to help them downsize
- Research the availability of resources to fund downsizing support
- Within the resources available, launch and promote a comprehensive package of advice for:
  - Older residents wanting to downsize
  - Residents who would like to let out their spare room
- Work with partner organisations to scope, develop and implement both projects
- Ensure robust safeguarding measures are in place for homeowners and tenants
- Promote both projects across a range of media

## **THEME 3**

### **Helping people solve their housing problems and provide a suitable home when needed**

#### **Introduction:**

This chapter sets out the council's homelessness strategy the key objective of which is to prevent homelessness wherever possible, providing people with advice and working with specialist service providers to help them resolve their own housing problems. When we are not able to do this, we have a duty to provide suitable accommodation. Preventing homelessness and sourcing accommodation is becoming increasingly challenging, as our customers often face multiple, complex problems and the local housing market does not supply sufficient affordable accommodation.

As well as having sufficient and appropriate housing stock, we need to look at how we might work more effectively with partners to develop packages of easily-accessible advice, support and accommodation to enable customers to access emergency, temporary, supported and settled accommodation successfully and to be able to sustain this.

#### **Vision for this theme:**

That all, who need it, have access to housing advice and assistance that will help them resolve their housing problems and that homelessness is reduced significantly. Suitable temporary accommodation is available when needed and bed and breakfast is used as an exception. Vulnerable people are able to receive support that helps them sustain their housing.

#### **Homelessness strategy**

#### **Background and issues**

#### **Homelessness review**

The Homelessness Act 2002 requires us to produce a homelessness review to support our strategy. In July 2016, we carried out a review with service providers specifically on homelessness. Through this work, we have:

- Undertaken a housing needs assessment
- Audited homelessness services and assessed the resources available to tackle homelessness and gaps in services



- Developed a programme for implementing key objectives and actions, set out in the Housing and Homelessness Strategy Delivery Plan 2017-2022

The review process identified an overall increase in the demand for our Housing Options service, with a 39% increase in households presenting as homeless and 29% increase in homeless acceptances between 2014 and 2016. Over the same time, cases of street homelessness have increased by 50% with 39 cases being recorded in summer 2016, and with eight to twelve cases of entrenched rough sleepers in Aldershot town centre.

In 2011, the start of our previous housing and homelessness strategy, there were no street homeless cases recorded in the borough. This area of work has become a priority over the last two to three years and looks likely to remain a challenge for the future. It is estimated that we spend 80% of our time dealing with homelessness prevention cases and 20% of our time on supporting people who are homeless.

In addition, the borough has a good level of specialist statutory and voluntary organisations, which provide support services to those experiencing homelessness for a variety of reasons. Comprehensive details of each organisation and the service they offer are contained within the homelessness review in appendix 5. The review process also identified key gaps in service provision. These are summarised as:

- Insufficient numbers of affordable homes to rent
- Insufficient access to emergency temporary accommodation
- Although there is a reasonable supply of general temporary accommodation in the borough, the lack of suitable move-on accommodation is causing accommodation blocking.
- Effective support services for entrenched single street homeless men with consequential increases in the number of street homeless in Aldershot town centre
- Lack of specialist, integrated services to help people with multiple complex needs, for example dual diagnosis of mental health and substance misuse
- Reduced amount of time we have to carry out homelessness prevention work because of the time taken to deal with the number of very complex cases

We will seek to improve further our effective partnerships and to explore new ways of working to deliver better homelessness prevention work.

## Housing advice

We provide housing advice at the council offices. This is supplemented by the debt and housing advice offered by Citizens Advice; the housing advice and support provided for single homeless people at The Vine Day Centre and the housing advice for young people at Step by Step.

### **Our housing allocation scheme**

We have a housing allocation scheme in place to make sure we use housing resources effectively and fairly. The scheme operates as a banding system, which reflects housing need, and we no longer hold a waiting list.

We assist those who have a housing need at the time that they approach us. If we are not able to do this and if they have evidence that they qualify for social housing because of that need, we will add them to our housing allocation pool. They can then bid for properties that we advertise on our Homefinder scheme.

If they have no realistic prospect of being eligible for social housing, we will provide advice and support to help them find an alternative home.

As part of its Armed Services Covenant, the Government revised its guidance on allocations schemes for armed services personnel. Our scheme makes sure that it does not disadvantage armed services personnel, through the local connection criteria, but it does not give additional priority to this group.

To make sure that our allocations scheme is fit for purpose we will be reviewing the scheme by 31 March 2018.

### **Working with private sector landlords**

The number of homes in Rushmoor that are rented by private sector landlords has increased significantly from 6% of the total housing stock in 2001 to 18% in 2011. This is because of an increase in Buy-to-Let landlords.

The work that we do to make sure that these properties are in good condition is set out in Theme 4.

The private rented sector meets the needs of a number of household types, including:

- People who cannot buy their own home because their incomes and savings are too low to secure a mortgage, or they have been affected by the tighter mortgage lending criteria
- Households who are not eligible for social housing but can afford to rent privately, either with or without housing benefit
- Those that we help out of homelessness by securing a private rent property in order to discharge our statutory duties

In view of the important role this sector plays in our housing market, it is important that we work with landlords to make sure that this is an option that remains accessible to local households.

We hold an annual landlords' forum to provide information and advice and we will look at additional methods of communicating with our landlords.

We will also continue to offer rent deposits to help eligible people with the upfront costs of renting.

A housing officer has been appointed to be the lead contact for landlords with the aim of helping landlords when housing our customers and ensuring a supply of private rented lettings.

### **Homelessness Reduction Act 2017**

The Act significantly amends previous housing legislation on homelessness. Some of the key changes introduced include:

- A requirement for a universal statutory homelessness prevention service for all applicants, including those who may not be in “priority need” and those who may be threatened with homelessness because of their own actions.
- An extension to the time during which homelessness duties are triggered. The duty will now arise if someone is likely to be homeless in 56 days rather than the current 28 days.
- A duty to relieve homelessness for all eligible households for a period of 56 days.
- A requirement that the council agrees steps with customers and keeps those steps under review. Where there are proposed changes to the steps that have been agreed, these must be recorded and the customer notified, including when there is no agreement.
- Introduction of a duty on public services to identify people who may be homeless or at risk of homelessness and refer them into the local housing team.

### **Homelessness Prevention Trailblazer Project**

The aim of the Trailblazer is to build on the work of both Hart and Rushmoor Council housing departments and deliver continuously improving homelessness prevention services. This includes reforming the way services assess and support customers. The Trailblazer project will help make sure that we are ready for the Homelessness Reduction Act by adopting key principles in the Act early. We want to strengthen our approach and work with our partners to improve end to end support available for people who are homeless or who may be at risk of homelessness in the future. The

project is about effecting positive change across public services and is funded by the DCLG.

### **Theme 3 Summary of challenges:**

- Lack of social and affordable private rented sector accommodation to meet needs
- Welfare reforms
  - The Benefit cap
  - Universal Credit
  - Housing Benefit changes mean under 35s now only qualify for a shared room rate below local housing allowance
- Uncertainty around revenue funding and the provision of short-term, rather than long-term, services
- The ability of households to be employment-ready, to secure jobs and through employment improve their housing circumstances

### **Our objectives and actions:**

- To offer a comprehensive housing advice service
- To work with private sector landlords to maximise access to tenancies
- Prevention of homelessness
- Manage our use of temporary accommodation

### **OBJECTIVE ONE: Provide housing advice and administer our housing allocation scheme**

**Outcome:** Residents have access to a proactive and effective housing advice service and social housing is allocated in a fair and transparent way.

**MEASURES:** The number of people approaching the council for advice, against the number of people in the housing allocation pool.

### **ACTIONS**

- Make sure that people with little prospect of re-housing through the housing allocation pool receive comprehensive housing options to help them solve their housing problem
- Review the housing allocation scheme to ensure it is fit for purpose
- Continue working with the armed services to understand the demand from serving personnel and those leaving the military
- Work with community groups to understand the housing needs of our different communities

## **OBJECTIVE TWO: Work with private sector landlords to maximise access to private rented homes**

**Outcome:** Private sector landlords are coming forward to let to households approaching the Council for help with housing.

**Measures:** The number of private rented homes available to homeless households and the number of rent deposits and bonds issued.

### **ACTIONS**

- Continue with the rent bond scheme, working with private sector landlords
- Make sure that as private-sector tenants are rehoused in social housing, the private sector vacancies created are available to other households that have approached the council for help
- Provide regular communication and advice to landlords and hold an annual landlords' forum
- Investigate barriers to landlords willing to house homeless households

## **OBJECTIVE THREE: Prevention of homelessness**

**Outcome:** There is a comprehensive range of interventions available to prevent homelessness.

**Measures:** Number of successful homeless prevention interventions as well as a reduction in the numbers of rough sleepers and people living in unsuitable accommodation.

### **Actions:**

- Identify existing tenancy and money management training available for residents
- Work with partners to establish longer-term housing support services to help people succeed in their tenancies
- Develop housing pathway approaches for different client groups, for example care leavers, people with disabilities, armed forces' veterans and people with drug, alcohol or mental health problems
- Signpost people to appropriate job clubs, training and employment schemes

## **OBJECTIVE FOUR: Manage our use of temporary accommodation**

**Measure:** Reduction in the use, length of stay and cost of bed and breakfast accommodation.

**Outcome:** People are supported to move on from temporary accommodation, creating space for those falling into need for this type of accommodation, minimising the need to use bed and breakfast.

### **Actions**

- Maintain the existing temporary accommodation in the borough as set out in our Homelessness Review 2016
- Plan for the end of temporary accommodation at Clayton Court (2022)
- Investigate the value of providing support at temporary accommodation in light of changes to supported housing funding changes

## **THEME 4**

### **Enabling people to live in good quality accommodation that is suitable for their needs**

#### **Background and Issues**

There are about 30,000 homes in Aldershot and Farnborough. Most of these are owner-occupied; however, increasing numbers are privately rented, or owned by Registered Providers of social housing. The 2011 Census shows that the private rented sector in grew to 18% of the total housing, compared with six per cent in 2001.

Our Private Sector Stock Condition Survey of 2010 found that compared with national averages, Rushmoor has more homes built after 1964 and fewer built before 1919, with more semi-detached houses and purpose- built flats.

The survey established that poor housing conditions are more likely to be found in private sector properties, particularly pre-1919 houses converted into flats. There was also a higher proportion of older people living in poor housing conditions, which is reflected by the experience of our housing officers.

#### **Vision for this theme**

The housing stock is in good condition, not overcrowded and meets housing standards, and that people with disabilities receive the right support, advice and assistance to allow them to live independently in their own home.

#### **Housing and health**

There is a correlation between poor housing and poor health. Improving the condition of homes can help considerably to improve the health and wellbeing of their occupants, reducing health inequalities and the cost of clinical interventions by the NHS. Despite this, efforts to bring housing and health priorities together are on a case-by-case basis. We will work with Hampshire County Council's Adult Services and Clinical Commissioning Groups (CCGs) to explore a strategic approach.

#### **Disabled Facilities Grant (DFGs)**

DFGs are mandatory grants that fund adaptations to enable disabled people or people with limited mobility to continue to live independently in their own homes.

Most people who receive the grants are older people. However, families with disabled children usually receive the largest grants to provide suitable bathing and sleeping accommodation.

DFGs are means-tested, except for households where their home requires adapting to meet a child's needs. They are limited to a maximum of £30,000 per grant application, so other funding sources are required in some cases.

We expect to see demand for these grants to continue to increase as the population ages and more disabled children live in their family home, rather than in residential care.

### **The Better Care Fund**

The Care Act 2014 included provision for the creation of a fund to support the integration of health and social care.

NHS England is contributing to the fund by ring-fencing resources allocated to CCGs with the rest of the funding coming from the payments made by the Government to first tier authorities and then passed on to district councils to fund DFGs.

Hampshire County Council administers the Better Care Fund locally. The aim of the fund is to help reduce avoidable hospital admissions and support earlier discharge from hospital. There is also a requirement for Better Care Fund to support innovative approaches to DFG.

Some Registered Providers fund low-cost adaptations for their tenants, up to a value of £1,500; a small number of others contribute to the cost of larger DFGs or will provide top-ups where the cost of the works exceed the £30,000 limit. The one per cent rent reduction imposed on Registered Providers reduces the availability of budget and we will look at options with our partners so this work can continue.

In some cases, it is appropriate to consider if an alternative property would be more suitable to meet the needs of a household. We provide advice to applicants and work with Registered Providers and private landlords to achieve the best housing solution in these cases.

In order to ensure that the Better Care Fund is used in the most appropriate way, we will be drafting a policy giving clear guidance on mandatory and discretionary use of the budget. This will mean that residents will get the maximum benefit from the funds available.

### **Grant Support for Residents**



The Home Improvement Agency contract with Family Mosaic ended on 30 March 2017. In order to provide residents with support through the grant process and to ensure continuation of the service the caseworker was transferred across and is now employed as a grant support officer. This post provides the following:

- Support through the DFG process for applicants
- Administrative support to the private sector housing officers
- Signposting to other agencies where a specific need is identified
- Help with benefit advice and income maximisation
- Monitoring of grants to ensure speedy service with no unnecessary delays
- Liaison with Occupational Therapists (OTs)

## **Housing conditions**

In response to the Government's guidance in the document 'Improving the Private Rented Sector and Tackling Bad Practice 2015', we commissioned a targeted survey to cover those areas of the borough that were likely to have problems with poor housing conditions. We based this assessment on the Indices of Multiple Deprivation, population, age of residents, local knowledge and history of housing issues being raised.

The survey data showed that there are problems with overcrowding and disrepair and some situations have needed the immediate intervention by the council and other supporting agencies, including the Hampshire Fire and Rescue Service.

Through this work, we have learnt how both poverty and cultural differences influence the housing expectations and experiences of households in the borough and that this can result in people renting properties in poor condition and living in overcrowded conditions. We will address these issues in a culturally-sensitive way, and overcome any language barriers to ensure every household in the borough is aware of their housing rights and responsibilities and can access safe housing conditions. In responding to poor housing conditions, we work with landlords to improve conditions and take enforcement action when necessary.

## **HMOs**

All HMOs that are three storeys or above and have five or more occupants forming two or more households, require a mandatory property licence. Our approach is to ensure landlords comply with the required housing standards.

Properties must be in good condition, well managed, and must comply with fire safety requirements to obtain a licence. The licence fee chargeable is based on the number of occupants and rooms available for letting.

The landlord must be a ‘fit and proper’ person’, as defined in legislation to obtain a licence.

We currently use the Housing Health and Safety Rating to deal with smaller HMOs outside the licensing regime and by working with landlords to improve conditions. New legislation is likely to mean that smaller HMOs will require a mandatory licence in future.

### **Grants and loans to deal with housing in disrepair**

We have a small budget to fund essential repairs in cases of hardship. Where a household does not qualify for a grant, the Parity Trust can provide subsidised, low-cost loans. Parity carries out a full financial assessment to make sure the household can afford to re-pay it.

### **Energy efficiency and fuel poverty**

We signpost all enquiries about energy efficiency and fuel poverty to the Environment Centre in Southampton. We offer energy efficiency grants for boiler replacements to people in financial hardship from our discretionary grant budget.

The Home Energy Conservation Act Progress Report 2017 was completed on 31 March 2017. A list of actions from the report aimed at reducing fuel poverty and encouraging energy efficiency is part of our delivery plan.

### **The Housing and Planning Act 2016 and other legislation**

The Housing and Planning Act 2016 contains measures to increase council powers to deal with problem landlords and letting agencies. It introduces the concept of banning orders, which prevent a person from letting homes, or engaging in letting agency or property management work. A banned person will not be able to hold a HMO licence. The Act also gives councils the ability to impose a financial penalty if they are satisfied that a person has breached a banning order. Councils will also be able to use rent repayment orders to reclaim rent from landlords who have committed an offence.

Under this Act, there are additional responsibilities for the Private Sector Housing team:

- To edit and update a database of non - compliant landlords
- To enforce the new requirement for all letting agents to be members of a redress scheme

To regulate the work of letting or managing agents, the Government issued an order requiring agents to join a redress scheme regulated by councils. This means that

tenants and landlords in the private sector will be able to complain through the relevant scheme if they are unhappy with the actions or services provided by their managers or agents.

The Smoke and Carbon Monoxide Alarm (England) Regulations 2015 also requires all private sector landlords to fit smoke alarms and where appropriate carbon monoxide alarms in their rented properties.

#### **Theme 4 Summary of challenges**

- Budget pressures
- Lack of awareness among some residents of the impact of poor housing conditions on their health and of fire hazards on their safety.
- Welfare reform forcing people into cheaper, poor quality homes
- Identifying problem properties and landlords in an efficient and cost effective way

#### **Our objectives and actions**

- To help older and disabled people to live in homes appropriate for their needs by providing DFG and housing options advice
- To make sure we have evidence to secure sufficient DFG funding from the Better Care Fund.
- Subject to the availability of resources, make sure that vulnerable residents have support through the mandatory and discretionary grant process
- Map, license and monitor Houses in Multiple Occupation to ensure they offer accommodation that is safe and meets housing standards

**OBJECTIVE ONE: To help older and disabled people live in homes appropriate to their needs (by providing housing options advice and DFGs).**

**Outcome:** Our policies and procedures help people to exercise some choice about living independently in their own home.

**Measure:** The number of applications received and grants completed.

#### **Actions:**

- Make sure that those most in need of DFG are able to access them and publish a DFG Policy

- Work with OTs and our Housing Options team to provide advice where alternative housing may be appropriate
- Adopt an allocation policy for mandatory and discretionary grants by March 2017

**OBJECTIVE TWO: Continue to provide support to vulnerable people.**

**Measure: Number of residents being supported by grant support officer**

**Outcome:** Residents receive services that support independent living.

**Actions:**

- Use the Better Care Fund to support case workers
- Work with Hampshire County Council to secure funding for adaptations

**OBJECTIVE THREE: Improve housing conditions in the borough.**

**Measures: The number of homes in disrepair, housing complaints and enforcement action taken.**

**Outcome:** Using the powers and resources available, residents health and safety is protected

**Actions**

- Continue to carry out targeted surveys of privately rented properties to identify poor housing conditions
- Ensure all residents are aware of their housing rights and responsibilities
- Record and monitor performance on housing condition complaint handling
- Act on new powers in the Housing and Planning Act 2016

**OBJECTIVE FOUR: Map, license and monitor HMOs to ensure they offer accommodation that is safe and meets housing standards.**

**Outcome:** Improve our information on HMOs in the borough and ensure compliance with safety and housing standards

**Measure: The number of HMOs licensed and achieving required standards for management, amenities, fire safety and repair.**

**Actions:**

- Maintain a database of the location, condition and ownership of HMOs
- License all known HMOs that require a licence
- Bring all HMOs up to a safe standard with adequate amenities and fireproofing
- Take action against overcrowding and breach of licensing conditions
- Use new powers under the new Housing and Planning Act 2016 to deal with rogue landlords

## **CONCLUSION**

Rushmoor Borough Council is committed to providing residents with good quality housing, that is affordable, which meets peoples' changing needs and aspirations and is located within safe and sustainable communities.

Good quality housing is central to creating sustainable communities and is essential to the health and wellbeing of our community. Housing also promotes the independence of vulnerable adults, equality of opportunity, educational attainment, access to work and generally improving opportunities for local people. New housing supply must reflect the needs and aspirations of a more inclusive community, having regard to prospective economic growth and the direction of Government policies. Our housing strategy is a key contributor to Rushmoor achieving the objectives of our corporate plan and influencing the work of other agencies, with the main objective of creating sustainable communities.

We need to focus our resources on innovative approaches to maximise housing assets and to maximise housing choice for local people will bring empty properties back into use, to provide additional homes by utilising the existing housing stock carefully. The private rented sector continues to play an important role in housing provision for our residents and we will work with landlords to improve standards and to deliver good quality accommodation.

The action plan is the mechanism for delivering the objectives of the housing strategy. An annual update will be published to monitor the strategy's implementation, to respond to major policy or financial changes and to identify any amendments to the strategy or action plan.



## Summary of Housing and Homelessness Strategy 2011-2016 achievements

There have been significant achievements over the period of the strategy in many aspects of the work of our housing service and our partners.

These are summarised below:

### Housing delivery

- A total of 457 affordable homes delivered between 2011 and 2016
- 384 homes provided for affordable rent
- 73 Shared ownership homes and 11 first buy properties provided

### Key housing delivery achievements

- 11 units of over 55s accommodation provided at Matinee House, Aldershot, allowing six social rent family homes to be released through our under occupation policy (implemented 2011/2012)
- Four new-build one-bed flats at a First Wessex at an under-used garage site has freed up five additional family homes, facilitated by a local letting plan
- Twenty five units of sheltered housing Alma House North Town
- The Step by Step scheme has provided 27 bed spaces for homeless youths (2011/12)
- Women's refuge refurbished (2012)
- Preferred development partners reviewed and include A2 Dominion, First Wessex, Radian, Sentinel and Thames Valley Housing Association
- Viability issues at Queensgate were resolved to secure 53 affordable homes
- Six units of temporary accommodation will be made available at Wellesley
- The Existing Satisfactory Property Programme (ESPs) secured five additional family homes in partnership with Sentinel Housing Association (2015)
- We have secured 19 units of affordable housing for Rushmoor residents at Sun Park, a cross-boundary scheme in partnership with Hart District Council
- One family house providing a pathway from the women's refuge has been provided in partnership with Sentinel Housing Association using £50,000 funding obtained from the DCLG Hampshire Domestic Abuse Programme
- Planning permission was granted for 3,850 new homes at the new Wellesley development in Aldershot, 1,347 of which will be affordable housing, including 82 affordable housing units to be delivered in Maida Phase 1
- Delivery of first units at Wellesley May/June 2016 (six shared ownership flats and ten affordable rent)

### Regeneration

- North Town regeneration started on site in 2011. Stage one will provide 471 homes and stage two an additional 226 homes. The first two phases have delivered 202 with a further 110 units expected by March 2017
- First Wessex delivered six private sale homes to subsidise the North Town regeneration programme 2012/13, with a further 77 outright sale homes to be delivered in phase one to five
- Right to Buy receipts of £302,000 supported the regeneration of North Town during 2014
- Selborne Avenue regeneration - 18 unfit units replaced
- Vivid's strategy for the regeneration of under-used garage courts has provided 25 units

### **Number of empty homes brought back into use**

- Eighty-seven empty homes brought back into use without the need for enforcement action (figure includes 45 Clayton Court).
- Seven additional units at Mills House brought back into use October 2016
- A new partnership with Oak Housing Association has enabled the conversion of an empty MOD building into 45 units of temporary accommodation, including two wheelchair-accessible units funded in part by £675,000 of HCA empty homes funding

### **Awards**

- Matinee House nominated for UK Housing Award Best Small Scheme of the Year category in 2011
- Step-by-Step nominated for UK Housing Award Specialist Provider of the Year category 2012
- Wellesley awarded Planning Permission of the Year 2014. Work starts to deliver the first of 3,850 new homes in Aldershot to include 1,347 affordable homes
- The Aldershot Winter Night Shelter, run by The Vine, achieved an Award for Excellent Practice by Housing Justice and helped 23 people access basic accommodation and support from November 2015 - March 2016

### **Homelessness and homelessness prevention**

- A total of 453 households helped into settled accommodation using the rent bond and deposit scheme
- Annual landlords forum and homelessness forum held with partners
- Staff received training on welfare reform with Shelter
- Enhanced housing options software installed and an online self-assessment tool is now available for residents (2012/13)
- Additional staff resources were made available to help identify suitable private rented accommodation
- Night shelter pilot scheme delivered with The Vine, helping 51 people. Funding went live in January 2014 and the scheme has opened again in 2015 and 2016
- Funding secured for ex-offender tenancy support via charity Jigsaw



- Wheelchair accessible and adapted properties are now identified through lettings plans and choice-based lettings scheme
- Clayton Court has reduced numbers in bed and breakfast, bringing down net costs of £165,100 in 2013/14 to £85,470 in 2015/2016

### **Meeting the needs of specific groups**

- Housing allocation scheme has been updated to reflect the need for fairness to military personnel (2014)
- New partnership working with Stoll and Haig Housing Association is allowing us to develop improved pathways into settled accommodation for armed forces' veterans; 20 existing street properties units have been obtained by Haig Homes
- Planning permission granted for 12 affordable rented units for armed forces' veteran accommodation at Christmas Lodge site to create a housing pathway. Working in partnership with Haig Homes and Stoll. Delivery expected summer 2017
- Disposal of a council-owned site to the charity Seeability provided a capital receipt of £150,000 to the council, with plans approved for the development of 12 units of specialist accommodation for people with visual impairment and learning disabilities
- A total of 116 immigration visits made to ensure accommodation standards are being met
- Housing officers have attended community events to give home safety, fire safety and housing advice to the Nepali community
- Older people's delivery plan in place
- Alma House North Town was completed December 2012 providing 265 units of sheltered accommodation
- Over 55 accommodation - 22 units provided over two schemes with delivery of a further eight units expected spring 2017
- The council's Gypsy, Traveller and Travelling Showpeople accommodation assessments published. Need for two additional plots for Travelling Showpeople identified and options set out in the local plan consultation

### **Neighbourhoods and housing standards**

- 152 licences granted to HMOs
- 500 Disabled Facilities Grants completed
- 21 energy efficiency grants given to vulnerable clients
- First Wessex has delivered a retrofit scheme of 21 properties in Aldershot, part-funded by energy company Obligation (2014)
- Energy efficiency case workers from Rushmoor Healthy Living and Family Mosaic Housing Association are working with us to support residents

- Insulate Hampshire installed 1,417 energy efficiency measures (2013)
- Housing officers run annual events, including a landlords' forum and information-sharing sessions to promote the importance of home and fire safety as well as the safety implications of overcrowding
- Increased formal enforcement action is being taken by our Private Sector Housing team for poor housing conditions, with the caseload increasing from two in 2012/13 to 23 in 2013/14

# Housing Strategy Workshop Feedback: 20 April 2016

## Theme 1 Getting the right homes in the right places

Success would look like:

- Meeting housing need
- Good quality, well managed homes
- Good communities

Challenges:

- Viability (SPA etc.)
- Perception of Aldershot- difficult to deliver
- Land availability

Priorities:

- Be more creative with tenure types
- Security of tenure, review fixed term tenancy
- Under occupation among older people

## Theme 2 Making the best use of our housing stock

Success would look like:

- More people suitably housed and able to move into smaller or larger accommodation, as they need to

Challenges:

- Overcrowding and under occupation
- Lack of appropriate stock
- No funding and need to improve joint working

Priorities:

To get movement in the housing stock by:

- Practical support and hand holding, possibly by social enterprise/ voluntary sector so people can downsize more easily
- House share/ lodgers/ rent a room out within the context of a scheme DBS checks and contractual arrangement
- Lease for older people going into care homes- rent contributes towards care costs and family don't have to sell their home, prevents empty homes and property falling into disrepair

### **Theme 3 Help people to resolve their housing problems and if we can't to house them**

Success would look like:

- Housing demand and supply in equilibrium and no requirement for temporary accommodation but better provision of supported accommodation and accommodation pathways for vulnerable people
- Sufficient budgets
- Responsible private rented sector landlords all signed up to accreditation scheme

Challenges:

- Lack of social and affordable private rented accommodation
- Universal Credit under 35s shared room rate
- Uncertainty/short termism/ unstable services
- Employability of some people

Priorities:

- Education for tenants, including tenancy and money management peer to peer education / landlords/ partners/ manage expectations/ comprehensive training package for all tenants and landlords
- Resources/ secure longer term budgets/ Integrated health and housing services/ improved partnership working
- Housing pathway approach, with appropriate housing models and resources for a range of needs.

### **Theme 4 - Enabling people to live in good quality accommodation that is suitable for their needs**

Success would look like:

- Much faster DFG process
- Great landlord relationships and all agents member of redress scheme
- No overcrowding
- All HMOs licensed, all private rent alarmed
- No enforcement actions needed

Challenges:

- Budget cuts and finances
- Welfare reform
- Understanding existing and new communities

Priorities:

- Making the DFG service faster, efficient and effective
- Improved information gathering
- Putting the workbook into action to prioritise our wor

# **Housing and homelessness strategy survey**

## **REPORT**

**June 2016**

Consultation report by Strategy, Engagement and  
Organisational Development for Environmental Health and  
Housing

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## Executive summary

The survey was designed so that members of the public have an opportunity to tell the council their priorities for housing in the borough and to inform the update of the housing and homeless strategy.

Overall, respondents thought Rushmoor did need new homes with 79.4% disagreeing with the statement 'Rushmoor doesn't need any new homes'. New homes should be more affordable, these should be more low cost housing to buy, for example shared ownership or shared equity (81.0% agreed), and more affordable homes for rent with housing associations (79.9% agreed).

Respondents agreed with all of the statements about who the new homes should be for. The highest level of agreement was with new homes should be for first time buyers who need affordable low cost homes to buy e.g. shared ownership or starter homes (86.9% agreed), followed by people who need affordable homes to rent because they have low incomes, are homeless, in crisis or living on the streets (80.1% agreed).

Respondents also agreed with all of the statements about who should have priority for homes. The highest level of agreement was with households where someone is disabled and needs a home which can accommodate a wheelchair and specialist equipment e.g. a lift or hoist system should have priority (85.6% agreed). There was also strong agreement for ex-armed service personnel having priority (68.9% agreed), followed by older people who want to downsize because their current home is too large (68.0% agreed).

Respondents agreed with all the locations for new homes. The highest level of agreement was for new homes on sites which have previously been used for commercial and industrial uses (82.0% agreed), followed by new homes in Farnborough (76.1% agreed) and new homes being in Aldershot (75.2% agreed).

Respondents would go to Rushmoor Borough Council first for advice on renting rights and responsibilities and to estate agents first for advice on buying a property (including low cost homes). Respondents would approach a Bank or building society first for advice on budgeting, saving and how mortgages work.



## Introduction

Rushmoor Borough Council is updating its housing and homelessness strategy, which will shape the types of homes that are built in Aldershot and Farnborough and who they are for. It will also set out how Rushmoor will work with residents and partner organisations to prevent people from becoming homeless and to provide the right help to people when they need it.

The survey was designed so that members of the public had an opportunity to give the council their priorities for housing in the borough. The new strategy is focusing on the following areas:

1. To get the right homes in the right places
2. Make the best use of our existing housing stock
3. To help people to resolve their housing issues and, if these can't be resolved, to help them find new accommodation
4. Enabling people to live in good quality accommodation

Rushmoor will be using the information received to inform the Housing and Homelessness Strategy 2016 – 2021. This will be considered by members of our Cabinet later this year.

## Method

The survey method was via an online survey available on the council's website, which was promoted on social media via Twitter and Facebook posts. In total 200 people filled in the online survey.

In addition paper copies (Appendix A) were available in the council's reception area. In total 22 of these were filled in.

The survey ran from Friday 20 May until Monday 6 June 2016.

## Response rate

Overall, 222 people filled in the survey.

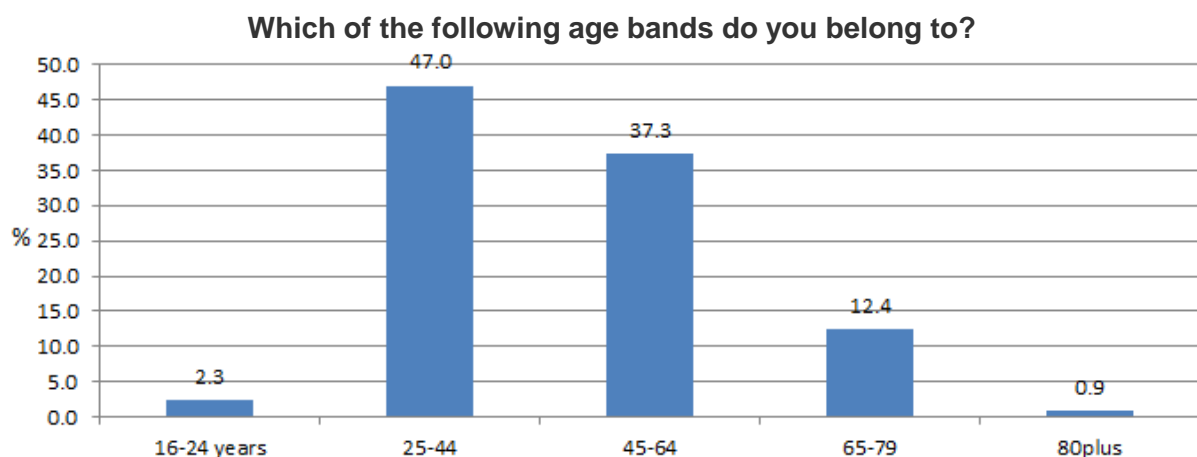
## Characteristics of the respondents

### Gender

In total 215 respondents filled in this question. 137 (63.7%) of respondents indicated they were female and 78 (36.3%) of respondents indicated they were male.

### Age group

In total 217 respondents filled in this question. The largest age group was the 25-44 year olds with 47% of respondents (102) being this age.



### Conditions or disabilities, which limit daily activities

In total 215 respondents filled in this question. 175 (81.4%) respondents indicated that they didn't have any conditions or disabilities which limit daily activities and 31 (14.4%) indicated that they did have conditions or disabilities which limit daily activities. Nine (4.2%) respondents indicated that they preferred not to say.

### Current accommodation

In total 215 respondents filled in this question. Over 56% (121) of respondents owned their own homes either out right or on a mortgage and 36.3% (78) of respondents rented their homes (18.6% (40) from housing associations and 17.7% (38) from private landlords). Eight (3.7%) respondents were living with parents/relatives or friends and eight (3.7%) respondents answered other.

### Which of these describes your current accommodation?



The following seven comments were filled in the other accommodation comment box:

- Army quarter
- Defence housing
- Housed by a charity
- Just been given eight weeks' notice as landlord wants to sell
- Rent off in-laws
- Renting but eviction notice served and struggling to find local accommodation
- Shared ownership
- Temp accommodation

### Postcode

181 respondents filled in their postcode or part of their postcode. 104 (57.5%) respondents had Farnborough postcodes, 72 (39.8%) respondents had Aldershot postcodes and 5 (2.8%) respondents had postcodes outside the borough but in surrounding local authority areas.

Of those in the borough 59.1% were from Farnborough and 40.9% were from Aldershot. This is a close reflection to the population of the borough, as the 2011 Census indicated that 61.3% of Rushmoor residents lived in Farnborough and 38.7% in Aldershot.

### Ethnic group

In total 212 respondents filled in this question with 188 (88.7%) of them identified themselves as white British. Nine (4.2%) respondents identified themselves as any other white background, eight (3.8%) respondents preferred not to say, three (1.4%) respondents identified themselves as mixed white and black Caribbean, one (0.5%) respondent identified themselves as any other white background (Slovakian), one

(0.5%) respondent identified themselves as Asian or Asian/British/Bangladeshi and one (0.5%) respondent identified themselves as white-Gypsy Traveller.

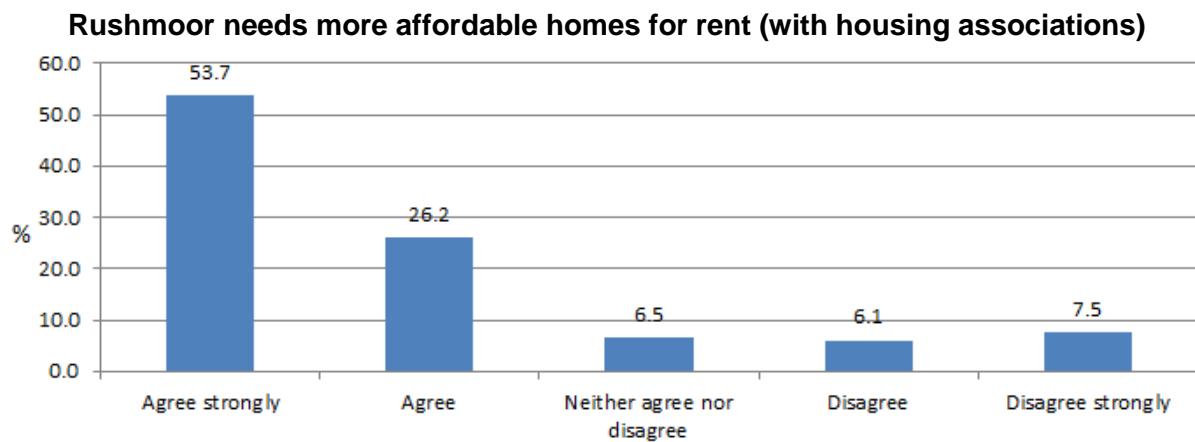
# Consultation results

## Types of new homes

This section consisted of five statements which respondents were asked how strongly they agree or disagree with which types of new homes.

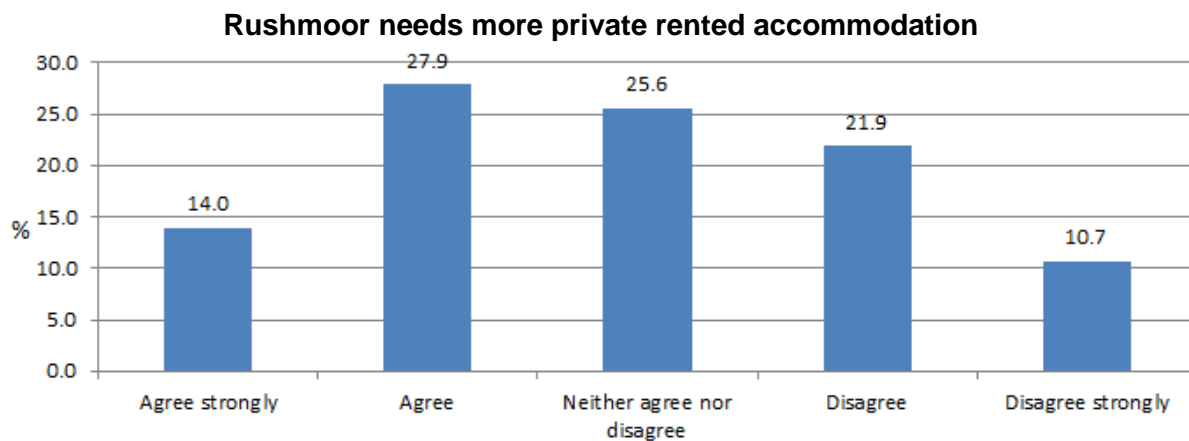
### 1. Rushmoor needs more affordable homes for rent (with housing associations)

214 valid responses (excluding the six 'I don't knows'). In total 79.9% agreed with this and 13.6% disagreed.



### 2. Rushmoor needs more private rented accommodation

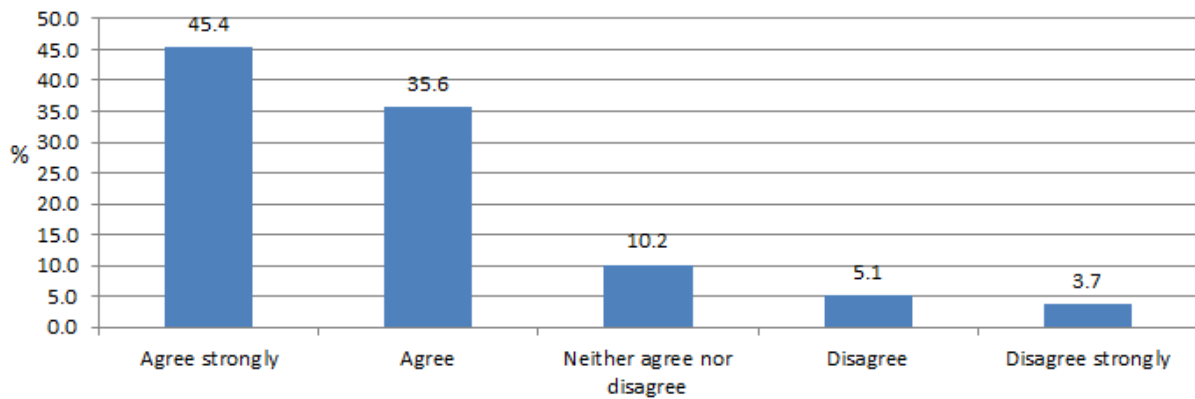
215 valid responses (excluding the five 'I don't knows'). In total 41.9% agreed with this and 32.6% disagreed.



### 3. Rushmoor needs more affordable low cost housing to buy, for example shared ownership or shared equity

216 valid responses (excluding the two 'I don't knows'). In total 81.0% agreed with this and 8.8% disagreed.

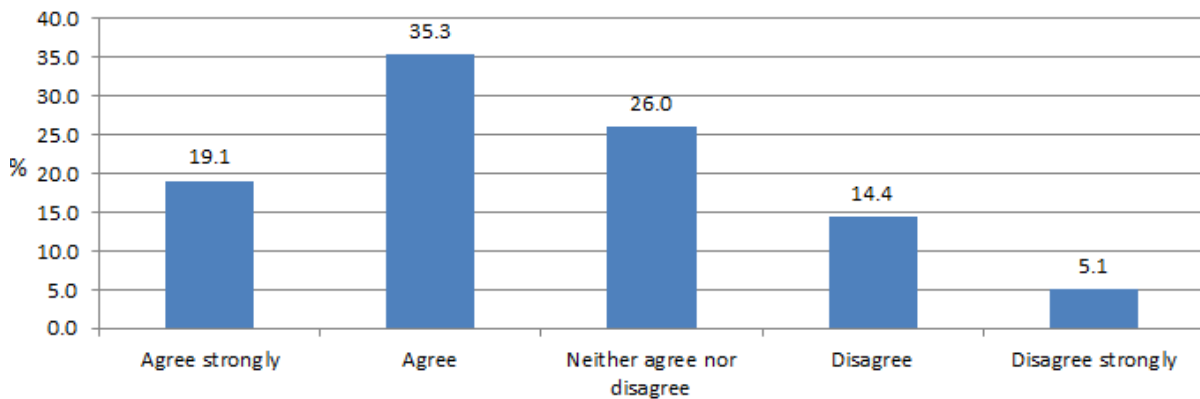
**Rushmoor needs more affordable low cost housing to buy, for example shared ownership or shared equity**



### 4. Rushmoor need more homes for outright sale

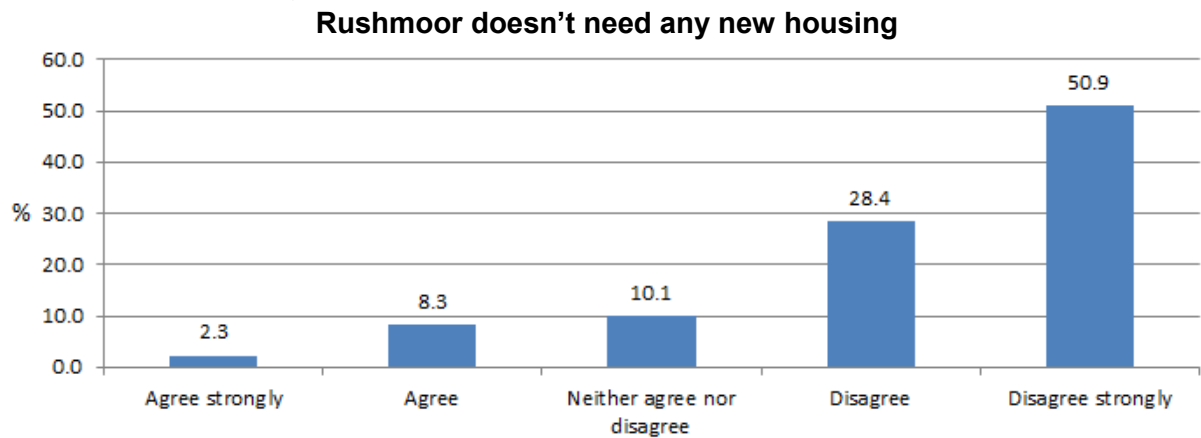
215 valid responses (excluding the two 'I don't knows'). In total 54.4% agreed with this and 19.5% disagreed.

**Rushmoor need more homes for outright sale**



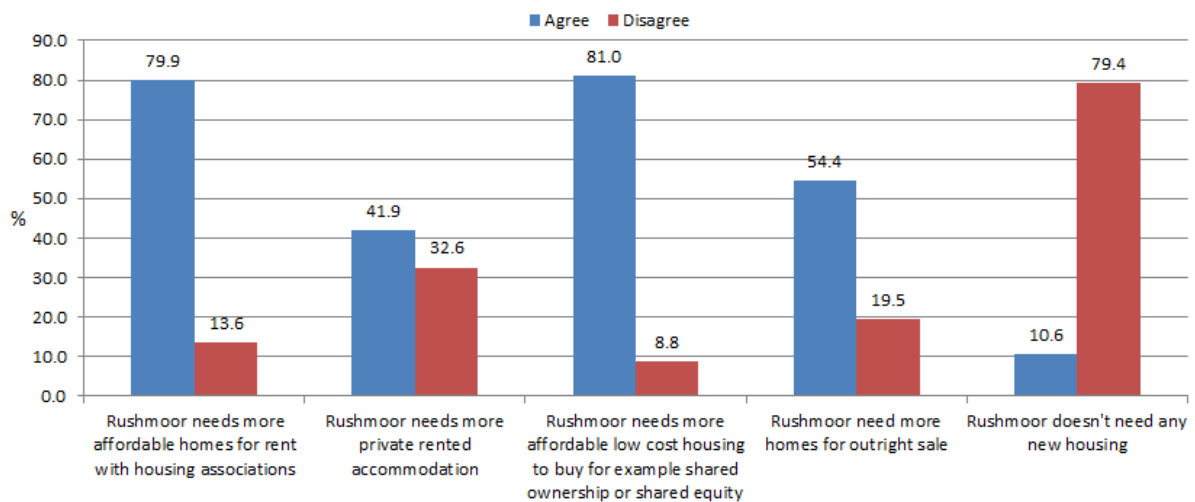
## 5. Rushmoor doesn't need any new housing

218 valid responses (excluding the one 'I don't knows'). In total 10.6% agreed with this and 79.4% disagreed.



### Overall

Respondents disagreed that Rushmoor didn't need any new homes with 79.4% of respondents disagreeing or disagreeing strongly with the statement. Of the statements connected to types of homes, the highest level of agreement was with Rushmoor needs more affordable low cost housing to buy, for example shared ownership or shared equity with 81.0% agreeing or agreeing strongly. This was followed by the statement Rushmoor needs more affordable homes for rent (with housing associations) with 79.9% agreeing or agreeing strongly. Although more people agreed than disagreed with the statement Rushmoor needs more private rented accommodation, this was the type of home that had the most disagreement with 32.6% disagreeing or disagreeing strongly.



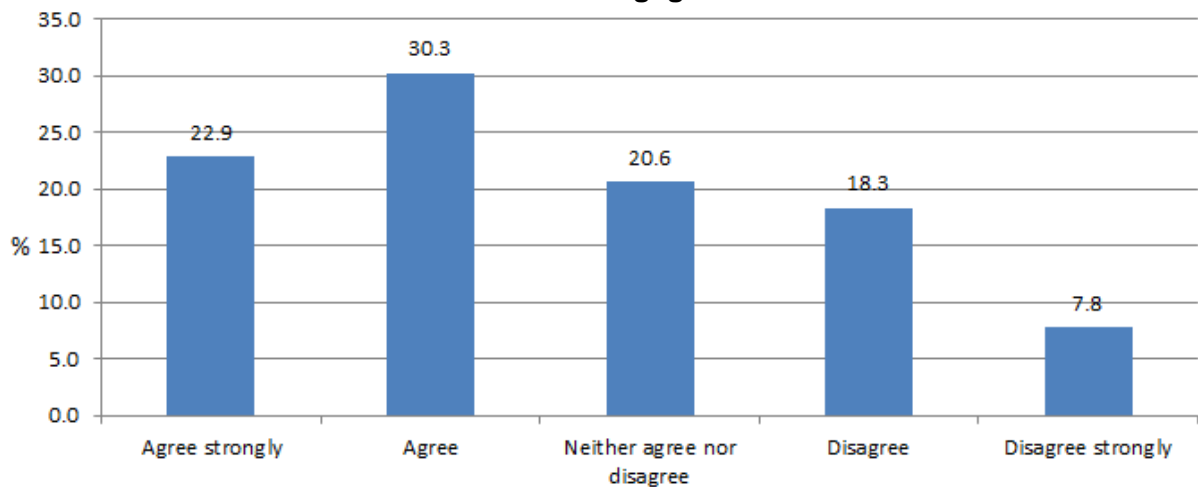
## Who the new homes should be for

This section consisted of four statements which respondents were asked how strongly they agree or disagree with who the new homes should be for.

### 1. New homes should be for people who can afford to buy their own home with a deposit and mortgage

218 valid responses (excluding the one 'I don't knows'). In total 53.2% agreed with this and 26.1% disagreed.

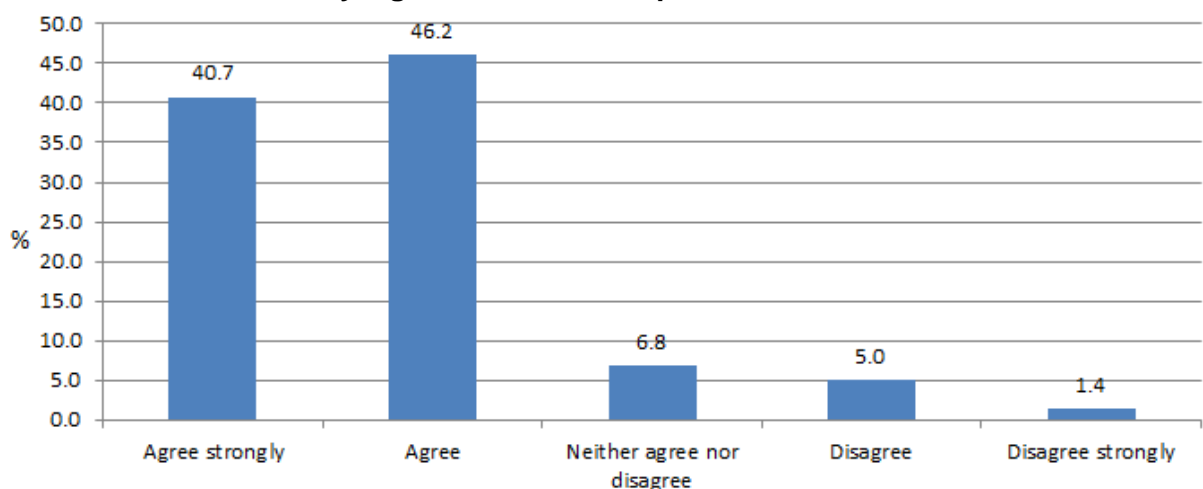
#### New homes should be for people who can afford to buy their own home with a deposit and mortgage



### 2. New homes should be for first time buyers who need affordable low cost homes to buy e.g. shared ownership or starter homes

221 valid responses. In total 86.9% agreed with this and 6.3% disagreed.

#### New homes should be for first time buyers who need affordable low cost homes to buy e.g. shared ownership or starter homes

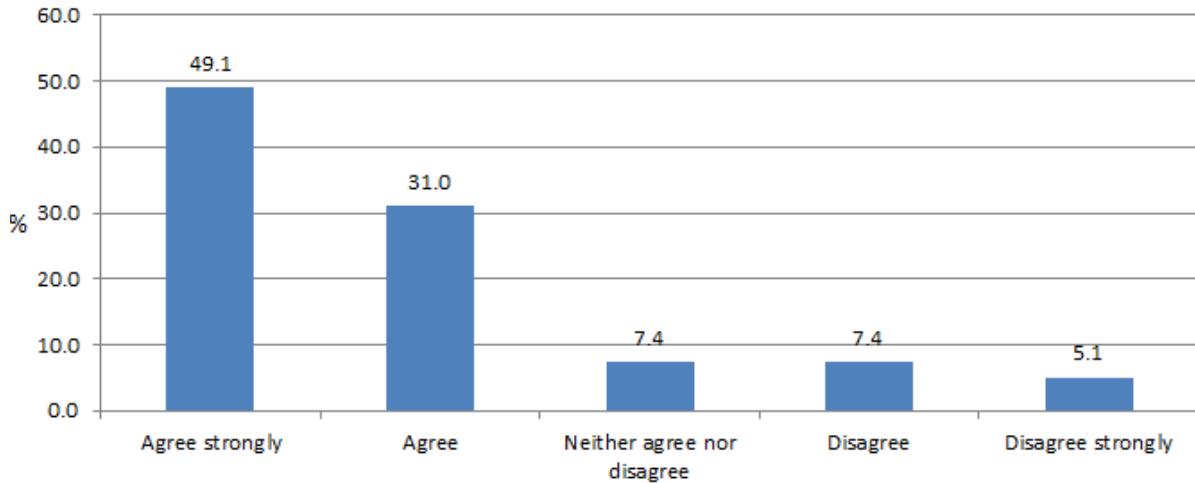




**3. New homes should be for people who need affordable homes to rent because they have low incomes, are homeless, in crisis or living on the streets**

216 valid responses. In total 80.1% agreed with this and 12.5% disagreed.

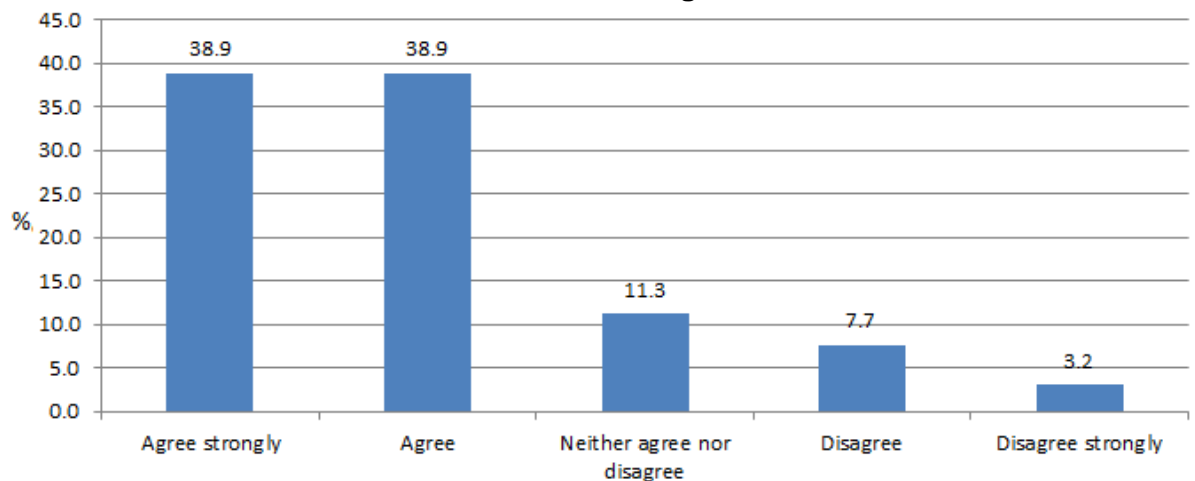
**New homes should be for people who need affordable homes to rent because they have low incomes, are homeless, in crisis or living on the streets**



**4. New homes should be for people who need affordable homes to rent because they are in unsuitable accommodation, for example they are living in poor housing conditions, over crowded or wanting to downsize**

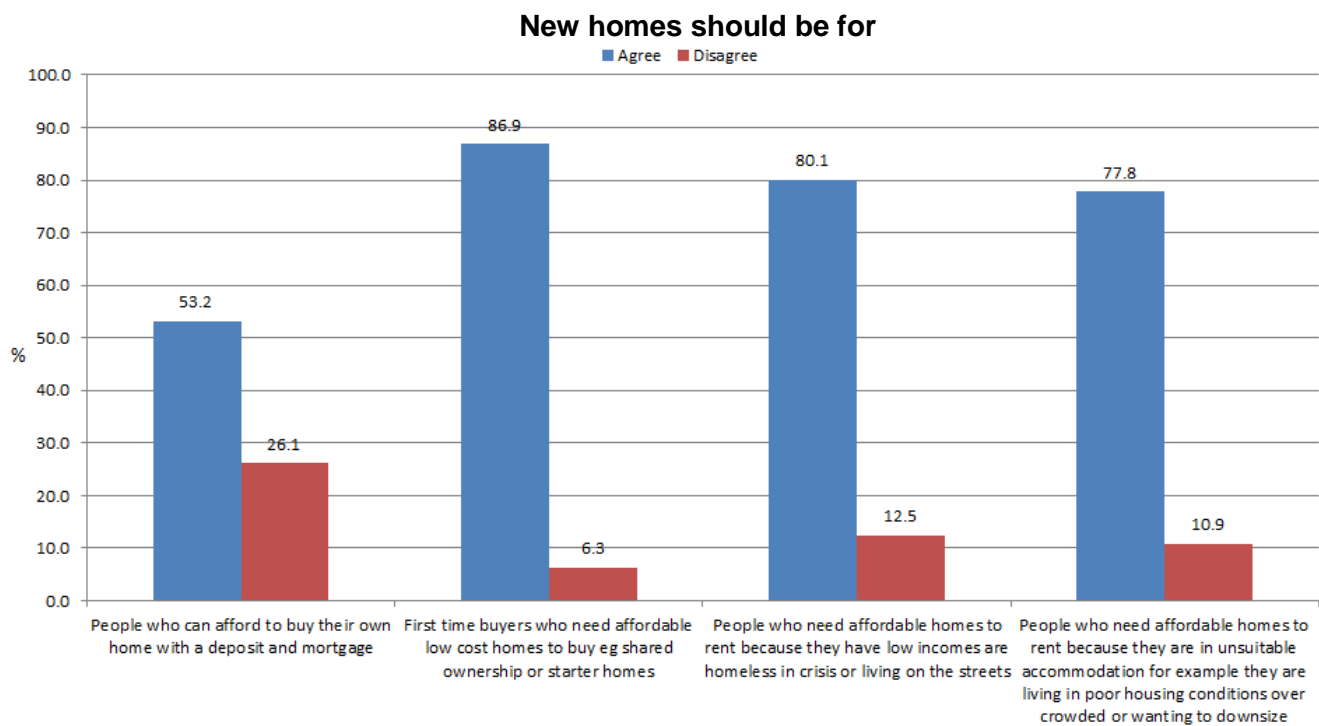
221 valid responses. In total 77.8% agreed with this and 10.9% disagreed.

**New homes should be for people who need affordable homes to rent because they are in unsuitable accommodation, for example they are living in poor housing conditions, over crowded or wanting to downsize**



## Overall

Respondents agreed with all of the statements about who the new homes should be for. The statement with the highest percentage of agreement was that new homes should be for first time buyers who need affordable low cost homes to buy e.g. shared ownership or starter homes, 86.9% of respondents agree and agreed strongly with this. Followed by the statement people who need affordable homes to rent because they have low incomes, are homeless, in crisis or living on the streets with 80.1% of respondents agreeing or agreeing strongly. The statement with lowest level of agreement (53.2%) at and the highest level of disagreement (26.1%) was that new homes should be for people who can afford to buy their own home with a deposit and mortgage.



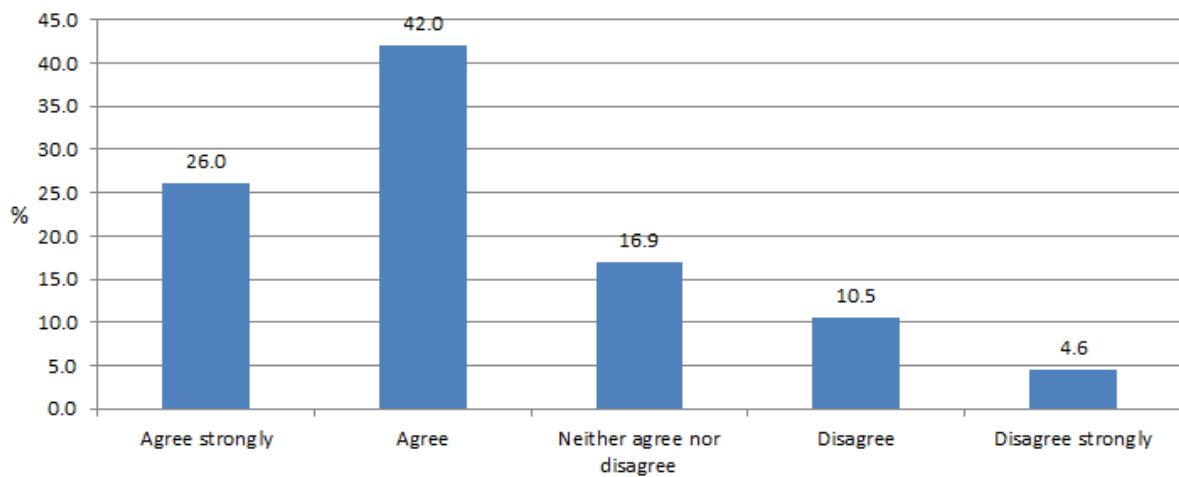
## Types of households that should have priority

This section consisted of five statements which respondents were asked how strongly they agree or disagree with which types of households that should have priority.

### 1. Older people who want to downsize because their current home is too large

219 valid responses (excluding the one 'I don't knows'). In total 68.0% agreed with this and 15.1% disagreed.

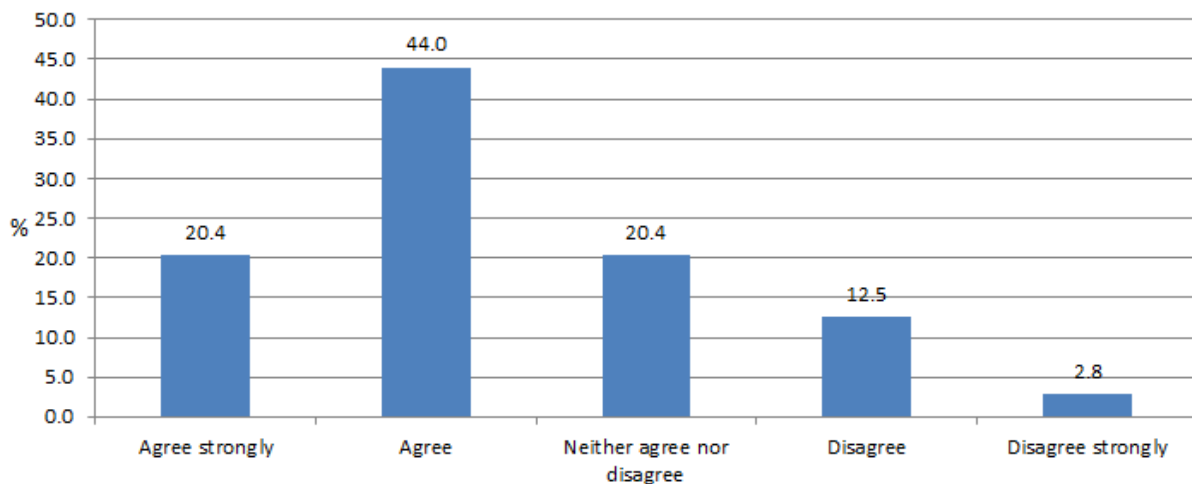
#### Older people who want to downsize because their current home is too large should have priority



### 2. Single people or couples who need a one bedroom home

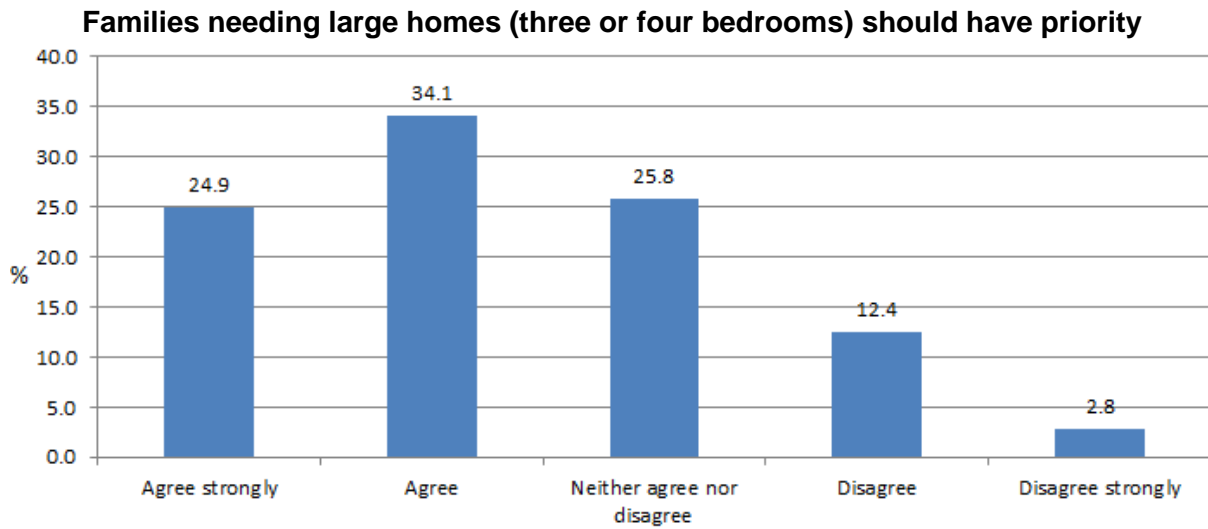
216 valid responses (excluding the two 'I don't knows'). In total 64.4% agreed with this and 15.3% disagreed.

#### Single people or couples who need a one bedroom home should have priority



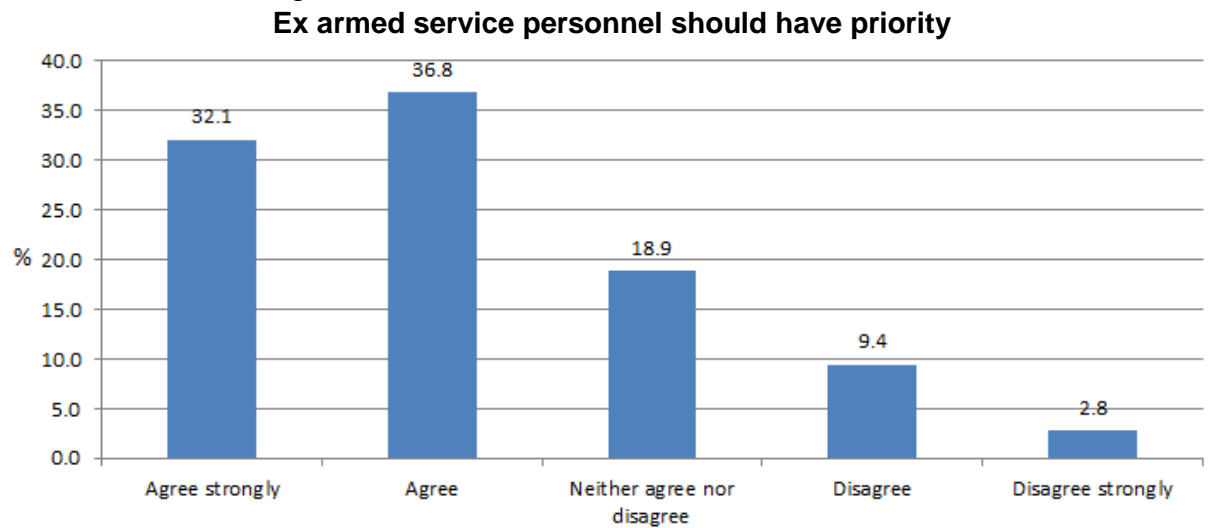
### 3. Families needing large homes (three or four bedrooms)

217 valid responses (excluding the three 'I don't knows'). In total 59.0% agreed with this and 15.2% disagreed.



### 4. Ex armed service personnel

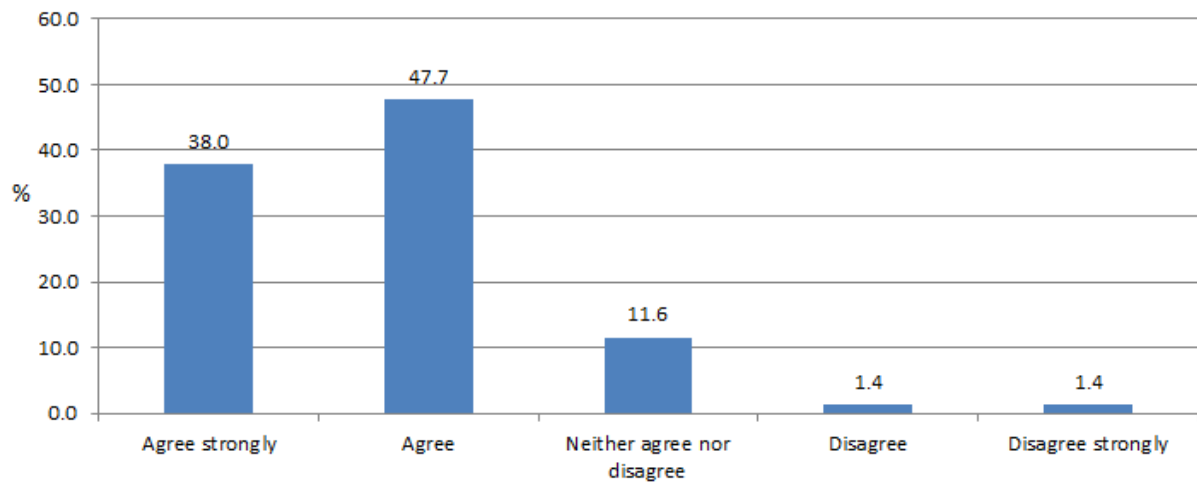
212 valid responses (excluding the three 'I don't knows'). In total 68.9% agreed with this and 12.3% disagreed.



**5. Households where someone is disabled and needs a home which can accommodate a wheelchair and specialist equipment e.g. a lift or hoist system**

216 valid responses (excluding the four 'I don't knows'). In total 85.6% agreed with this and 2.8% disagreed.

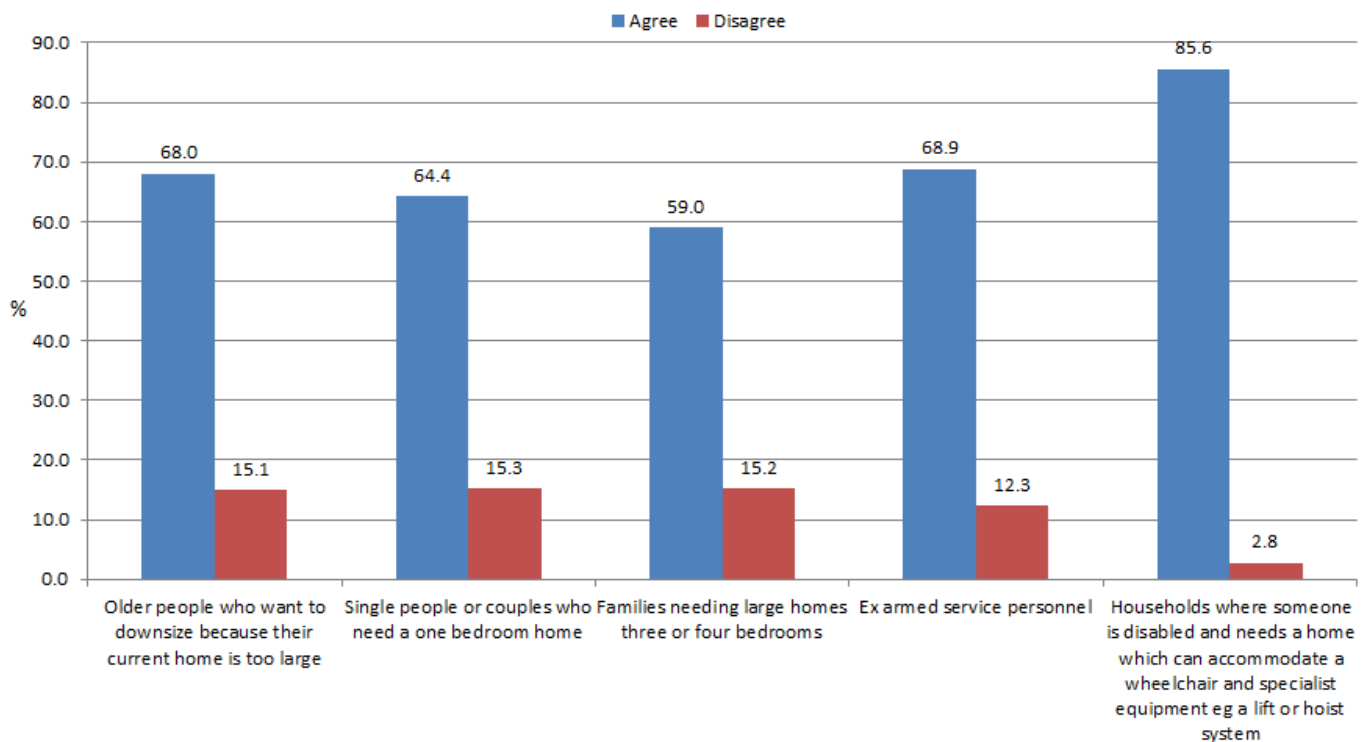
**Households where someone is disabled and needs a home which can accommodate a wheelchair and specialist equipment e.g. a lift or hoist system should have priority**



## Overall

Respondents agreed with all of the statements about who should have priority for homes. The highest level of agreements was with households where someone is disabled and needs a home which can accommodate a wheelchair and specialist equipment e.g. a lift or hoist system should have priority, with 85.6% agreeing or agreeing strongly. Followed by ex armed service personnel having priority, with 68.9% agreeing or agreeing strongly. Very closely after ex-armed service personnel having priority was older people who want to downsize because their current home is too large having priority, with 68.0% agreeing or agreeing strongly.

### Households that should have priority

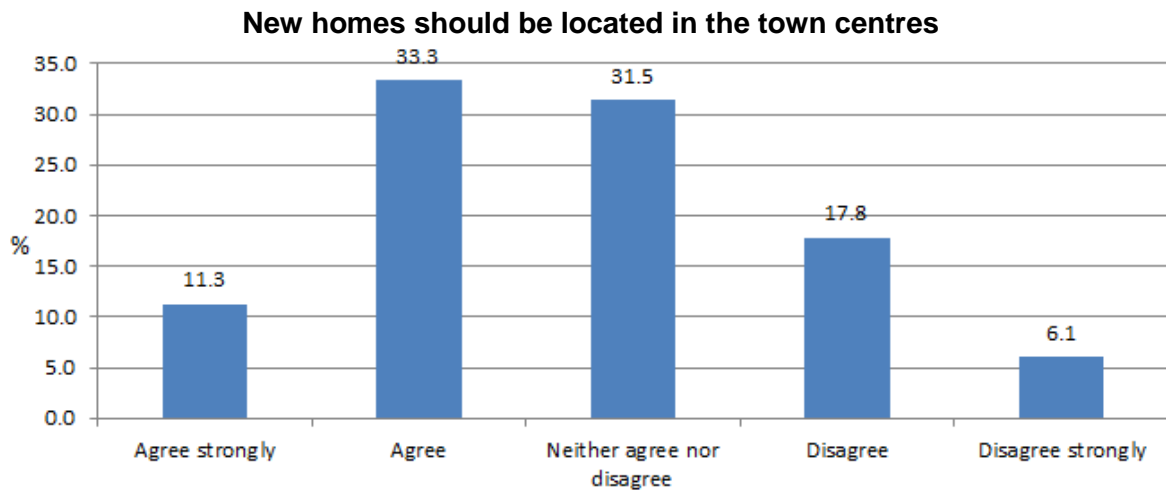


## Location of new homes

This section asked whether respondents agreed or disagreed with locations for new homes.

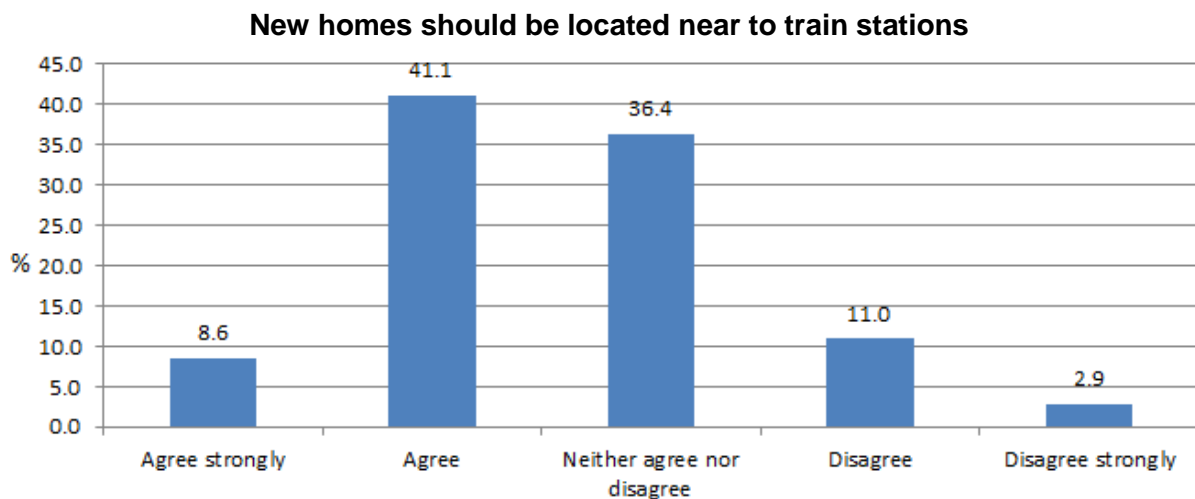
### 1. In the town centres

213 valid responses (excluding the two 'I don't knows'). In total 44.6% agreed with this and 23.9% disagreed.



### 2. Near to train stations

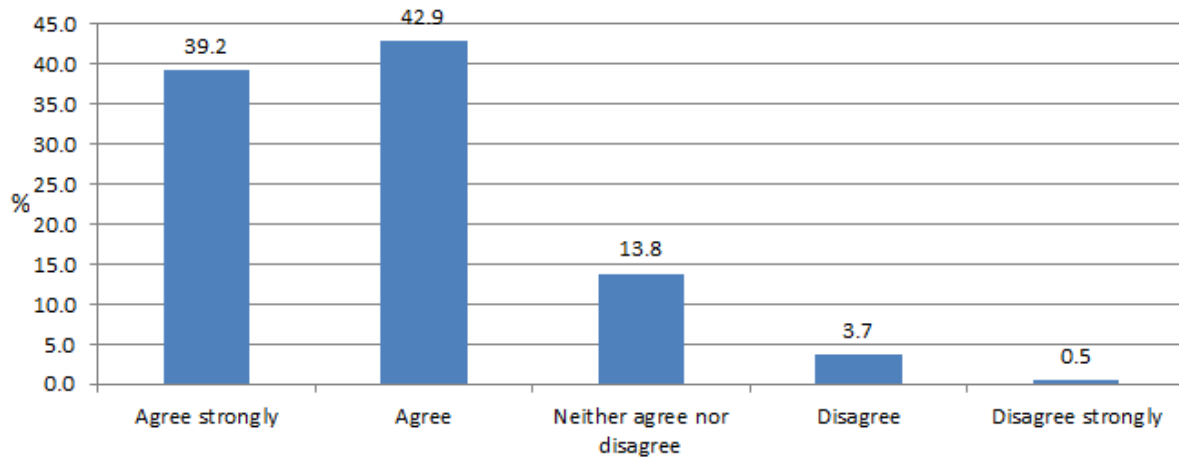
209 valid responses (excluding the two 'I don't knows'). In total 49.8% agreed with this and 13.9% disagreed.



### 3. On sites which have previously been used for commercial and industrial uses

217 valid responses (excluding the one 'I don't know'). In total 82.0% agreed with this and 4.1% disagreed

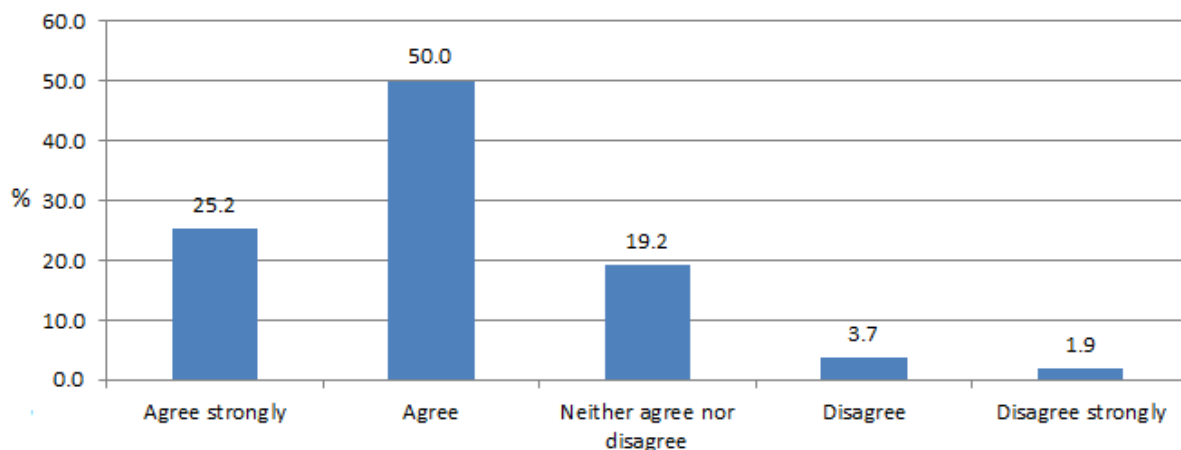
#### New homes should be located on sites which have previously been used for commercial and industrial uses



### 4. In Aldershot

214 valid responses (excluding the three 'I don't knows'). In total 75.2% agreed with this and 5.6% disagreed.

#### New homes should be located in Aldershot

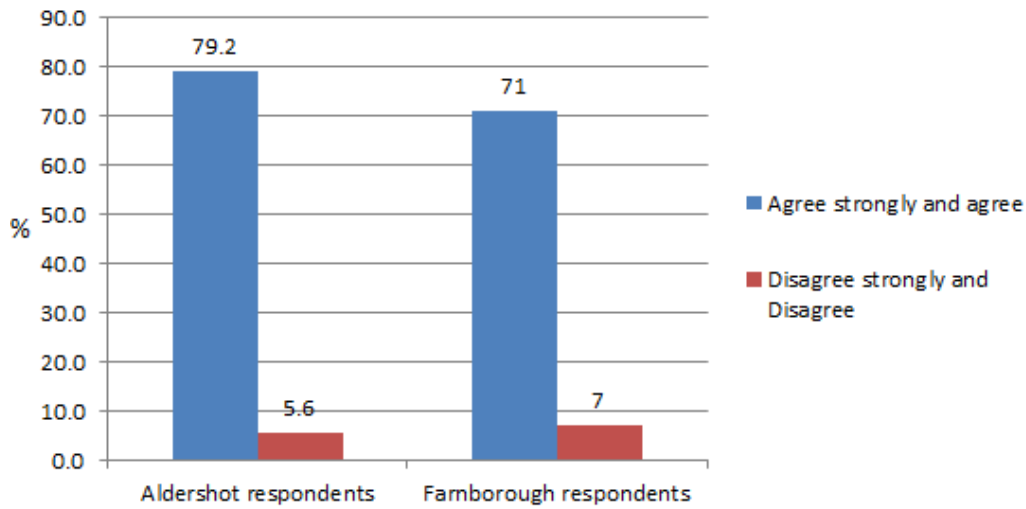


### Aldershot and Farnborough respondents view

Of the respondents who filled in their postcode 79.2% of Aldershot resident agreed that new homes should be in Aldershot and 71% of Farnborough resident agreed that new homes should be in Aldershot.



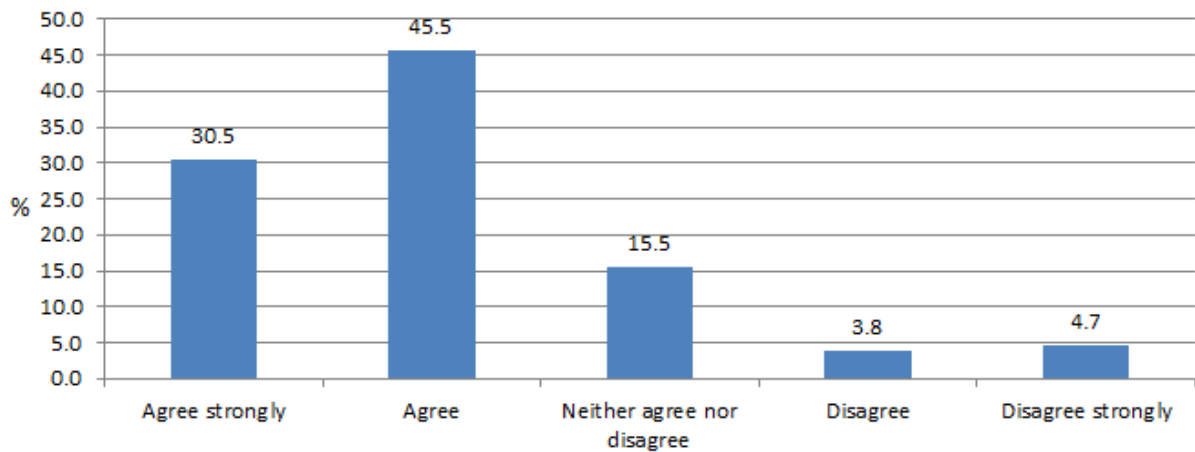
**Aldershot and Farnborough respondents view whether new homes should be in Aldershot**



**5. In Farnborough**

213 valid responses (excluding the seven ‘I don’t knows’). In total 76.1% agreed with this and 8.5% disagreed.

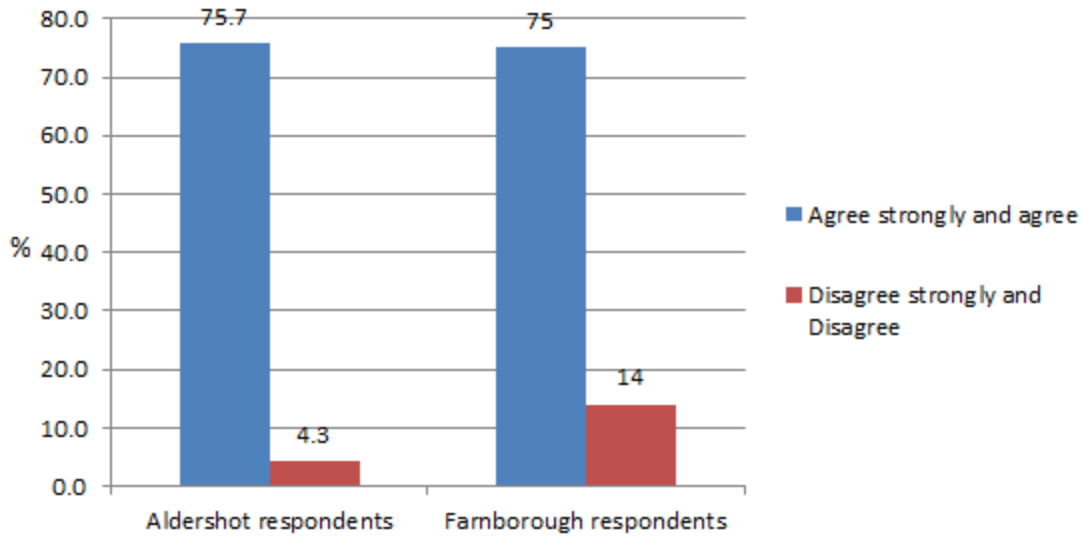
**New homes should be located in Farnborough**



**Aldershot and Farnborough respondents view**

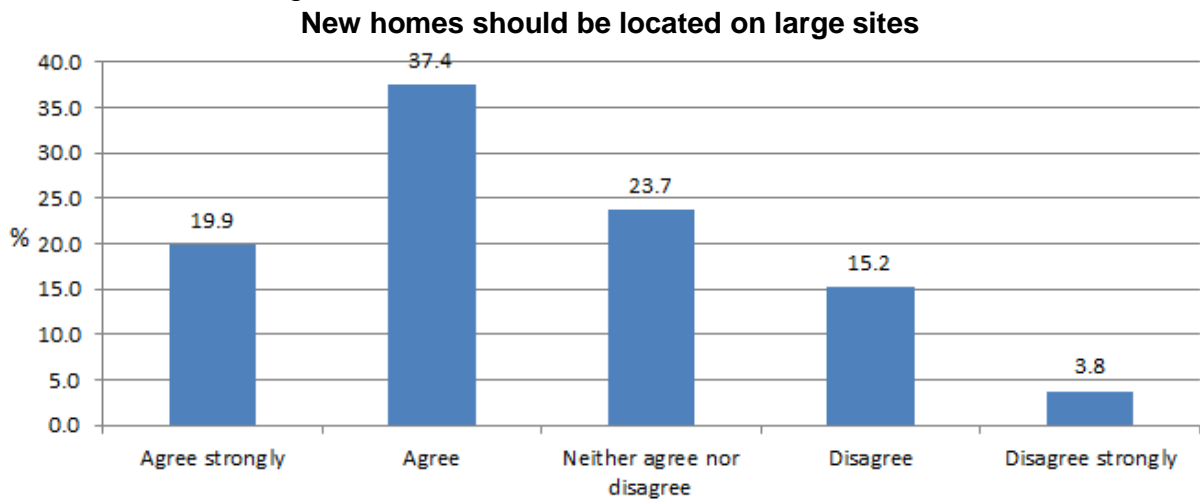
Of the respondents who filled in their postcode 75.7% of Aldershot resident agreed that new homes should be in Farnborough and 75% of Farnborough resident agreed that new homes should be in Farnborough.

**Aldershot and Farnborough respondents view whether new homes should be in Farnborough**



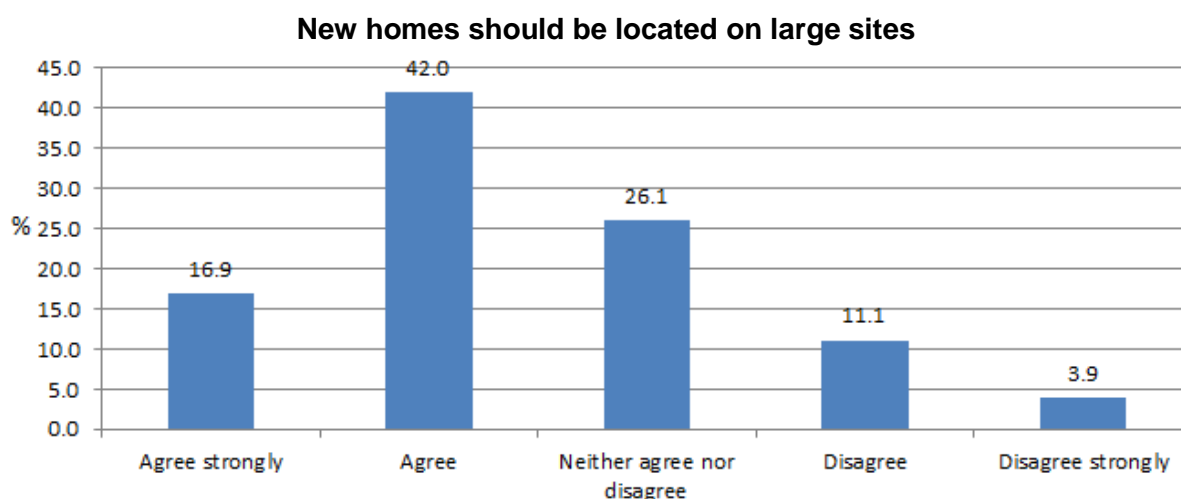
**6. On large sites**

211 valid responses (excluding the three 'I don't knows'). In total 57.23% agreed with this and 19.0% disagreed.



**7. On small infill sites**

207 valid responses (excluding the six 'I don't knows'). In total 58.9% agreed with this and 15.0% disagreed.



### 8. Other – please explain

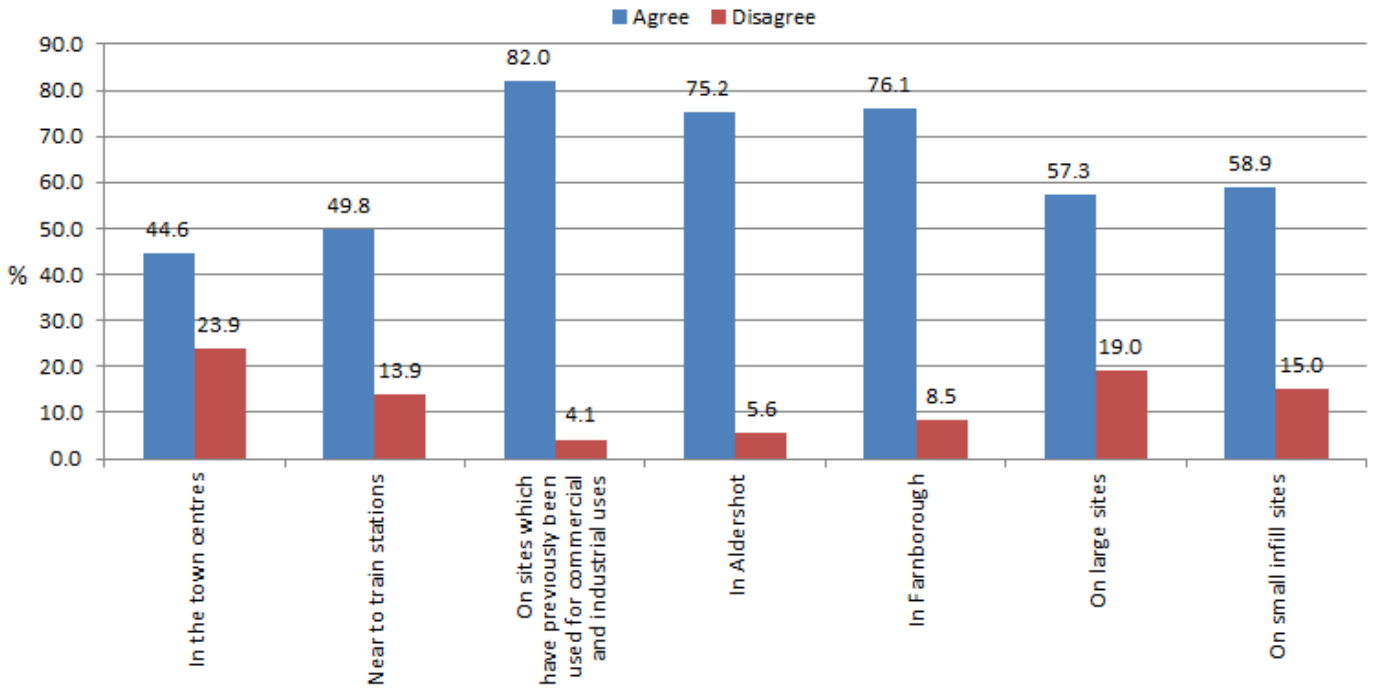
There were 30 answers to this question. The main themes of the comments were:

- Housing should be built on brownfield sites/unused offices and commercial premises (mentioned in four comments)
- Concern about current and future infrastructure e.g. schools, roads and amenities (mentioned in four comments)
- Concern about loss of green space (mentioned in four comments)

### Overall

Respondents agreed with all the locations for new homes. The highest level of agreement was for new homes on sites which have previously been used for commercial and industrial uses, with 82.0% agreeing or agreeing strongly. This was followed by homes should be located in Farnborough (76.1% agreed) and then by homes should be located in Aldershot (75.2% agreed). There was no difference between the Aldershot and Farnborough respondents, both agreed new homes should be in both towns. Although overall respondents agreed new homes should be in the town centre, this location had the highest level of disagreement with 23.9% disagreeing and strongly disagreeing.

### Location of new homes



## Housing advice

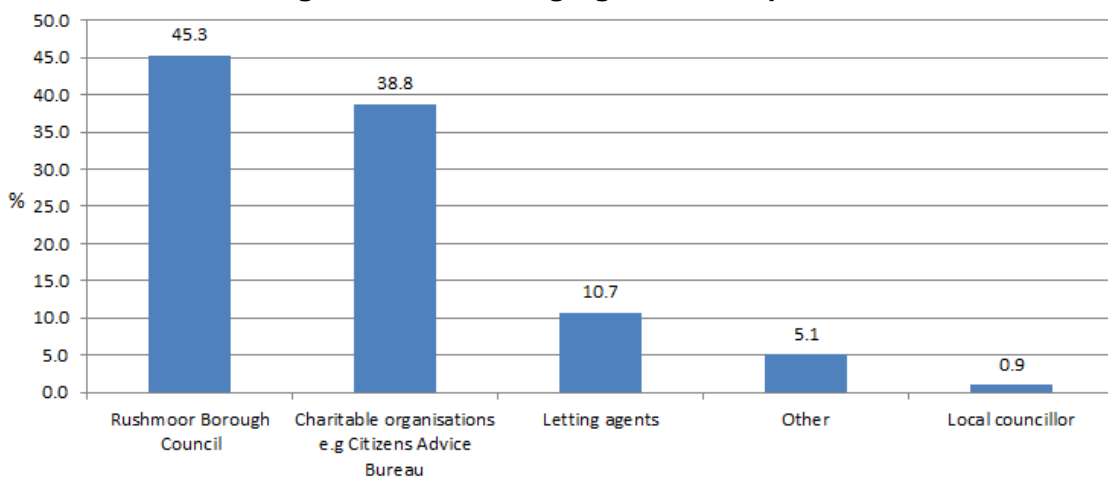
This section asked who respondents would approach first for housing advice.

### 1. Renting rights and responsibilities

214 valid responses (including one respondent who selected more than one item).

The highest percentage of respondents, 45.3% (97) would approach the council first for advice, the second highest percentage was charitable organisations e.g. Citizens Advice (38.8%).

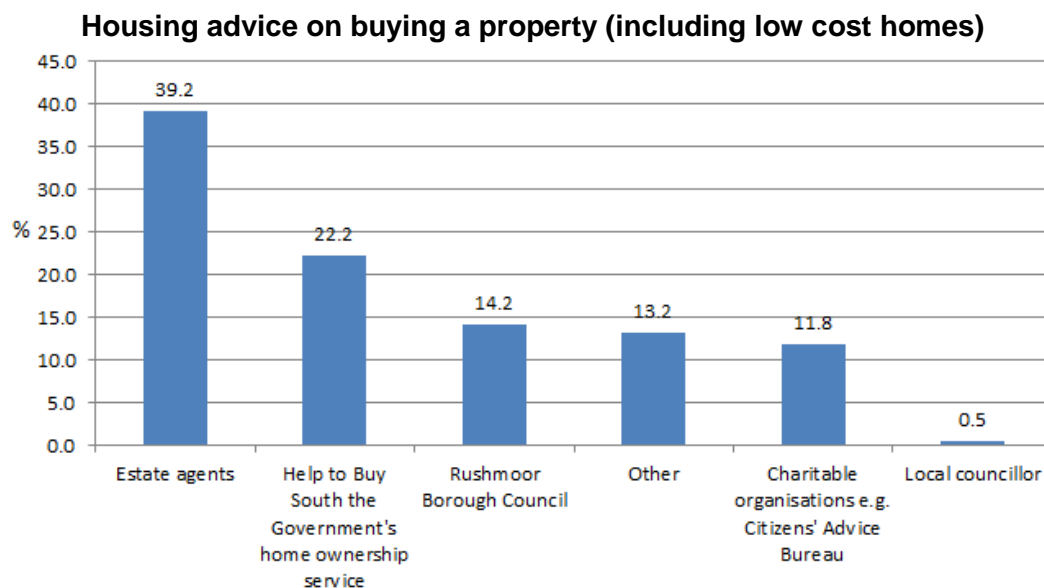
### Housing advice on renting rights and responsibilities



In total 10 respondents filed in the other comment box. Of those mentioned more than twice, seven of these comments said they would go to the internet first and two comments said they would go to a housing association first.

## 2. Advice on buying a property (including low cost homes)

212 valid responses (including two respondents who selected more than one item). The highest percentage of respondents, 39.2% (83) would approach an estate agent first for advice, the second highest percent was Help to Buy South, the Government's home ownership service (22.2%).

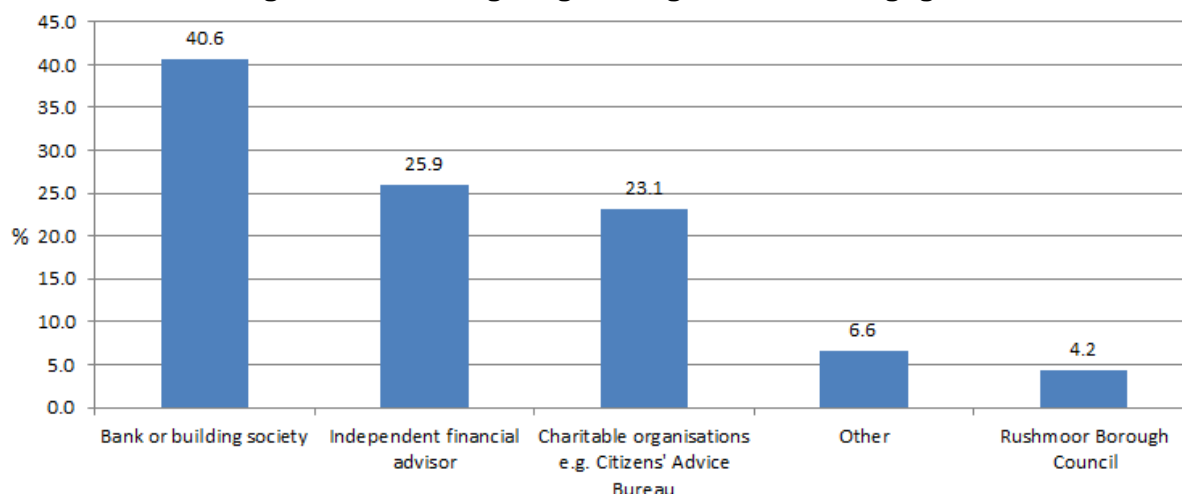


In total 23 respondents filed in the other comment box. Of those mentioned more than three times, 11 of these comments said they would go to the internet first, three of these comments said they would go to their bank/building society and three said they would go to family or friends.

## 3. Advice on budgeting, saving and how mortgages work:

212 valid responses (including one respondent who selected more than one item). The highest percentage of respondents, 40.6% (86) would approach a bank or building society first for advice, the second highest percent was Independent financial advisor (25.9%).

### Housing advice on budgeting, saving and how mortgages work



In total, four respondents filed in the other comments box. Of those mentioned more than three times, nine of these comments said they would go to the internet first and three of these said they would go to family or friends.

### Any other comments

There were 44 answers to this question. The main themes of the comments were:

- The high cost of renting and buying in the area (mentioned in nine comments)
- Housing should be for long-term Rushmoor residents (mentioned in five comments)
- Concern about infrastructure (mentioned in five comments)
- The need for more social housing (mentioned in four comments)

## Summary

The characteristics of the respondents showed that 63.7% were female, 47.0% were 25-44 years old, 81.4% didn't have any conditions or disabilities which limit daily activities, over 56% of respondents owned their own homes either outright or on a mortgage and 88.7% them identified themselves as white British. Of the respondents who filled in a Rushmoor postcode, 59.1% were from Farnborough and 40.9% were from Aldershot - this a close reflection of the population of the borough.

Respondents disagreed that Rushmoor didn't need any new homes with 79.4% of respondents disagreeing or disagreeing strongly with the statement. Of the statements connected to types of homes the highest level of agreement was with Rushmoor needs more affordable low cost housing to buy, for example shared ownership or shared equity with 81% agreeing or agreeing strongly. Followed by the statement Rushmoor needs more affordable homes for rent (with housing associations) with 79.9% agreeing or agreeing strongly. Although more people agreed than disagreed, the statement Rushmoor needs more private rented accommodation was the type of home that had the most disagreement with 32.6% disagreeing or disagreeing strongly.

Respondents agreed with all of the statements about who the new homes should be for. The statement with the highest percentage of agreement was that new homes should be for first time buyers who need affordable low cost homes to buy e.g. shared ownership or starter homes, 86.9% of respondents agree and agreed strongly with this. Followed by the statement, people who need affordable homes to rent because they have low incomes, are homeless, in crisis or living on the streets, with 80.1% of respondents agreeing or agreeing strongly. The statement with lowest level of agreement (53.2%) at and the highest level of disagreement (26.1%) was that new homes should be for people who can afford to buy their own home with a deposit and mortgage.

Respondents agreed with all of the statements about who should have priority for homes. The highest level of agreement was with households where someone is disabled and needs a home which can accommodate a wheelchair and specialist equipment e.g. a lift or hoist system should have priority, with 85.6% agreeing or agreeing strongly. There was also strong agreement for ex- armed service personnel having priority, with 68.9% agreeing or agreeing strongly, followed by older people who want to downsize because their current home is too large having priority, with 68% agreeing or agreeing strongly.

Respondent agreed with all the locations for new homes. The highest level of agreement as for new homes on sites which have previously been used for commercial and industrial uses, with 82.0% agreeing or agreeing strongly. This was followed by homes should be located in Farnborough (76.1% agreed) and then by homes should be located in Aldershot (75.2% agreed). There was no difference

between the Aldershot and Farnborough respondents, both agreed new homes should be in both towns. Although overall respondents agreed new homes should be in the town centre, this location had the highest level of disagreement with 23.9% disagreeing or strongly disagreeing.

Respondents would go to Rushmoor Borough Council first for advice on renting rights and responsibilities (45.3%), followed by charitable organisations e.g. Citizens Advice (38.8%). Respondents would go to estate agents first for advice on buying a property including low cost homes (39.2%), followed by Help to Buy South, the Government's home ownership service (22.2%). Respondents would approach a bank or building society first for advice on budgeting, saving and how mortgages work (40.6%), followed by an Independent financial advisor (25.9%).



Please tell us if there are any other comments you would like to make that haven't been covered in our survey:

### ABOUT YOU

To help us understand the views of different groups of people, it would be helpful if you could tell us more about you (you do not have to give us this information)

#### Gender

- Male     Female

Which of the following age bands do you belong to?

- 16-24 years  
 25-44  
 45-64  
 65-79  
 80+

Do you consider yourself to have any conditions or disabilities, which limit your daily activities?

- Yes  
 No  
 I'd prefer not to say

Which of these describes your current accommodation?

- Owned outright  
 Buying on mortgage  
 Rent from housing association  
 Rent from private landlord  
 Living with parents/relatives or friends  
 Homeless or sofa surfing  
 Other

Your postcode: \_\_\_\_\_

## EQUALITY MONITORING QUESTIONS

### What is your ethnic group?

- White-British
- White-Irish
- White-Gypsy/Traveller
- Any other white background \_\_\_\_\_
- Mixed – white and black Caribbean
- Mixed – white and black African
- Mixed – white and Asian
- Any other mixed background \_\_\_\_\_
- Asian or Asian British – Nepali
- Asian or Asian British – Indian
- Asian or Asian British – Pakistani
- Asian or Asian British – Bangladeshi
- Asian or Asian British – Chinese
- Any other Asian background
- Black or black British – Caribbean
- Black or black British – African
- Any other black background \_\_\_\_\_
- Any other background \_\_\_\_\_
- I'd prefer not to say

**Thanks for your views, we'll be using the information you give us to inform our Housing and Homelessness Strategy 2016 - 2021 which will be considered by members of our Cabinet later this year.**

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Rushmoor Borough Council  
May 2016

**Data on House Prices and Incomes**

This additional data supports the data included in Theme One: The right homes in the right place.

Table 1: Average House Prices over the last 12 Months to August 2017

Post code area GU11		
	Average Price Paid £	Current Average Value £*
All	270,845	294,514
Detached	440,179	501,948
Semi-detached	336,862	343,746
Terrace	282,102	274,336
Flats	186,800	186,189
Post code area GU14		
All	330,124	348,803
Detached	484,772	511,743
Semi detached	351,367	355,769
Terraced	298,589	295,584
Flats	214,375	226,802
Source: Zoopla		

\*based on current Zoopla estimates

Table 2: Income data from the housing allocations pool August 2017

Income £	House size needed						
	1 bed	2 bed	3 bed	4 bed	5 bed	Tot	%
Under 10,000	82	26	7	2	1	118	24
10,001-15,000	71	42	19	5	0	137	28
15,001 - 20,000	47	44	20	5	1	117	24
20,001 – 27,500	17	31	38	3	2	91	18
27,501 – 32,500	3	4	13	1	1	22	4.5

32,501 – 40,000	1	2	2	0	0	5	1
40,001 – 55,000			3			3	0.5
Total	221	149	102	16	5	493	100
Source: Rushmoor Borough Council Housing Allocations Pool							

### Homelessness Review 2016

#### Introduction

The Homelessness Act 2002 requires the council to produce a homelessness review to support the housing and homelessness Strategy. In addition to our formal consultation activities with housing partners, elected members and Rushmoor residents, we have:

- Undertaken a housing needs assessment in partnership with organisations directly involved in preventing homelessness and supporting homeless people
- Audited homelessness services and assessed resources available to tackle homelessness
- Developed a programme for implementing our housing and homelessness strategy in the form of the Housing Strategy Delivery Plan, where key objectives and actions are set out for the next five years

#### Assessing needs and resources

Over the past two to three years, the number of people in Rushmoor presenting as homeless has increased by 39 %.

Table 1 below shows data collected by the council's Housing Options team.

**Table 1: Housing Option Data**

Housing Option Data as at 31 <sup>st</sup> March 2016	2014/15	2015/16	% Change
Number of homeless households presenting to the council	116	162	39% increase
Number of homeless household acceptances	85	107	32% increase
Number of households receiving advice and assistance	651	600	8% reduction
Number of households in the housing allocation pool	1201	1307	9% increase
Rent bonds issued	102	54	53% reduction
Full rent deposits issued	102	13	87% reduction
Single person rent deposit issued	30	20	33% reduction
Priority homeless households in temporary accommodation	145	157	8% increase
Rough sleeper count *	11	15	36%

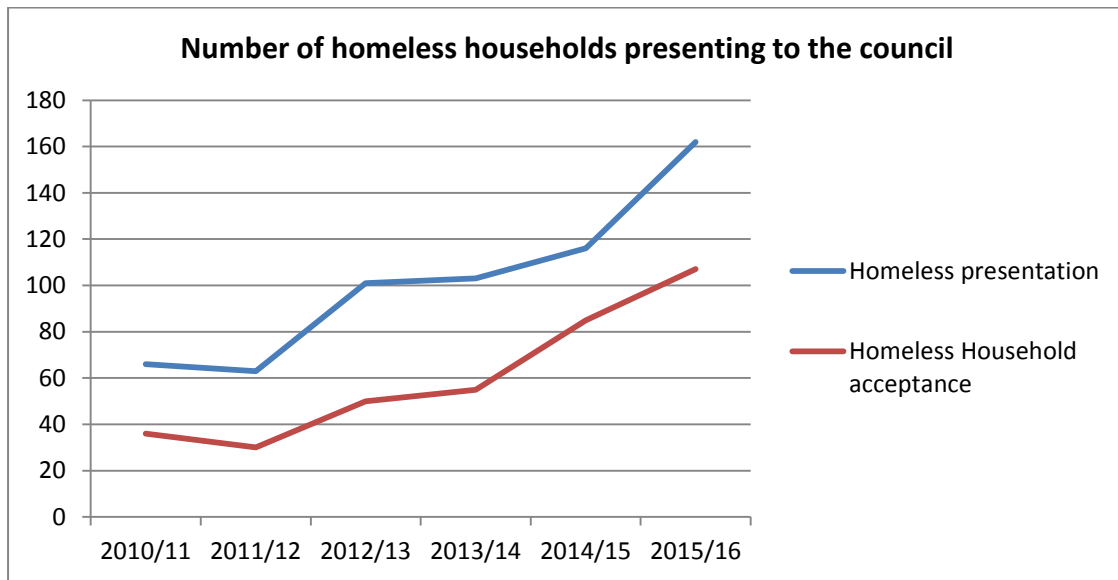
			increase
Number of people claiming Housing Benefit or Local Housing Allowance	6541	6398	2% reduction

\*Source: DCLG Rough Sleeper Count

### Reasons for homelessness for accepted households

The council’s success in preventing homelessness has led to the reduction in homeless acceptances (as a percentage of homeless approaches). However, the number of homeless households presenting to the council is steadily rising, as shown in the graph below. Our Housing Options team records the reasons for homelessness of those approaching for initial housing options advice. Table 2 shows the type of households found to be eligible for help. The main reasons for loss of a home are parent/relative/friends no longer being able to assist; loss of private rented accommodation due to landlord serving notice; relationship breakdown. Other reasons include rent and mortgage arrears leading to loss of accommodation (Table 3).

We have experienced an increase in street homelessness of single people with drug and alcohol dependency. We have provided a 9 bed hostel which can accommodate nine single people with drug and alcohol support needs and provide specialist help to access mainstream accommodation.



**Table 2: Type of household accepted as homeless**

Household Type	2014/15	2015/2016
With dependent children	65	54
Pregnant no other children	4	13
Applicant aged 16 or 17 years	0	0
Applicant formerly in care and aged 18 -20 years	0	1
Vulnerable – physical disability	4	10
Vulnerable – old age	1	1
Vulnerable – mental illness or handicap	8	15
Vulnerable violence	3	0
Drug dependency	0	4
Alcohol dependency	0	8
Other	0	1
<b>Total</b>	<b>85</b>	<b>107</b>

**Table 3: Reasons for homelessness of accepted households**

	2014/15	2015/16
Parents no longer willing to assist	11	28
Relatives/friend no longer willing to assist	9	13
Relationship breakdown with partner – non -violent	8	5
Relationship breakdown with partner –violent	3	2
Breakdown of relationship involving associated partner	0	3
Violence - other	2	0
Harassment, threats or intimidation	2	3
Mortgage arrears	0	1
Rent arrears – local authority or other public dwelling	1	0
Rent arrears – private rented	2	2
End of assured shorthold tenancy (AST)	25	28
Loss of rented – other than end of AST	4	4
Left prison/on remand	0	1
Left hospital	1	2
Left other institution or local authority care	0	4
Left armed forces	13	5
Other reasons (e.g. homeless in an emergency, sleeping rough or in hostel)	4	6
<b>Total</b>	<b>85</b>	<b>107</b>

### Consultation with statutory and voluntary partners

Partners and officers agreed that the best way to monitor homeless trends and progress in preventing and tackling homelessness is within existing networking meetings and information collected by our Housing Options and Revenues and Benefits team.

We discuss homelessness trends, the potential impact of welfare reform changes and suggested priorities at regular meetings with partners and voluntary agencies including:

- Registered Providers (RPs) liaison meeting with all RPs owning and managing housing stock in Rushmoor
- Supported housing providers
- RP review programme
- Rushmoor’s Health and Wellbeing meetings (i.e. NHS, Hampshire County Council, Rushmoor Borough Council and Social Services)
- Rushmoor Voluntary Services
- Homeless forum
- Annual landlords’ forum
- Other council teams: Housing Options, Housing Strategy & Enabling, Revenue & Benefits, Private Sector, Housing and Family Mosaic.

**Table 4: Telephone survey with some of the council’s key support service partners showed**

Key line of enquiry:	Summary of responses
Have they seen a change in demand for their service over the last two to three years?	Partners have seen a clear increase in the demand for their services over the last two to three years.
If so, what has been the impact to their organisation?	Longer waiting lists, people’s circumstances deteriorating into crisis, increases in ‘bad behaviour’ to secure support and an increased risk of minor offending (Step by Step and probation) ; pressure on staff and volunteers and pressure on budgets.
What do they think is the main cause of homelessness?	Lack of affordable homes to rent locally is the main cause coupled with changes to the benefit system, especially for single under 35s. Parental eviction remains the main cause



	for younger people. For young people with mental health and LD??, parents are not being able to cope; drug alcohol and mental health problems; relationship problems and abuse.
What do they think the trend is likely to be for the next five years?	Dependant on funding models in the future: all respondents expect resources to reduce and homelessness to continue to increase especially for the under 35age group.
Do they partner with any other organisations if so who?	Hampshire County Council Children and Adult Services, education, police, charities, housing associations and voluntary organisations are all partnering with each other.
What do they consider the main gaps in services to prevent people becoming homeless?	Lack of financial resources, more support and education needs to be invested into money management and dealing with neighbourhood issues; not enough support staff and social workers , not enough support for people with drug and alcohol addictions who are often refused help until they are clean/ sober.
Do they think there are services, which are overprovided?	No

## Our resources

### Support services

The following organisations provide outreach work or other support services to homeless households in Rushmoor as at June 2016.

**Table 5: The following organisations provide specialist support**

Organisation	Service
Adult Services social workers	Support and protection of vulnerable adults
Amber project	Referrals to Surrey Drug and Alcohol services
British Legion	Provides rent bonds to ex-military personnel
Broadhurst Community Action Project	Tenancy support for people with mental health problems
Citizens Advice	Housing and benefits of advice and signposting to housing related services

Child and Adolescent Mental Health Service (CAMHS)	Specialist NHS mental health service for children and young people
Catch 22 D&A	Telephone based support service for under 18s providing information and advice on drug and alcohol issues
Children's Services social workers	Support and protection of vulnerable children
Community Mental Health Recovery Services (CMHRS)	Provides mental health support face to face for people in crisis and open eves and weekends
DnA (part of Youth Aims)	A holistic approach to tackling drug alcohol and housing problems
Fleet Lions	Provide starter packs for homeless households
Food Bank	Provide food to households in crisis
Hampshire's Help for Single Homeless Project	£250,000 funding from DCLG to deliver a project across seven councils – outreach work and multi-agency hub approach to try different approaches to prevent and tackle single homelessness.
Inclusion D&A (formerly HOMER)	Drug treatment organisation based in Aldershot
Oak Housing Association - Clayton Court	Temporary accommodation for homeless households
Probation	Statutory criminal justice service which supports high risk ex-criminals back into the community
SSAFA	Charity supporting serving armed forces and veterans
Sanctuary Housing Association	Mental health support services
Skilled Up	Training and employment opportunities
The Blue Lamp Trust	To enable victims of domestic abuse to remain at home
The Source	Engagement with 11-25 year olds struggling with school, the law, family relationships and consequential housing and homelessness issues
The Vine	Day centre for homeless people and those at risk of being made homeless, offering a range of advice, support and training. It also runs the winter night shelter. In 2015/16: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• 138 clients received an individual support needs assessment and housing plan</li> </ul>

	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• 41 clients were secured a private rented tenancy</li> <li>• 50 clients were assisted into hostel, night shelter or supported accommodation</li> <li>• 18 clients were assisted with a reconnection back to their home area</li> <li>• 36 clients were assisted to secure education, training, volunteering or employment opportunities</li> </ul>
Youth Aims	Part of StepbyStep drop-in advice, information and mediation service for young people, aged 16 to 21 years, and their families.

### Specialist accommodation

**Table 6: The following organisations deliver specialist accommodation with support**

Organisation	Accommodation provided
Gurkha Homes	Providing specialist, quality HMO accommodation for former Gurkhas
Haig Homes	Providing accommodation for ex-Armed Forces
Home Group (Stonham)	Provides specialist accommodation including life hostel for single mums, a women's refuge and supported accommodation for homeless people and those with learning disabilities
Hampshire Integrated DV?? and Abuse Service	Women's refuge -specialist domestic abuse service provision
The You Trust	Accommodation to provide move-on accommodation from women's refuge for victims of domestic abuse
Riverside Housing (Mike Jackson House)	Supported accommodation for veterans who are homeless
Seeability	Specialist accommodation for those with learning disabilities and visual impairment
Society of St James	Specialist homeless hostel accommodation
Step by Step	Specialist accommodation and supported lodgings for young people aged 16-21
Stoll	Specialist accommodation and accommodation pathways for veterans
North Lane Lodge hostel	Specialist housing and intervention to be able to access mainstream accommodation for single people with drug and alcohol support needs.
Winter night shelter	Open to meet the requirements of Severe Weather Emergency Protocol (SWEP) and run by The Vine out of Holy Trinity Church, Aldershot.

**Table 7: Pathway to accommodation and support**

Housing Options advice	Housing options interviews – home visits- negotiation with families, third parties and landlords. Improved housing options. Software has been installed. Access to temporary and social housing accommodation.
Referral to specialist accommodation	The council works with partner organisations to provide supported housing placements to customers with specialist needs who have a Rushmoor connection, are in identified housing need, and are prepared to engage with the support services offered.
Referral to night shelter and North Lane Lodge	Officers refer homeless clients to night shelters and wet hostels. The council makes accommodation available to all homeless households irrespective of priority need under statutory homelessness duties during severe cold weather periods (SWEF).
Supply of temporary accommodation available to homeless people	The welfare reforms and lack of affordable accommodation in the private rented sector has had a direct impact on the increase in demand for temporary accommodation. There are 88 units of temporary accommodation in Rushmoor: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Wet hostel?? for up to nine people</li> <li>• Clayton Court- 45 units of temporary</li> <li>• Night shelter - ten bed spaces (SWEF)</li> <li>• Brighstone - ten units; Mulberry House - four units and Aspen Court - three units</li> <li>• Mills House - seven units</li> </ul>
Plans for the provision of social housing	Housing and Homelessness Strategy 2017-2022 - updated annually.  Rushmoor Borough Council's Core Strategy  Rushmoor Borough Council's Housing Development Guidance notes  One of our challenges is to make best use of the borough's existing housing stock and to maximise additional stock  The 1% rent reduction for Registered Providers of social housing and the Government's recent policy to facilitate homeownership are likely to impact on the delivery of affordable homes. We will need to look at new approaches to facilitate new affordable rented homes.  Our shared ownership local priority policy aims

	<p>to give priority to households who are renting privately in Rushmoor to create movement in the private rented housing market.</p> <p>We have implemented an under-occupation and overcrowded policy alongside a Chain Letting Policy to help movement in housing association stock and free up larger family homes.</p>
Accommodation and support provision	<p>Referral to supported accommodation providers for people with specific needs.</p> <p>Referral to night shelters and hostels.</p>
Access to temporary accommodation, including bed and breakfast	<p>With the increased provision of temporary accommodation of 52 units provided at Clayton Court and Mills House and the use of the night shelter during severe weather emergency protocol (SWEP) periods, the use of bed and breakfast has steadily reduced. We have assisted 81 individuals with cold weather placements since the night shelter was launched in 2013 and there have been no cold weather placements made into B&amp;B.</p>
Access to private rented accommodation and rent guarantee schemes	<p>We are currently supporting 128 households in the private sector by providing a bond or cash deposit and/or rent in advance. Our dependence on private rented accommodation is increasing. We have seen dramatic reduction in the number of rent bonds and deposits we have provided in 2015/16 because of the shortage of affordable private rented properties, particularly to households who rely on benefits and are affected by the welfare reforms and the benefit cap.</p> <p>We are examining ways to maximise access to private rented homes by increasing tenancy advice and are considering training officers as a specialist contact to landlords who are reluctant to give tenancies to households referred by the council.</p> <p>We hold annual landlords' forums and homelessness forums.</p>
Council staff available for homelessness and related work	<p>With the emphasis to homeless prevention, our Housing Options team consists of seven full time offices and a part time housing allocations assistant. In the last 12 months, 600 households approached the council for advice and assistance.</p> <p>We have seen an increase of 39% of homeless</p>

	<p>households presenting and a seven per cent reduction in numbers accepted as homeless.</p> <p>Our preventative advice and assistance is proving effective and has helped households access alternative accommodation and resulted in a reduction of homeless acceptances.</p> <p>Our Housing Options staff have received training on welfare reform with Shelter.</p>
Policies and procedures for homeless services	<p>The Homelessness Act 2002  The Homelessness Code of Guidance for Local Authorities 2006  Localism Act 2011  Welfare Reform Act 2012  Making Every Contact Count - published by the Government, 2012  Rushmoor Borough Council's Housing Allocations Policy  Rushmoor Borough Council's Housing and Homelessness Strategy 2017-2022</p>

### Allocation of funding to assist in the provision of the pathway to accommodation and support

Budget allocation for homeless service	<p>We maximise our budget allocation for homeless services. We are proactive in bidding and securing additional government funding for schemes where there is opportunity and work closely with other Hampshire councils to achieve this.</p> <p>By increasing access to temporary accommodation, we have significantly reduced the need for costly B&amp;B.</p> <p>There has been no cold weather placements made into B&amp;B since the night shelter opened.</p> <p>We encourage landlords to accept rent bonds, reducing the costs of rent deposits.</p>
Voluntary agency services	<p><b>The Vine</b> - Day centre for homeless people and those at risk of being made homeless, offering a range of advice, support and training . It also runs the winter night shelter.</p> <p><b>Step by Step</b> - Specialist accommodation and supported lodgings for young people aged 16-21.</p> <p><b>Rushmoor Citizens Advice</b> – helps prevent homelessness by making sure clients receive</p>

	<p>their benefit entitlements, maximise their income, prioritise their debts and negotiate realistic repayment arrangements with landlords and creditors.</p>
Funding of voluntary organisations	<p>We benefit from having a number of voluntary advice and support services and have contributed funding to:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• The Vine</li> <li>• Step by Step</li> <li>• Rushmoor Citizens Advice</li> </ul>
Access to other sources of funding	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• £274,000 DCGL grant to develop a sub-regional, north Hampshire prevention of homelessness scheme</li> <li>• Funding secured for ex-offender tenancy support via Jigsaw</li> <li>• Oak Housing secured £695,000 HCA Empty Homes funding to help provide 45 units of temporary accommodation at Clayton Court</li> <li>• Hostel funding secured from CCG mental health, Hampshire County Council Drug &amp; Alcohol dependency and Rushmoor Borough Council capital grant funding</li> <li>• Stoll secured HCA Care and Support Specialist Housing funding for its scheme of supported housing for ex-armed forces personnel and their dependent families</li> <li>• DCLG £250,000 funding has been secured for 'Help for Single Homelessness' across seven north Hampshire districts to look at different approaches to dealing with people for whom traditional models of service delivery do not work - hub approach and assertive outreach training for outreach workers</li> <li>• We have secured DCLG funding of £50,000 from the Hampshire Domestic Abuse Programme to provide a property for victims of domestic abuse to move on from the women's refuge and a further £99,000 of DCLG funding from the Hampshire Domestic Abuse Programme to provide 33 privately rented homes across 11 Hampshire local authority areas for victims of domestic abuse.</li> <li>• £90,000 of funding has been made available to the Blue Lamp Trust to provide home security and sanctuary measures across 11 Hampshire local</li> </ul>

	authority areas to enable victims of domestic abuse to stay safe in their own home.
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### **Gaps and overlaps in services**

The shortage of social housing lettings generally is a national housing problem and unless government policy changes this is likely to continue.

The lack of emergency temporary accommodation to assist people in housing crisis puts pressure on the council to make use of bed and breakfast accommodation. Although we have some temporary accommodation available to us, the lack of move-on housing means that people have to stay longer than they should have to. Move-on accommodation is certainly a gap in provision, which we should be looking into over the next strategy period.

Our Housing Options service and partners have identified the need for more support for vulnerable people to help them maintain their tenancy and prevent them becoming homeless.

We could consider targeting council staff resources to provide additional advice and help to support private sector landlords, who are renting to vulnerable tenants.

Lack of specialist and integrated services for people with multiple needs means some people fail in the housing because the services they need are not joined up. This is often the case for people with dual diagnosis of mental health and substance misuse issues.

Prevention work is less effective than it could be because of the amount of work our housing options officers have to do to support people with complex needs

There is some evidence of an overlap in the delivery of outreach work to homeless people, for example, the Vine Day Centre has been delivering outreach support as part of its Journey programme and Stonham Housing has recently been awarded the Hampshire County Council Social Inclusion Project, which also covers outreach work.

### **Future trends in homelessness**

There are concerns that the potential loss of social housing properties because of the Right to Buy scheme and reduced new build development, will deplete further the available social housing stock.

The potential weakening in local authority nomination rights to housing association properties, coupled with the increasing shortage of private rented homes in the borough, could make it more difficult for us to discharge our homelessness duties.

The roll-out of Universal Credit and the introduction of new direct rental payment arrangements raise concerns about the possible impact of the already-fragile access to private tenancies to prevent or alleviate homelessness.

The new welfare reforms announced in the Government's summer 2015 budget and autumn statement will have particularly marked consequences for families with more than two children, and for out-of-work young, single people aged 18-21 (Youth Obligation due to start



in 2017). Subject to specific exemptions, these groups may be entirely excluded from support with their housing costs or may receive a very low shared accommodation rate of housing benefit in both the social and private rented sector.

Access to employments is an increasing priority for households receiving benefits, particularly those who are subject to the benefit cap who could increase their income if in employment above the criteria of required minimum hours. Access to employment is essential for young, single people under 35 years, because they are the most disadvantaged with low benefit and no affordable housing.

The one per cent cut in social rents and even more so, the extension of the Local Housing Allowance rate caps to the social rented sector have prompted concerns about the viability of supported accommodation services unless exemptions are applied to this sector.

The following information is a summary taken from the Strategic Housing Market Assessment (SHMA) for Rushmoor, Hart and Surrey Heath in 2014. The figures provided are for Rushmoor only. The SHMA sets the objectively assessed housing need for Rushmoor, which represents the total housing need and demand, at 470 homes a year. The evidence informing these predictions includes household and population changes including the impact of net migration, as well as prospective job and labour force growth.

<b>STAGE 1 CURRENT NEED</b>	Estimate
1.1 Current occupiers of affordable housing in need	210
1.2 <i>plus</i> households from other tenures in need	852
1.3 <i>plus</i> households without self-contained accommodation	35
1.4 <i>equals</i> total current housing need	1,095
1.5 <i>divided by</i> time period to address backlog of need	20 years
1.6 <i>equals</i> annual requirement of units to reduce current need	<b>55</b>
<b>STAGE 2 NEWLY ARISING NEED</b>	
2.1 New household formation per year	819
2.2 <i>times</i> proportion of new households unable to buy or rent in the market	46%
2.3 <i>plus</i> existing households falling into need	264
2.4 <i>equals</i> total newly arising need per year	<b>637</b>
<b>STAGE 3 FUTURE SUPPLY OF AFFORDABLE HOUSING</b>	
3.1 Current occupiers of affordable housing	11
3.2 <i>plus</i> supply of social re – lets (net)	473
3.3 <i>plus</i> annual supply of intermediate housing available for re-let or re-sale at sub market levels	12
3.4 <i>plus</i> surplus stock	0
3.5 <i>plus</i> committed supply of new affordable homes per year	0
3.6 <i>minus</i> units to be taken out of management	0
3.7 <i>equals</i> annual supply of affordable housing units	<b>496</b>
<b>NET SHORTFALL OF AFFORDABLE UNITS PER ANNUM</b>	<b>197</b>

Source: SHMA 2014

If there were to be 197 units of affordable housing provided each year for the next 20 years, we would be able to meet the backlog of affordable housing delivery and newly-forming need. A good supply of affordable housing is central to preventing homelessness. Unfortunately, government housing policies, in support of home ownership, work against

being able to achieve this. Budgetary restrictions to support and care services and uncertainty about the future funding of supported housing mean, at this point, we expect that homelessness will continue to increase.

### **Challenges, risks and opportunities**

Enabling people to find and sustain suitable accommodation in the long term is key to preventing homelessness. This is becoming increasingly challenging as existing and new social housing supply remains limited; rents in social housing are rising; and private rented homes are more difficult to access and afford for those on benefits. We are also witnessing an increase in homelessness among single people, and in particular rough sleeping, reflecting the national trend.

With the continued changes to government legislation, welfare reform, rising homelessness and the ability to discharge homelessness duty in the private sector, helping vulnerable households presents a number of challenges.

#### **Among the challenges are:**

- Welfare reforms
- Shortage of social housing lettings - not meeting demand
- Uncertainty from housing providers about the building of new, affordable homes because of housing and welfare reforms
- A lack of available land for development in the borough
- The need for additional temporary accommodation for people in housing crisis
- Lack of affordable private rented accommodation
- The situation of households in private rented accommodation, who cannot afford to buy a property, has increased demand for private rented properties in the borough. This, in turn, is not matched by supply, causing rents to rise
- Prospective landlords who are reluctant to offer tenancies to vulnerable clients
- The need for increased support for vulnerable people to help them maintain their tenancy in the private sector, and prevent them becoming homeless
- Secure additional shared accommodation for under 35s to increase housing options for this group
- To minimise the impact of welfare reforms by improving access to employment and training opportunities for people in housing need or at risk of becoming homeless

### **Risks**

As with most public services aimed at supporting our more vulnerable clients, there is the risk to further changes in government legislation and welfare reforms, making providing services increasingly challenging. Further cuts to public funding may reduce the capacity to maintain partnerships, which provide the services that prevent and respond to those in need of support. The Government's on-going welfare reform programme and in particular, the bedroom tax, roll-out of Universal Credit and the benefit cap, may increase the risk of homelessness.

#### **Risks in more detail:**

- The roll-out of Universal Credit
- Reduced benefit cap to £20,000 a year
- The number of benefit changes that will reduce benefits to claimants
- Access to employment is an increasing priority for our residents, who receive benefits, and is key to empowering people's independence
- With less benefit help and rising private rents, our ability to help homeless households into alternative private rented accommodation will become more challenging, with a greater proportion of private rented properties becoming unaffordable, particularly for larger households affected by the benefit cap
- Under the Government's plan, single people, aged under 35, would only be allowed to claim the shared accommodation rate – the amount considered enough to rent a room in a shared house – which is often lower than housing benefit awards
- Those aged between 18 and 21 will no longer necessarily receive Housing Benefit. Under its 'Youth Obligation' scheme, the government plans to end automatic entitlement to Universal Credit housing costs for this age group from April 2017
- Payment of one monthly welfare payment may out vulnerable households and those less able to manage their finances at risk of rent arrears
- The Department for Work and Pensions (DWP) move to deal with Universal Credit applications online could create problems for those who are vulnerable and less able to engage with the digital environment

## Opportunities

- Being able to pool resources and jointly take advantage of any local, regional or national funding opportunities will help all organisations maintain services, achieve value for money and potentially provide additional services that they would not otherwise have delivered
- Look to secure additional shared accommodation for use by under 35s and increase housing options for this group
- Examine new services at minimal cost to the council to reduce rough sleeping i.e. North Lane Lodge
- Improved partnership working to ensure there is access to appropriate support services to help people sustain their accommodation in both the short-term and the long-term
- Use of the night shelter and North Lane Lodge to deliver support services, enabling access to alternative accommodation, support service and primary health care to reduce number of rough sleepers
- Work with other councils to provide regional outreach support using a local hub approach to provide a range of services. These would include:
  - Early intervention to contact and assess rough sleepers
  - Resettlement work to place people into appropriate accommodation
  - Tenancy sustainment work to assist former rough sleepers to maintain their homes
  - Preventing a return to entrenched street sleeping
- Sharing the expertise of the council's Revenue and Benefits teams, particularly the Housing Benefit section, with our partners could make a significant contribution to

preventing homelessness locally. There is evidence that a local presence is helpful to Registered Providers and tenants

- Support vulnerable tenants with their tenancy. The council could consider targeting staff resource into this area to include tenancy support for tenants renting privately and advice and support for landlords
- Consider a tenancy mediation service for private sector landlords and their tenants, within the role of a tenancy support officer
- Work closely with partners, who provide employment support, education and training needs, to make sure that residents at risk of homelessness receive advice and help to access employment. Promote employment initiatives and access to employment opportunities to strengthen by cooperation around total Benefit Cap implementation

## **Conclusion**

Welfare reforms, changes to government legislation and reduced resources together with reduced availability and affordability of private rented properties, has contributed to the rise in homelessness.

The number of homeless households presenting to the council has more than doubled over the past five years, increasing the need for additional temporary and supported specialist accommodation. Given the current situation and future predictions from service providers operating in the borough, we believe that preventing and tackling homelessness will be very challenging in the future. Going forward, we will need to work closely with our partners to make the most efficient use of the social sector and private rented housing stock, target existing staff resources to provide advice and develop innovative, resilient responses to the housing needs of our residents.

## Appendix 6

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**Appendix 2**

**RUSHMOOR BOROUGH COUNCIL'S HOUSING AND HOMELESSNESS STRATEGY 2017-2022  
DELIVERY PLAN**

**Theme 1**  
**The Right Homes in the right place**

**Our vision**  
Having well designed and appropriately located homes in sufficient numbers to meet the needs of our residents and support the economic future of the borough

PROGRESS COLOUR KEY	White – not started	Amber - underway	Mauve – Business as usual	Green – target met	Red – target not met
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Objective 1: Housing needs				
Outcome: The council has sufficiently accurate housing needs data to help plan for housing provision				
Measures: Subject to availability of funding, data on housing need is no more than five years old.				
Action		Timescale	Resources needed & Lead Officer	Progress
1.1	Use our data from the updated Strategic Housing Market Assessment (SHMA) to inform policies that secure a range of house types and tenure that meets a range of housing needs.	April 2018	RBC Planning and Housing teams <b>SR</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>The updated SHMA was published in January 2017 and will inform local plan policies</li> </ul>
1.2	Use our allocations pool as a data source.	2017-2022 monitored quarterly	RBC Housing Strategy & Enabling and Housing Options <b>SR ZP ST</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>We regularly analyse and refresh the data we hold for the housing allocations pool. We are looking to develop this further</li> </ul>
1.3	Use data from Help to Buy South agent.	2017-2022 monitored quarterly	RBC Housing Strategy & Enabling and Help to Buy South <b>ST</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>We use information held by the Help-to-Buy agent to inform decisions on intermediate housing products.</li> </ul>

1.4	Prepare a plan for assessing the housing needs of specific groups.	April 2018	RBC /Partner statutory agencies and the voluntary sector <b>SR</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>New project to make sure that we understand the needs of specific groups. Following work on the needs of Travelling Show People site allocations are being proposed in the submission draft local plan</li> </ul>
1.5	Share and exchange data with our partners.	2017-2022	RBC staff/other councils and Registered Providers RPs)/supported providers/other agencies  <b>SR ZP</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>RP liaison meetings are held twice a year to share information. This will be supplemented by more specific data sharing for specific projects. In addition, information is exchanged at countywide liaison meetings. <b>SR</b></li> <li>Tenancy Strategy Survey completed with RPs <b>SR</b></li> <li>Other partners include organisations represented at the Rushmoor Strategic Partnership and the Rushmoor Health and Wellbeing Partnership. <b>ZP</b></li> </ul>

## Objective 2: Maximise Housing delivery

Outcome: Local plan targets for housing are achieved

Measures: Analyse the number of housing completions, percentage of tenures and types of homes delivered against our policy requirements.

Quarter 1 =20 affordable rent

Action		Timescale	Resources needed and Lead Officers	progress
2.1	Support the planning department with the preparation and adoption of the Rushmoor local plan.	April 2018	RBC Planning and Housing Strategy & Enabling <b>SR</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>We meet regularly with our planning colleagues to make sure that policies in our local plan documents help to address local housing need.</li> <li>A policy on affordable housing has been</li> </ul>



				drafted for the submission draft of the local plan. The policy reduces the percentage of affordable housing sought due to viability issues.
2.2	Prepare policies and procedures to support housing delivery required by the plan.	April 2018	RBC Housing Strategy & Enabling <b>SR</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>We provide input into planning policy development to help meet the need for affordable housing in the borough.</li> </ul>
2.3	Update affordable housing advisory note for developers of affordable housing.	Dec. 2017	RBC Housing Strategy & Enabling Team <b>SR</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Our existing advice note can be found on the council's website <a href="http://www.rushmoor.gov.uk/article/2201/New-affordable-housing-in-Rushmoor">http://www.rushmoor.gov.uk/article/2201/New-affordable-housing-in-Rushmoor</a>.</li> <li>This has recently been redrafted to reflect the findings of the SHMA 2016.</li> </ul>
2.4	Use our policies and work with developers to achieve a mix of house types and tenures that meet local needs including the needs of an ageing population and other specific groups.	2017-2022	RBC Housing Strategy & Enabling Team, Planning and Registered Providers <b>SR ZP</b> on scheme by scheme basis	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>The SHMA sets out information on the types and tenures of housing needed. We provide input into policy development to make sure that as far as possible we deliver what is needed, subject to viability.</li> </ul>
2.5	Encourage developers to offer a range of home ownership products.	2017-2022	RBC Housing Strategy & Enabling Team, Planning and Registered Providers <b>SR ZP</b> on a scheme by scheme basis	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>We will take the opportunity when negotiating with developers to discuss a wider range of home ownership and intermediate housing products.</li> </ul>
2.6	Use our policies to achieve good quality housing and good design.	2017-2022	RBC Housing Strategy & Enabling Team, Planning and Registered Providers <b>SR ZP</b> on a scheme-by-scheme basis	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Policies on space standards and accessibility have been prepared for the submission draft of the new local plan.</li> </ul>
2.7	Secure commuted sums where housing	2017-2022	RBC Housing Strategy &	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Units on site are our first choice but in</li> </ul>

	proposed is of a type or in a location where affordable housing would not be appropriate for meeting local needs.		Enabling Team, Planning and Developers <b>SR ZP</b> on a scheme-by-scheme basis	<p>some circumstances, developments may be of a type or in a location that do not offer the type of housing needed. In these circumstances, we will explore taking a commuted sum to be used for the provision of affordable housing that will better meet our housing need.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Our aim is to maximise the provision of housing that best meets our housing needs.</li> </ul>
2.8	Scrutinise viability assessments.	2017-2022	RBC Housing Strategy & Enabling Team, Planning, Legal Services and Developers <b>SR ZP</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Viability assessments will continue to be scrutinised by valuers acting on behalf of the council.</li> </ul>

**Objective 3: Deliver housing to achieve regeneration and to support the economy**

**Outcome: Housing is secured as an element of regeneration schemes**

**Measures: Both Aldershot and Farnborough regeneration schemes include a range of house types to support the labour force and meet identified housing need.**

Quarter 1 – data not yet available				
Action		Timescale	Resources needed and Lead Officers	Progress
3.1	Considering corporately a mechanism for deciding the relative priority of s106 contributions requested for regeneration schemes, including the provision of affordable housing.	Dec. 2017	RBC existing staff resources <b>SR</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>We will look closely at the potential for maximising affordable housing when seeking s106 contributions.</li> </ul>
3.2	Make sure that town centre housing schemes are designed to provide good quality living environments for a range for household types.	2017 - 2022	Housing Strategy & Enabling and Planning, Registered Providers <b>SR ZP</b> on a scheme by scheme basis	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Using our opportunity to comment on planning applications and provide pre-application advice we encourage types of housing that can best meet the range of housing needs in the borough.</li> </ul>
3.3	Provide a range of house types that will retain higher paid workers in the borough	2017 -2022	Planning Housing Strategy & Enabling <b>SR ZP</b> on a scheme-by-scheme basis	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>On some developments, it may be appropriate to provide larger executive homes to make sure that the borough has the full range of housing.</li> </ul>
3.4	Provide properties of a size and tenure that allows lower paid workers to remain in the borough.	2017 - 2022	Housing Strategy & Enabling, Planning, Legal Services and Registered Providers <b>SR ZP</b> on a scheme by scheme basis	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Through our work enabling the provision of affordable housing we aim to help those in lower- paid employment.</li> </ul>

**Objective 4: Housing to help those most in need**

**Outcome:**The stock of housing available to those most in need remains at or exceeds current levels.

**Measures/outcome:** We will monitor the levels of affordable housing stock in the borough and work to maintain the level of housing stock available to people in need

Q1: Stock as at 01 April 2016 – 6096 (general needs rented)				
Action		Timescale	Resources needed and Lead Officer	Progress
4.1	Continue to seek a proportion of affordable housing on new developments as affordable homes for rent.	2017-2022	Housing Strategy & Enabling and Planning <b>SR ZP</b> on a scheme by scheme basis	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>We will continue to require a proportion of affordable homes for rent.</li> <li>There are pressures arising from reductions in funding for affordable housing and consequent viability challenges that may reduce the amount of affordable homes for rent that can be delivered.</li> </ul>
4.2	Negotiate provision of specialist housing as part of new housing schemes.	2017-2022	Housing Teams and Registered Providers <b>SR ZP</b> on a scheme by scheme basis	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>We will gather information on needs and seek to secure specialist housing where there is evidence of need.</li> <li>At Wellesley 10% of affordable rented accommodation will be for wheelchair users and a scheme for people with learning disabilities is provided for in the s106 agreement.</li> </ul>
4.3	Enable specialist housing in the existing housing stock or custom-built new specialist projects.	2017-2022	RBC /Partner statutory agencies and the voluntary sector <b>SR ZP</b> on a scheme by scheme basis	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>There may also be opportunities in the existing housing stock or on land that could be used for new build specialist housing .</li> </ul>
4.4	Provide a contribution to funding to secure housing to meet specific needs.	2017-2022	Homes and Community Agency(HCA) funding and RBC capital grant <b>SR ZP</b> on a scheme by scheme basis	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Where necessary the council's capital budget can be used to provide small contributions to the capital costs of schemes. There might also be opportunity to use commuted sums.</li> </ul>

4.5	Explore options for direct procurement of affordable housing to meet local needs.	Dec. 2017	RBC existing staff resources <b>SR ZP</b> with asset team	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>project to evaluate whether we can provide housing directly through existing mechanisms e.g. development agreements and long leases.</li> </ul>
4.6	Put in place an appropriate vehicle to achieve residential development for income generation, regeneration and to cross-subsidise housing to meet housing needs.	Dec. 2017	RBC existing staff resources <b>SR</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>New project to consider housing companies and partnering arrangements</li> </ul>
4.7	Develop shared housing options for single people under35.	Dec. 2018	RBC Housing Teams <b>ZP SH</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>The reduction in housing benefit for those under 35 will require an alternative approach to housing for this age group.</li> <li>Discussions to be held with existing temporary housing providers and/or private landlords.</li> </ul>

**Theme 2**  
**Making the best use of existing stock**

**Our vision**

**Capacity within existing housing assets is maximised across all tenures and work in tackling under-occupation and empty properties is prioritised**

**Objective 1: Housing needs and household profiles****Outcome: Working with our partners we have access to a range of data on our needs, stock and household profiles****Measures: Data on housing need is kept up-to-date and is no more than five years old****2017 Q1 Housing and income data exercise collected from applicants has been completed****2017 Q1 RPs attending the RP Liaison meetings have agreed in principal to sharing household profiling data**

Action		Timescale	Resources needed and Lead Officer	Progress
1.1	Interpretation of the housing allocation pool data.	2017-2022 quarterly monitoring	RBC Housing Strategy & Enabling and Housing Options <b>ST</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Data collection exercise carried out on incomes summer 2016.</li> <li>Results have been analysed and housing and income data has been presented at the Community Policy and Review Panel</li> </ul>
1.2	Partnership working with Registered Providers and letting agents to better understand their tenant profiling and stock occupancy level.	Dec 2018	RBC Housing Teams existing staff resources <b>SR ZP ST</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>We are speaking to RPs about sharing household profiling data, agreed in principle with our main partners.</li> </ul>
1.3	Understand the needs and aspirations of under-occupying owner-occupied homeowners to help developers and housebuilders provide attractive homes for downsizers.	Sept. 2018	RBC Housing Teams existing staff resources Lead to be confirmed	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Work will be programmed in to determine the most appropriate way of gathering this information</li> </ul>

**Objective 2: Delivery of a range of appropriate, affordable properties to enable people to downsize****Outcome: Where people wish to downsize they have the opportunity to do so.****Measures: Number of properties let to downsizers and the number of lettings achieved from chain lets of properties released by downsizers. Quarter 1 Downsizers = 5; Chain lets = nil**

Action		Timescale	Resources needed and Lead Officer	Progress
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2.1	The housing team will work with planning colleagues and development partners to ensure opportunities for appropriate housing units are delivered for people to downsize into, considering the location, design and affordability.	2017-2022	RBC Housing Teams, Planning and Registered Providers <b>SR ZP</b> on a scheme-by-scheme basis	We will take opportunities to do this on a scheme-by-scheme basis building on work done for Matinee House and Worcester Close
2.2	Assess the effectiveness of the housing allocation policy in creating movement in the housing stock through the under-occupation scheme.	March 2018 Annual monitoring	RBC Housing Strategy & Enabling and Housing Options <b>ST</b>	The allocations scheme will be updated by 31 March 2018 (the current financial year). Deadline for this piece of work has been extended to take account of additional work generated by the Trailblazer project

**Objective 3: Maximising the turnover of vacancies using fixed-term tenancies, lettings plans and chain lets**

**Outcome: The majority of new lettings of social housing in the borough are let on fixed term tenancies.**

**Measures: The number of lettings achieved from fixed-term tenancies ending, lettings plans and chain lettings **Quarter 1; Nil****

Action		Timescale	Resources needed and Lead Officer	Progress
3.1	Continue to encourage all Registered Providers operating in the borough to base their tenancy policies on our tenancy strategy and provide fixed-term tenancies.	2017-2022	RBC Housing Strategy & Enabling and Registered Providers <b>SR</b>	Tenancy strategy survey will indicate how many RPs are supporting our tenancy strategy
3.2	In the social housing stock, continue to use lettings plans and chain lettings to achieve the maximum movement for each new unit available to us.	2017-2022	RBC Housing Strategy & Enabling and Housing Options and Registered Providers <b>ST</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>As fixed-term social housing tenancies end, we will work with our partners to agree an approach for maximising consequent lettings.</li> <li>Monitoring success of Wellesley lettings plan - all targets have been met on phase 1 Maida</li> </ul>
3.3	Explore how a planned lettings approach might work with private landlords.	Dec. 2017	RBC Housing Teams <b>ST BB</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>This will be considered as part of the private tenancy officer role (see Theme 3 Objective 2).Performance indicators</li> </ul>

				<p>and evaluation of outcomes will be carried out after six months from start of the role.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Funding for incentive schemes for landlords to encourage them to let to victims of Domestic Violence is now available.</li> </ul>
3.4	Collect lettings data to illustrate impact of the above	April 2022	RBC Housing Teams <b>ST BB</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>See 3.2 above</li> </ul>
3.5	Consider borough-wide lettings targets for specific property types working with our partners.	April 2018	RBC Housing Teams and Registered Providers <b>ST CH</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Identify where there are shortages of lettings by April 2018.</li> <li>Initiate work with partners on borough-wide lettings during 2018/19</li> </ul>
3.6	Monitor compliance with, and effectiveness of, nomination agreements.	Dec. 2017	RBC Housing Strategy & Enabling and Housing Options <b>ST CH</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Re-lets are continuously monitored to check that nomination agreements are complied with.</li> </ul>
3.7	Provide housing advice with partners for Pay to Stay cases.	March 2018	Housing Options Lead officer to be confirmed	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>We are yet to see any of our landlords adopt Pay to Stay.</li> <li>We will check with RP partners to see if they are going to implement by 31 March 2018</li> </ul>
3.8	Make sure that the housing allocation scheme supports these actions.	March 2018	Housing Options <b>SH</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>The allocations scheme will be reviewed by 31 March 2018</li> </ul>

#### Objective 4: Bringing Empty properties back into use.

Outcome: By working with property owners, long-term empty properties are brought back into use and where necessary enforcement powers are used.

Measures: That year-on-year, the number of long-term empty properties in the borough reduces **Quarter 1: Two empty homes brought back in use**

Action	Timescale	Resources needed and	Progress
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			<b>Lead Officer</b>	
4.1	Develop a consistent corporate approach to prioritising and dealing with empty properties within limited resources.	2017-2022	Housing Strategy and Enabling <b>ST</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>A new policy is in place</li> </ul>
4.2	Improve collaborative working across the council on empty property work.	2017-2022	RBC Existing Staff Resources <b>ST</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>We use and will improve our use of our Corporate Empty Property Group (CEPG) and case conferences for specific properties</li> <li>CEP G meeting every three months to discuss cases</li> <li>Officers across the council are carrying out inspections and feeding back updates to the empty homes officer</li> </ul>
4.3	Develop an approach to prevent properties from becoming empty.	Dec 2018	RBC Housing Strategy & Enabling <b>ST</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>New project</li> </ul>
4.4	Publicise advice and options to owners of empty properties.	2017-2022	RBC Housing Strategy & Enabling <b>ST</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Prioritisation policy agreed and will be posted on the RBC website</li> </ul>
4.5	Explore the use of a keeping house scheme to support families in letting property belonging to an older relative going into residential care, preventing it becoming empty and making use of the housing asset to meet local housing need.	Dec. 2017	RBC Housing Strategy & Enabling <b>ZP</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Contact has been made with Hampshire County Council.</li> <li>Awaiting next steps advice from HCC Adult Services</li> </ul>
4.6	Continue to capitalise on opportunities, which arise from empty commercial or retail building and properties in other uses in the borough for homes.	2017-2022	RBC Housing Strategy & Enabling <b>SR ZP</b> on a scheme by scheme basis	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Continue to investigate opportunities as they arise</li> </ul>

**Objective 5: Supporting Rushmoor's residents to downsize or let out spare rooms**

Outcome: Residents are empowered to respond flexibly to their need to reduce their housing costs. Measures/outcome: The number of residents downsizing each year and units of accommodation generated.				
Action		Timescale	Resources needed and Lead Officer	Progress
5.1	Determine what support people need to help them downsize.	Sept. 2018	RBC Housing Teams Lead officer to be confirmed	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Work will be carried out to determine the most appropriate way of gathering this information</li> </ul>
5.2	Research the availability of resources to fund downsizing support.	Sept. 2018	RBC Housing Teams Lead officer to be confirmed	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Small incentive packages have been used in the past with some success/However, financial pressures may require us to consider alternative types of support.</li> <li>Discussion with RPs to provide white goods and window blinds as an incentive</li> </ul>
5.3	Within the resources available, launch and promote a comprehensive package of advice for: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Older residents wanting to downsize</li> <li>Residents who would like to let out their spare room</li> </ul>	April 2019	RBC Housing Strategy & Enabling <b>ZP ST</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>This is a new project,</li> <li>A project plan will be put in place during 2018.</li> </ul>
5.4	Work with partner organisations to scope, develop and implement both projects.	April 2019	RBC Housing Teams <b>ZP</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>See above</li> </ul>
5.5	Ensure robust safeguarding measures for homeowners and tenants.	April 2019	RBC Housing Teams <b>ZP</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>See above</li> </ul>
5.6	Promote both projects across arrange of media.	April 2019	RBC Housing Strategy & Enabling <b>ST</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>See above</li> </ul>

### Theme 3

#### Helping People solve their housing problems and provide a suitable home when needed

##### Our vision

That all, who need it, have access to housing advice and assistance that will help them resolve their housing problems and that homelessness is reduced significantly. Suitable temporary accommodation is available when needed and B&B is used as an exception. Vulnerable people are able to receive support that helps them sustain their housing.

#### Objective 1: Provide housing advice and administer the housing allocation scheme

**Outcome:** Residents have access to a proactive and effective housing advice service and social housing is allocated in a fair and transparent way.

**Measures:** The number of people approaching the Council for housing advice, against the number of people in the housing allocation pool.

2017 Q1: number of people approaching - 618

2017 Q1: number of household in the housing allocation pool -1366

Action		Timescale	Resources needed and Lead Officer	Progress
1.1	Make sure that those with little prospect of re-housing through the housing allocation pool receive comprehensive housing options to help them solve their housing issues..	2017-2022	RBC Housing Options <b>SH</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>In preparation for the Homelessness Reduction Act, work has started on implementing a new housing advice tool kit (Trailblazer funding of £385,000 secured) to help people resolve their housing issues.</li> <li>Three health and wellbeing officers and a manager have been recruited</li> </ul>
1.2	Review the housing allocation scheme to ensure it is fit for purpose.	Dec. 2017	RBC Housing Options <b>SH</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Work on a review of the allocations scheme is planned March 2018</li> </ul>
1.3	Continue working with the armed services to understand the demand from serving personnel and those leaving the armed	2017-2022	RBC Housing Options and Housing Strategy & Enabling Teams	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Officer meetings and member review meetings are planned to make sure that we understand housing</li> </ul>

	forces.		<b>SH</b>	need/demand from this group. <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>RP Review Group recently met with Defence Infrastructure Organisation (DIO) to discuss management of service family accommodation</li> </ul>
1.4	Work with community groups to understand the housing needs of our different communities.	Sept. 2018	RBC Housing Teams Lead officer to be confirmed	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Work is due to start in 2018</li> </ul>

**Objective 2: Work with private sector landlords to maximise access to private rented homes**

**Outcome: Private sector landlords are coming forward to let to households approaching the council for help.**

**Measures/outcome: The number of private rented accommodation available to homeless households and the number of rent deposits and bonds issued**

**2017 Q1 Number of PSR properties available to homeless households: 12**

**2017 Q2 The number of rent deposits and bonds issued: 27**

<b>Action</b>		<b>Timescale</b>	<b>Resources needed and Lead Officer</b>	<b>Progress</b>
2.1	Continue with the rent bond scheme, working with private sector landlords.	2017-2022 annual monitoring	RBC Housing Options <b>SH</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>An officer has been seconded to work with private landlords and letting agents to improve liaison and increase the supply of private rented properties for homeless households</li> </ul>
2.2	Make sure that, as private-sector tenants are re-housed in social housing, the private sector vacancies created are available to other households that have approached the council for help.	December 2017	RBC Housing <b>BB</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>The council's private tenancy officer (seconded post) is monitoring, on a weekly basis, private tenants within the allocation scheme and identifying when a property could be recycled for homeless households (BB to provide information on outcomes)</li> </ul>

2.3	Offer a dedicated officer as a main point of contact for landlords.	April 2017	RBC Housing Options existing staff resources <b>SH BB</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>A trial of this method of working is underway (see above). An officer is in post on secondment. Outcomes from this trial will be analysed after six months from commencement.</li> </ul>
2.4	Provide regular communication and advice to landlords and an annual landlords' forum.	2017-2022 Annual monitoring	RBC Housing Options & Private Sector Teams <b>SH</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>The annual landlords' forum was held on 15 March 2017 and there were presentations on right to rent, smart meters, the work of the private tenancy officer and an update on housing benefit.</li> <li>The annual newsletter was issued in December 2016.</li> <li>Information on the website is updated regularly.</li> </ul>
2.5	Investigate barriers to landlords working with homeless households.	April 2017	RBC Housing Options and Housing Strategy & Enabling <b>BB</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>The private tenancy officer is undertaking this work</li> </ul>

### Objective 3: Prevention of homelessness

Outcome: There is a comprehensive range of interventions available to prevent homelessness

Measures: Number of successful homeless prevention interventions as well as a reduction in the numbers of rough sleepers and people in unsuitable accommodation.

2017 Q1: Number of successful homeless prevention cases: 91

2017 Q2: Number of rough sleepers 5

	Action	Timescale	Resources needed and Lead Officer	Progress
3.1	Identify existing tenancy and money	September	RBC Housing Options	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Initial discussions have taken place with</li> </ul>

	management training for residents.	2017	<b>BB</b>	<p>Citizens Advice to run a series of workshops, initially for homeless households working toward tenant accreditation</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Private Tenancy Officer to produce work plan</li> </ul>
3.2	Work with partners to establish longer-term housing support services to help people succeed in their tenancies.	2017-2022	RBC Housing Options <b>SH/ Brian</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Identify partners.</li> <li>• Some work on this will be part of the Trailblazer project.</li> </ul>
3.3	Develop housing pathway approaches for different client groups, for example care leavers, people with disabilities, armed forces' veterans and people with drug, alcohol or mental health problems.	Dec 2018 annual monitoring	RBC Housing Strategy & Enabling and Housing Options <b>SH ZP</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• The council is in discussion with partners to make best use of existing accommodation to ensure that specific client groups have recognised pathways to the most appropriate housing and support.</li> </ul>
3.4	Signpost people to appropriate job clubs, training and employment schemes.	2017-2022	RBC Housing Options <b>SH/ Brain</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• The council has prepared a directory of job clubs etc.</li> </ul>

#### Objective 4: Manage our use of temporary accommodation

**Outcome:** People are supported to move on from temporary accommodation creating space for those falling into need for this type of accommodation, minimising the need to use Bed and Breakfast.

**Measures:** Reduction in the use, length of stay and cost of bed and breakfast accommodation.

2017 Q1 Number of households in B&B: 5

2017 Q1 Average length of stay in B&B 1.9 weeks

2017 Q1 Cost of B&B £5730.32 gross (£2264.94 net)

	Action	Timescale	Resources needed and Lead Officer	Progress
4.1	Maintain the existing temporary	March 2022	RBC Housing Teams <b>SH</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• We are exploring the potential for</li> </ul>

	accommodation in the borough as set out in the Homelessness Review 2016.			further temporary accommodation as opportunities arise in council or privately owned stock.
4.2	Plan for the end of temporary accommodation at Clayton Court (2022) and North Lane Lodge	March 2022	RBC Housing Strategy & Enabling and Housing Options <b>ZP</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• A project plan is being prepared.</li> <li>• We are meeting with Oak Housing, the managers of Clayton Court) to discuss options (Sept 17)</li> </ul>
4.3	Investigate the value of providing support at temporary accommodation in light of changes to supported housing funding.	September 2017	RBC Housing Strategy & Enabling and Housing Options <b>SH</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Currently awaiting clarification from the Government on future funding. Consultation on this has closed and a new model is expected in 2017</li> <li>• We are working with our partners to mitigate potential impacts.</li> <li>• Funding has been awarded sufficient to meet our current commitments but not to allow for innovation at this time</li> </ul>

## Theme 4

### Enabling People to live in good quality accommodation that is suitable for their needs

#### Our vision

The housing stock is in good condition, not overcrowded and meets housing standards, and that people with disabilities receive the right support, advice and assistance to allow them to live independently in their own home.

**Objective 1: To help older and disabled people live in homes appropriate for their needs (by providing housing options advice and Disabled Facilities Grants).**

**Outcome: Our policies and procedures help people to exercise some choice about living independently in their own home.**

**Measure: The number of applications received and grants completed. Quarter 1 = 47 DFG referrals received from OTs; The number of DFGs completed is 30**

Action		Timescale	Resources needed and Lead Officer	Progress
1.1	Make sure that those most in need of Disabled Facilities Grants are able to access them and publish a DFG Policy.	2017-2022 Quarterly monitoring	RBC Private Sector team <b>HS</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>We are preparing a DFG policy to give clear guidance on the use of the budget and to allow flexibility to meet the needs of vulnerable people.</li> <li>A project plan will be prepared.</li> <li>In the year to 31 March 2017 there have been 160 occupational therapy referrals, 127 DFGs approved and 117 DFGs funded and completed.</li> </ul>
1.2	Work with occupational therapists and our Housing Options team to provide advice where alternative housing may be appropriate.	2017-2022	RBC Private Sector team, Strategy and Enabling and Housing Options teams	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Through liaison between our Housing Options Team, Strategy and Enabling (for new builds), the Private Sector Housing Team and occupational therapists we make sure that where properties cannot be adapted other housing options can be explored using resources from the better care fund and opportunities in new housing schemes.</li> </ul>



**Objective 2: Continue to provide support to vulnerable people**  
**Outcome: Residents receive services that support independent living**  
**Measures: Services provided and number of residents being supported by services currently provided by the grant support officer.**  
**Quarter 1: We no longer have a Home Improvements Agency. Rushmoor has employed a grant support Officer**  
**Q1 = Grant support officer supporting 47 residents**

Action		Timescale	Resources needed and Lead Officer	Progress
2.1	Use the Better Care Fund to employ a grant support officer (Transferred from Family Mosaic the HIA).	April 2017 Completed	HS	The Home Improvement Agency contract ended in March 2017. The HIA caseworker is now employed by RBC as a grant support officer. The role involves assisting residents with DFG applications, securing charitable funding for grant top ups and signposting to other agencies.
2.2	Work with Hampshire County Council to secure funding for adaptations.	2017-2022 Annually	RBC Private Sector Team HS	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>By meeting HCC targets and ensuring speed of service we will secure funding for DFG's</li> </ul>

**Objective 3: Improve housing conditions in the borough**  
**Outcome: Using the powers and the resources available, residents' health and safety are protected.**  
**Measures: The number of housing complaints received and enforcement action taken.**  
**Quarter 1: 147 complaints received – 98% contacted within 3 working days**  
**Quarter 1: 6 statutory notices served**

Action		Timescale	Resources needed and Lead Officer	Progress
3.1	Continue to carry out targeted surveys of the private rented properties to identify poor housing conditions.	June 2017	RBC Private Sector Team HS	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>We completed our private sector housing survey in March 2017. This information is being used to inform future actions to improve housing</li> </ul>

				conditions in the borough.
3.2	Ensure all residents are aware of their housing rights and responsibilities.	March 2018	RBC Private Sector Team <b>HS</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>We will include information on our website and in leaflets. There is a “report it” button for disrepair and a “report it” button is under construction with the web team to report Houses in Multiple Occupation (HMO).</li> <li>We will work with minority groups to ensure that landlords understand their duties and responsibilities to their tenants and what the tenants can expect from a rented property.</li> </ul>
3.3	Record and monitor performance on housing condition complaint handling.	2017-2022 quarterly monitoring	RBC Private Sector Team <b>HS</b>	<p>Quarterly performance information will be analysed</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>In Quarter 1. 98% of complaints were investigated within three days</li> </ul>
3.4	Monitor action from the Home Energy Conservation Act progress report of 31 March 2017	2017 – 2019 annual monitoring	RBC Private Sector Housing Team <b>HS</b>	<p>Monitor the two year action plan</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Attend Hampshire Energy Efficiency Partnership (HEEP) meetings</li> <li>Refer residents to the Environment Centre (tEC) and Citizens Advice for advice</li> </ul>
3.5	Act on new powers in the Housing and Planning Act 2016.	2017 - 2022	RBC Private Sector Team <b>HS</b>	<p>We are waiting for guidance on the implementation of the new licensing regime.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>We have received guidance on civil penalties and rent repayment orders and a plan of how these will be implemented will be drawn up</li> </ul>

**Objective 4: Map, licence and monitor HMOs to ensure they offer accommodation that is safe and meets housing standards**  
**Outcome: Improve our information on HMOs and ensure compliance with safety and housing standards.**  
**Measures: The number of HMOs licenced and achieving required standards for management, amenities, fire safety and repair.**  
**Quarter1: 10 licenses issued and 17 brought up to the required standards for management, amenities, fire safety and repair.**

Action		Timescale	Resources needed and Lead Officer	Progress
4.1	Maintain database of the location, condition and ownership of HM Os	2017-2022	RBC Private Sector Team <b>HS</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>We have an existing list of HMOs and this will be maintained and added to as appropriate.</li> <li>There is a register of all licensed HMO's on the website. There are currently 97 licensed properties</li> </ul>
4.2	Licence all known HMOs that require a licence under the Housing Act 2004	2017-2022 quarterly monitoring	RBC Private Sector Team <b>HS</b>	<p>In Quarter One: Ten licenses were issued</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Under the Housing and Planning Act 2016, a new licensing regime is coming into force for smaller HMOs. We are currently awaiting guidance on the implementation of the scheme.</li> <li>Where we know about an HMO we make sure that it is licensed where required</li> </ul>
4.3	Bring all Houses in Multiple Occupation up to a safe standard with adequate amenities and fire proofing.	2017-2022 Quarterly monitoring	RBC Private Sector Team <b>HS</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>In Quarter 1: 17 properties were brought up to standard</li> </ul>
4.4	Take action against overcrowding and breach of licencing conditions Under the Housing Act 2004	2017-2022 Quarterly monitoring	RBC Private Sector Team <b>HS</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>In Quarter One: six notices were served under the Housing Act 2004</li> </ul>
4.5	Prepare a Policy to set out how civil penalties and rent repayment orders are issued to in accordance with the Housing and Planning Act.	March 2018		<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>New project.</li> </ul>



RUSHMOOR BOROUGH COUNCIL

# Affordable Housing Development Guidance Note 2017

**A guidance note prepared by the Council's Housing Strategy and Enabling Team for developers and registered providers of social housing.**

Sept 2017

# Affordable Housing Development: Guidance Note 2017

## Foreword

We are frequently asked to provide information for developers and Registered Providers of Social Housing (RPs) on the type of affordable housing required to meet the Borough's need for affordable housing. In response we have prepared this guidance note which we hope will provide useful advice for those looking to deliver affordable housing in Rushmoor.

The Note takes account of policies set out in the adopted Rushmoor Plan Core Strategy. The Council is currently preparing a new local plan and is advanced in this process, having published the Draft Submission Rushmoor Local Plan in June 2017. The policies contained in the Draft Submission Local Plan give a strong indication of the direction of travel for the planning policy framework to guide future development in Rushmoor to 2032, and where relevant, can be used to supplement the development plan policies as a material consideration in the determination of planning applications.

This note will provide advice consistent with the current Core Strategy and will, where appropriate, make reference to policies in the Draft Submission Rushmoor Local Plan. This note will be updated further when the new local plan is adopted.

## 1.0 Introduction

- Affordable housing is a requirement on sites of 15 or more net dwellings, subject to site viability. On these sites 35% of dwellings will be required as affordable housing. However, the Draft Submission Local Plan lowers the site size threshold to 11 or more dwellings and reduces the percentage of affordable housing to 30%, subject to viability.
- This document sets out our aspirations for new build affordable housing. It has been prepared by our housing team and reflects the aims of our Housing and Homelessness Strategy 2017 – 2022 and learning from our experience of working in partnership with registered providers of social housing (RPs) to deliver affordable housing.
- A copy of the Council's Housing and Homelessness Strategy can be found on the Council's website

[www.rushmoor.gov.uk/housingstrategies](http://www.rushmoor.gov.uk/housingstrategies)

- The guidance is intended for developers and registered providers of social housing (RPs)
- Where appropriate we have given links for further advice and guidance.

## 2.0 Prior Consultation

- We ask that proposals for development are discussed with the Council's Housing Strategy and Enabling Manager as this can help resolve any issues at an early stage. It will also help to make sure that proposals are meeting local housing needs.
- RPs should make sure that their housing management teams are able to comment on any scheme being promoted and that any concerns are designed out or addressed in other ways e.g. lettings plans.

## 3.0 Planning Policy and Development Control

- The key development plan document containing policies on housing is the Rushmoor Plan Core Strategy (adopted October 2011)
- A new Rushmoor Local Plan is being prepared and the Draft Submission Local Plan was published in June 2017. This document is relevant as a material consideration in the determination of planning applications.
- Where appropriate this guidance note refers to emerging policy as well as that contained in the Core Strategy.
- The Council's Development Control Team can provide pre-application planning advice. We also have a pre application checklist for developers.

<http://www.rushmoor.gov.uk/article/3420/advice-for-developers>

and

<http://www.rushmoor.gov.uk/article/3433/pre-application-advice-for-developers>

## 4.0 Funding

Schemes should be designed so that they are eligible for public subsidy These standards will also apply to schemes that are funded by the Council.

## Affordable Housing Development: Guidance Note 2017

### 5.0 Residential Mix

- Affordable housing schemes of more than 10 units should aim to provide a mix of house types and tenures.
- The current Development Plan Core Strategy seeks to deliver a mix of dwelling sizes as follows:

Bed Size	1 bed%	2 bed%	3 bed%	4 bed +%
Social rented	25	35	25	15
Intermediate	40	40	20	0

- The Draft Submission Local Plan, working on evidence contained in the Hart, Rushmoor and Surrey Heath Strategic Housing Market Assessment (SHMA) 2014 – 2032, suggests that for future affordable housing delivery we should aim to provide a mix of dwelling types as follows

Affordable Housing size requirement across the Housing Market Area			
1 bed	2 bed %	3 bed %	4 bed %
30%	30 – 40%	20	10

In addition:

- To best meet housing needs the 2 bed requirement should be met by providing 2 bed houses as well as 2 bed flats.
- To offer maximum flexibility in the households that can be housed in 2 bed homes they need to be suitable for occupation by 4 people
- It is recognised that the full house type mix is not appropriate on all sites but the council wants to make sure that across the affordable housing programme a mix of dwelling types is being achieved.
- The Council favours small blocks of flats up to 12 homes. Larger blocks should not have more than 12 units served from one entrance and core.
- Combinations of dwelling forms e.g. terraces, town houses, flats above maisonettes can be used to achieve high density with a variety of house types.
- Flats suitable for under-occupiers will be considered favourably but these should contain features that will allow people to remain in their own homes as they age e.g. Lifetime Homes principles, mobility scooter storage.
- Dwellings should be built to accessible and adaptable standards to meet the requirements of Building Regulations M4(2).
- Developers must aim to include house types for a range of household types including wheelchair accessible dwellings. Where evidenced by local need a proportion of affordable dwellings should be built as wheelchair user dwellings to meet the requirements of Building Regulations M4(3).
- Developers will need to consult with the Council on the need for specialist housing.



## 6.0 Tenure Mix

- Affordable housing schemes of more than 10 units should aim to include a mix of tenure types.
- The appropriate tenure for smaller (10 or fewer) sites will need to be discussed with the Council taking in to account housing need and tenures in the surrounding area.
- Housing design must be tenure blind
- Large groups of homes (more than 10 units) of the same affordable tenure should be avoided.
- The Rushmoor Plan Core Strategy identifies a target affordable housing tenure mix of 60% rent and 40% shared ownership. The Draft Submission Local Plan (<http://www.rushmoor.gov.uk/newlocalplan>) seeks to secure affordable housing principally as subsidised rent. The tenure mix is likely to be about **70% for rent** and **30% for intermediate housing**.

## 7.0 Density and Design

- The Council's Housing Density and Design Supplementary Planning Document (SPD) adopted in 2006 provides guidance on the design and density of new housing schemes. (<http://www.rushmoor.gov.uk/article/3033/Housing-density-and-design---supplementary-planning-document>) Higher density is appropriate in areas of the borough with good transport provision.
- Although high density generally results in developments of smaller units in flatted schemes, concentrations of similar types of dwellings should be avoided and developers should aim to provide a mix of dwelling types.
- Particular attention needs to be taken to ensure that sound transmission in high density schemes is minimised.
- Affordable housing proposals should have regard to the principles set out in Building for Life (12) published by the Building for Life Partnership.]

## 8.0 Dwellings

### 8.1 Dwelling Sizes

- To achieve a satisfactory living environment we would recommend that dwellings should meet the internal space standards set out in Technical Housing Standards – Nationally Described Space Standards (DCLG 2015). Attached in appendix 1. These standards are reflected in the Draft Submission Local Plan (Policy DE2).
- We would suggest all affordable dwellings should be provided with some private external amenity space. All new affordable homes should provide good-quality, useable private outdoor space in the form of gardens, balconies, and / or roof terraces. More detail is set out in Draft Submission Local Plan Policy DE3.
- Ensuite bathrooms and utility rooms are excluded from the GIA figures
- Bedsits for single people aged over 35 years will not be considered favourably.

# Affordable Housing Development: Guidance Note 2017

## 8.2 Internal Dwelling Features

We have analysed the outcome of new build affordable housing schemes and from the feedback we have received we would recommend that the following dwelling design issues are considered.

### 8.2.1 Circulation Space

- Circulation space near the dwelling entrance should allow space to accommodate outside items such as prams, umbrellas, coats and shoes. Entry directly into a living room should be avoided.

### 8.2.2 Living Space

- In larger homes careful thought is needed when designing open plan living, dining and kitchen areas taking into account the number of potential occupiers and the need for some quiet space.
- All rooms, except internal bathrooms, should have natural light.
- Double and twin bedrooms must be capable of being used interchangeably. A minimum width of 3m would allow this to be achieved.
- Layouts should be planned so that the effect of noise from adjoining properties is minimised in sound sensitive rooms e.g. bedrooms.

### 8.2.3 Bathrooms and WCs

- Clear circulation space of 1500mm x1500mm provided in bathrooms together with a minimum of 1200mm in front of the WC pan to the nearest obstruction will allow properties to be used by a wider range of occupiers including those with mobility problems.

### 8.2.4 Storage

- Lack of storage is frequently an issue for residents, therefore, storage in excess of the Nationally Described Space Standard would be welcomed.
- In planning internal space and layout, account needs to be taken for the washing and drying of clothes and for waste and recycling bins.

### 8.2.5 Private Open Space

- Family homes (two bedrooms and above should have gardens of a minimum of 30 sqm, Smaller 1-2 person houses should have a 15 sqm garden.
- Flats should be provided with a balcony of a minimum of 5sqm and ground floor flats should have small gardens or private external space such as a patio (5 sqm min).
- Gardens to houses should have sufficient space for the needs of the occupants for example clothes drying, space for garden furniture and a shed and should have space for an area of lawn and for planting.
- If it is not possible to provide external balconies, Juliet balconies with compensating internal space in the living area may be acceptable.

## Affordable Housing Development: Guidance Note 2017

- Ideally balconies should have enclosures that are safe, offer some degree of privacy and be robust enough to take clothes drying equipment and furniture.

### 8.2.6 Entrances, Access and Communal Areas

- Approaches and entrances should be designed to make sure that properties are wheelchair accessible and include level access over the threshold.
- The number of dwellings served from a communal core should ideally be limited to 12 homes and corridor access flats should be avoided.
- Proper consideration of access control, number and size of lifts and management and maintenance is advised.

### 8.2.7 Space Heating

- Space heating should be chosen having regard to the need for simple operation, building regulations energy efficiency requirements and to make sure running costs are at a reasonable level to minimise the risk of fuel poverty. Use of renewables is encouraged to reduce residents' energy costs.

It is our view that consideration of the issues set out in this section can reduce housing management issues in completed properties.

## 9.0 External Environment

Our advice, based on feedback we have received on completed schemes, is that the following scheme design issues are considered

### 9.1 Secured By Design

We would recommend that when designing schemes consideration is given to Secured by Design principles.

[www.securedbydesign.com](http://www.securedbydesign.com). Advice has also been prepared by Hampshire Constabulary and Rushmoor Borough Council "Designing out Crime, Designing in Community Safety <http://www.rushmoor.gov.uk/article/3420/advice-for-developers>."

### 9.2 Car and cycle parking

- Car parking provision must be provided in accordance with the council's adopted Car and Cycle Parking Supplementary Planning Document. This is available on line at <http://www.rushmoor.gov.uk/parkingspd>. This includes guidance on visitor parking.
- The appearance of the car parking needs to be considered early in the design process to make sure that it does not dominate the street
- Our advice is that rear car parking courts should be avoided.

# Affordable Housing Development: Guidance Note 2017

## 9.3 Bin Storage

- Good design can incorporate bin storage into a scheme so that bins are easily accessed from the home but do not harm the appearance of the development. Arrangements that require rubbish to be taken through the home should be avoided..
- Consideration should be given to the size of the bin stores, and how bins will be collected. Further information is available online at <http://www.rushmoor.gov.uk/index.cfm?articleid=5087>

## 10.0 Environmental considerations

- The planning policy requirements for sustainable development, energy efficiency, renewable energy and sustainable construction are set out in the Rushmoor Plan Core Strategy. <http://www.rushmoor.gov.uk/corestrategy>

## 11.0 Maintenance

Developers should be able to demonstrate that they

- Have designed their scheme with low maintenance in mind
- Have considered the impact of design on service charges .
- Can provide easily understood maintenance manuals for occupiers.

## 12.0 Accessible and Adaptable Homes

Standards for accessible and adaptable homes are now optional standards contained in Building Regulations Document M. The Draft Submission Local Plan expects that affordable housing should meet the standards in Part M4(2), this is broadly similar to Lifetime Homes Standards. Where there is evidenced local need the Council will support proposals for wheelchair accessible affordable housing meeting the requirements of Part M4(3) of the building regulations

<http://www.lifetimehomes.org.uk>

## 13.0 Management

Our expectation is that to secure affordable housing for future eligible households, it should be managed by a registered provider of social housing (RPs).

There are a number of RPs developing in the borough or adjoining districts. The Council maintains a list on its website of RPs with which it is currently working. We believe that working with one of these RPs should minimise management costs and provide better value for money for residents .

## 14.0 Nominations

The Council will expect to enter into a nomination agreement with the provider of the affordable housing units giving the council the right to nominate to 100% of the units on first let or sale and 75% on subsequent lets and sales. This will help to secure housing for local people.

## 15.0 Tenancies

RPs will let their properties according to their tenancy policies. RPs should have regard to the Council's Tenancy Strategy when setting their policies. The Council's Tenancy Strategy forms part of the Housing and Homelessness Strategy 2017 - 2022

[www.rushmoor.gov.uk/housingstrategies](http://www.rushmoor.gov.uk/housingstrategies)

## 16.0 Affordability

Affordable housing is social rented, affordable rented and intermediate housing, provided to eligible households whose needs are not met by the market. Eligibility is determined with regard to local incomes and local house prices.

To be considered as affordable housing it must be affordable to people whose incomes do not allow them to buy or rent a home that is suitable to their needs in the borough. Although affordable rented housing can be offered at a range of rents it should be no more than 80% open market rent including service charges and no more than 90% of the Local Housing Allowance, but regard should also be had to whether a scheme includes homes affordable to households on lower quartile incomes.

The measure of affordability recommended by the Council and to be considered by Registered Providers when appraising their schemes is that housing costs are not more than 30% gross income. Developers are advised to have regard to this when agreeing offers with Registered Providers, and Registered Providers are advised to discuss rents with the Council's Housing Strategy and Enabling Manager to make sure their scheme meets local housing need.

There is a particular issue with rents for larger properties and the degree to which they are affordable to low income working households. For this reason we would suggest setting rents as follows:

- One two and three bedroom properties 70% of Open Market Rent or 90% of the Local Housing Allowance whichever is the lower
- Four bedroom properties 65% of Open Market Rent or 80% of the Local Housing Allowance whichever is the lower, OR
- A rent cap in the region of £250 per week.

## Affordable Housing Development: Guidance Note 2017

- Or such other rents as are agreed with the Council

Registered providers will be asked to demonstrate that their rents are affordable to those who are likely to apply for their homes.

The Council will periodically make available information on the incomes of those waiting for affordable housing under its allocations scheme. See appendix Two

### 16.0 Commuted Sums

The Council's preference is for affordable housing to be provided on site. In exceptional circumstances where local housing needs can best be met by securing a financial contribution to off site provision, a contribution of equivalent value may be accepted. This contribution will be calculated as follows.

*Financial Contribution = residual land value of the development proposal with 100% market housing **minus** residual land value of the development proposal with x% affordable housing.*

*( x% is 35% of the total number of dwellings of which 60% are affordable rent/social rent and 40% intermediate tenures as required by the Rushmoor Plan Core Strategy paragraph 8.79, unless otherwise agreed following a viability assessment of the development proposal).*

Developers may be asked to provide appraisals to support the calculation of an appropriate financial contribution which the Council may submit for independent assessment at the cost of the developer. These appraisals should be based on a policy compliant scheme and the correct level of s106 contributions. Money received from developers through this route will be ring-fenced for affordable housing to meet local need.

### 17.0 Specialist Housing

Developers are requested to consult with the council's Housing Strategy and Enabling Team concerning the requirements for specialist housing.

Wheelchair Housing needs to be designed taking account of the Wheelchair Housing Design Guide (2010) Habinteg Housing Association and meet the requirements of Building Regulations Document Part M4(3).

### 18.0 Grant Funding

For some schemes the Council may be able to make grant funding available.

If an RP wishes to apply for grant funding it will need to make sure that the scheme for which funding is sought can meet the following criteria

- Provides homes for rent at the rent levels indicated in para 16 above

## **Affordable Housing Development: Guidance Note 2017**

- Provides shared ownership that is additional to shared ownership required under a s106 agreement
- In the case of shared ownership, offers a return to the council in the form of a ground rent and a share in capital growth
- Meets the standards set out in this guidance note.
- Provides Lifetime Homes and Wheelchair housing as requested by the Council
- Provides opportunity for chain lettings, and
- Provides the Council with nomination rights.

## Affordable Housing Development: Guidance Note 2017

### Appendix One

Minimum gross internal floor areas and storage

No. of bedrooms (b)	No. of bed spaces (persons)	1 storey dwellings	2 storey dwellings	3 storey dwellings	Built in storage
1b	1p	39	-	-	1.0
	2p	50			1.5
2b	3p	61	70	-	2.0
	4p	70	79	-	
3b	4p	74	84	90	2.5
	5p	86	93	99	
	6p	95	102	108	
4b	5p	90	97	103	3.0
	6p	99	106	112	
	7p	108	115	121	
	8p	117	124	130	
5b	6p	103	110	116	3.5
	7p	112	119	125	
	8p	121	128	134	
6b	7p	116	123	129	4.0
	8p	125	132	138	



## Affordable Housing Development: Guidance Note 2017

### Appendix Two

Income	1bed	2bed	3bed	4bed	5bed	Tot
under 10,000	82	26	7	2	1	118
10,001 -15,000	71	42	19	5	0	137
15,001-20,000	47	44	20	5	1	117
20,001-27,500	17	31	38	3	2	91
27,501 -32,500	3	4	13	1	1	22
32,501 - 40,000	1	2	2			5
40,001 -55,000			3			3
<b>Total</b>	221	149	102	16	5	493

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**EMPTY HOMES POLICY**

**2017-2021**





# Empty Homes Policy

2017-2021





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# Introduction

This policy sets out how Rushmoor Borough Council will work to bring empty homes back into use, and supports our strategic objective to maximise capacity within existing housing stock as set out in Rushmoor's Housing and Homelessness Strategy 2017-2021.

Empty homes are a blight on local communities and a wasted resource we cannot afford when there is such high demand for housing in Rushmoor. An empty property could be a home for a family needing somewhere to live. We work with owners to encourage, enable and assist them bring their empty properties back into use.

The benefits to bringing these homes back into use for the council, the local community and individuals are many including:

**Meeting the housing needs of our residents**

**Preventing empty homes becoming a target for antisocial behaviour**

**The local community benefit from the improved environment, maintaining safe attractive neighbourhoods and preventing depreciation of property value**

**The owner benefits from support and advice on options for the reuse of the empty home, turning cost into financial benefits**

**Generates New Homes Bonus income**

**Reduce costs of providing temporary accommodation in bed and breakfast for homeless households in need**

The council will use the following twin-track approach to bringing empty homes back into use.

**Provide general advice, assistance and incentives to all owners to help them bring empty homes back into use; and**

**Prioritise all empty home for the appropriate action**

We will respond to complaints about empty homes as detailed on page six.

We have a good track record for tackling empty homes. Since 2011, we have brought 94 empty properties back into use, including 42 street properties, conversion of a disused Sergeants' Mess to provide 45 units of much-needed temporary accommodation and seven units of empty sheltered accommodation now being used as supported accommodation.

# Prioritising resources

The Government has produced guidance and legislation under the Housing Act 2004 to support local authorities to tackle the problem of long-term empty homes. Nationally, long-term empty homes are defined as properties that have been empty for more than six months.

Experience in Rushmoor shows that most properties that are empty for less than two years are re-occupied with minimal intervention from the council. As such, and to allow for alignment with our council tax scheme, this policy will focus on properties that have been empty for two years or more. The council tax scheme applies a premium of 150% to properties that we know to have been empty for two years or more.

As of June 2017, there were around 113 properties, which had been empty for six months up to two years and 38 properties had been unoccupied for more than two years. These figures do not include properties on regeneration schemes known to be vacant and waiting to be demolished.

To ensure that resources are used appropriately and effectively all actionable empty homes will be prioritised using a points-based system.

Appendix 1; Empty property prioritisation scheme provides further details on the scoring system and uses the following criteria to prioritise empty homes.

## Length of time empty



The longer a property is empty, the higher the priority.

## Property condition



The poorer the condition, the higher the priority.

## Impact of property on neighbours and local community



The bigger the impact on neighbours and the community and number of complaints the higher the priority.

Once prioritised, the council will concentrate case action on the highest priority cases.



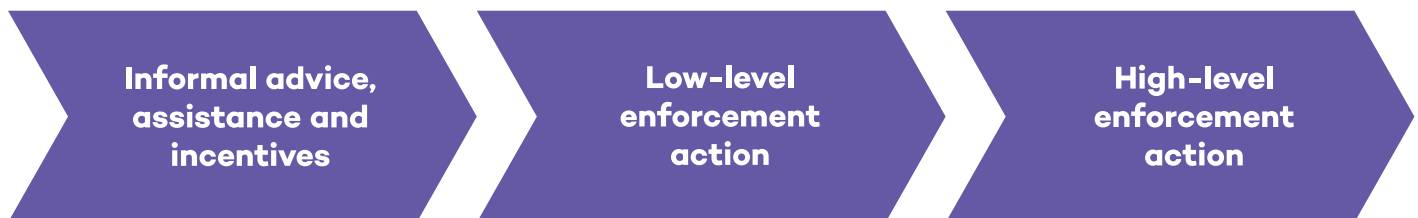
# Action on empty homes

The council can take enforcement action to bring a property back into use where the property has been empty for more than two years and it is having an adverse impact on the surrounding area.

Where property has been empty for less than two years and is in poor condition, it will only be classed as 'actionable empty' in exceptional circumstances.

The council will use a risk-based approach to identify the highest priority cases and take enforcement action where appropriate, to tackle the worst cases.

There is a range of options available to the council to bring a property back into use. These fall into three broad categories.



## General advice for all owners

We will provide information and advice to all empty property owners to help them bring their property back into use. Information on how to report an empty property is available on our website at [www.rushmoor.gov.uk](http://www.rushmoor.gov.uk)

## Informal advice, assistance and incentives

The council's main approach to tackling the issue of long-term empty homes is to work with the owners to encourage them to bring their homes back into use voluntarily.

We will work with owners of actionable empty homes advising them of the options available and providing information on a range of issues including:

- Information about renovating /or converting the property for occupation and signposting the owner to resources to support them
- Selling on the open market including at auction or to a Registered Provider of social housing (RP)
- Financial incentives, subject to budget available, including grants and loans
- Advice about letting the property including information about the council's rent deposit scheme and private tenancy officer to help find a suitable tenant
- Possible enforcement action that could be taken – environmental health, planning and building control issues

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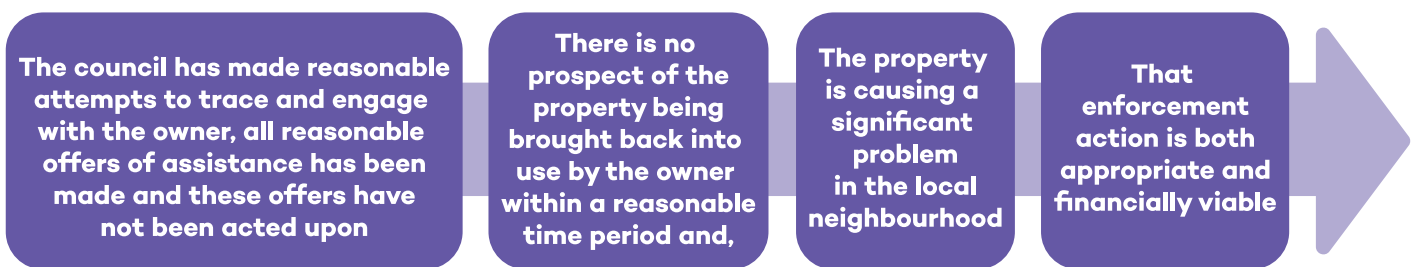
## Low-level enforcement action

Where actionable properties are in a condition which will cause problems for neighbours, for example overgrown gardens or disrepair, in the first instance we will try to engage with the owner to encourage them to carry out the necessary works. Where this fails, we may take low-level enforcement action and serve notice to carry out the required remedial works.

Where appropriate, cases will be referred to other council departments such as environmental health, planning services and the private sector housing team.

## High-level enforcement action

For priority properties, we will engage with the owner and work with them to bring the property back into use. Our Empty Homes Corporate Group meets every three months to monitor progress to bring properties back into use. High-level enforcement action will only be considered as a last resort when all of the following criteria have been met.



The council has a range of enforcement powers to tackle the problem of long-term empty properties. High-level enforcement action to bring the property back into use may include:



When the appropriate high-level action has been determined, we will seek Cabinet approval to begin enforcement.

In limited circumstances, owners are exempt from some enforcement action that would lead to the council removing management or ownership of the property from the owner. These circumstances are:

- Where the owner has moved to receive care
- Where the council is satisfied that the property is being used as a second home
- For six months after a probate decision has been made

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## Empty property enquiries and dealing with complaints

How we respond to reports received about an empty property:

- Investigate the complaint, including a visit to the property to establish if the council needs to take further action
- Prioritise the property using the points system
- Write to the owner to inform them that we are aware that the property is empty and enquire about their future intentions for the property. Offer general advice including signposting to resources to support the owner
- Advise of any action required for any necessary works and ensure it is carried out
- Refer the complaint and seek support from other council departments for action where appropriate
- Inform the complainant whether the property is classified as empty or not and update them on the action taken

## Complaints, reviews and appeals

Rushmoor Borough Council is committed to providing good quality service. If you are not happy with the service you have received or decision made under this policy, we need to know so that we can have the opportunity to put it right and learn from the experience.

In the first instance, please speak to the Strategy and Enabling Team Manager (job share) who will try to resolve the concern. They can be contacted by calling **01252 398 687** or **01252 398 630**, or by email at **[zoe.paine@rushmoor.gov.uk](mailto:zoe.paine@rushmoor.gov.uk)** or **[sally.ravenhill@rushmoor.gov.uk](mailto:sally.ravenhill@rushmoor.gov.uk)**

Alternatively or if you are not satisfied with the response, the council's complaints policy can be viewed on our website at **[www.rushmoor.gov.uk](http://www.rushmoor.gov.uk)**



# Appendix 1

## Empty property prioritisation scheme

<b>Address:</b>	
<b>Description of property:</b>	

Time empty	Score	Tick
Two years and over	10	
Five years and over	20	
Ten years +	30	

Property condition	Score	Tick
Visibly neglected - overgrown garden, poor external appearance, exterior not maintained	10	
Poor condition- significant disrepair affecting adjoining neighbours or visitors to the property	20	
Very poor condition - structural damage resulting from neglect. Requires major works internally or externally to structure and amenities to bring into use.	30	

Impact of neighbours and local community	Score	Tick
Attracting antisocial behaviour - evidence or risk of fire, vandalism, risk of entry	5	
Visual impact - visible from main road, garden overgrown	5	
Rubbish or fly-tipping	5	
Vermin - complaints received or presence of vermin	5	
Semi-detached, terrace or flat	5	
Number of complaints	5	
Number of people complaining - more than one person	5	
History of local authority action	5	

<b>Total</b>		
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Empty Property Priority		Priority score	
80-100	50-80	20-50	<20
High	High Medium	Low Medium	Low

A property that has been empty for less than two years, but is in poor condition and complaints have been received will only be classed as 'actionable empty' in exceptional circumstances and as agreed by the council's Empty Homes Corporate Group.

# Consultation on overnight respite for children with disabilities

## Proposed closure of Merrydale and Sunbeams overnight residential respite homes

Information Pack



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# Introduction

The County Council is seeking residents' and stakeholders' views on proposals to close overnight respite services at Merrydale in Winchester and Sunbeams in Aldershot. These are two overnight residential respite children's homes owned and run by Hampshire County Council.

The proposal does not include:

- **Firvale** – the third residential respite children's home jointly owned and run by the County Council and Hampshire Hospitals NHS Foundation Trust; and
- **Short break activities**

Please note that this consultation is separate from the County Council's *Serving Hampshire – Balancing the Budget* consultation ([www.hants.gov.uk/consultations](http://www.hants.gov.uk/consultations), closing 21 August). As such, responses to this consultation on overnight respite services will not be used to inform any decisions made by the County Council with regard to the Balancing the Budget consultation.

## Why your views are important

It is important to the County Council that the views of the children and young people, and their families and carers, who may be affected by the proposals, are carefully considered; as well as feedback from Hampshire residents and other interested stakeholders.

The findings from this consultation will be published and presented to the Executive Lead Member for Children's Services. Feedback will help to inform any decision by the County Council on the proposed closure of overnight respite services at Merrydale and Sunbeams later in the year.

# How to have your say

## a. Open public consultation

You are invited to give your views on the proposals to close Merrydale and Sunbeams. You can do this by using the online Response Form at: [www.hants.gov.uk/consultations](http://www.hants.gov.uk/consultations). The Information Pack and Response Form, along with Easy Read versions of both documents, are available to download and print from the consultation webpage.

If you require a paper copy of the Information Pack or the Response Form, or if you have any queries about the consultation, please contact [overnight.respite@hants.gov.uk](mailto:overnight.respite@hants.gov.uk), or call: **0300 555 1384**.\*

You can also email your response directly to Hampshire County Council using the email address: [overnight.respite@hants.gov.uk](mailto:overnight.respite@hants.gov.uk).

This Information Pack and the Response Form are available in other formats such as large print, audio and Braille. To obtain an alternative format please email Hampshire County Council at: [overnight.respite@hants.gov.uk](mailto:overnight.respite@hants.gov.uk), or call: **0300 555 1384**.\*

Please return paper Response Forms in the Freepost envelope provided. If you do not have a Freepost envelope, please post your response to: **Freepost HAMPSHIRE**.

**The consultation is open from midday on 7 August and closes at 23:59pm on 2 October 2017. Please note that responses received after this date will not be included in the findings report.**

\*Calls from a landline will be charged at the local rate, although mobile phone charges may vary



## b. Consultation drop-in events for parents and carers

Drop-in events have been arranged to help parents and carers to take part in the consultation. Booking is not required to attend these events.

At the drop-in events you will be able to:

- Find out more about the alternative overnight respite services which could be used instead of Merrydale and Sunbeams;
- Talk to Hampshire County Council staff; and
- Pick up a paper copy of the consultation Information Pack and Response Form.

These events are being held alongside, but separate to, the 'Get Together' regional meetings organised by Hampshire Parent Carer Network. Details of the times and locations of the events are set out below:

Location	Date	Time	Venue
Andover	8 September	9:30 – 11:30	Longmeadow Centre Cricketers Way, Andover SP10 5DE
Aldershot	14 September	10:00 – 12:00	Aldershot Centre for Health Hospital Hill, Aldershot GU11 1AY
Romsey	15 September	9:30 – 11:30	Youth in Romsey Southampton Road, Romsey SO51 8AF
Winchester	20 September	9:30 – 11:30	United Church Jewry Street, Winchester SO23 8RZ
Basingstoke	28 September	9:30 – 11:30	Maple Ridge Primary School Maple Crescent, Basingstoke RG21 5SX
Alresford	29 September	10:00 – 11:30	The Swan Inn Hotel 11 West Street, New Alresford SO24 9AD

### c. Face-to-face meetings with Social Workers for children and young people, and their families who currently use Merrydale and Sunbeams

The County Council will be offering all children and families who currently use Merrydale and Sunbeams, face-to-face meetings with their child's Social Worker or a colleague from the Disabled Children's Team. If your child is a current user of Merrydale or Sunbeams, you will be contacted separately by the Children's Services department to make an appointment. These meetings will take place during the consultation period: 7 August – 2 October.

These meetings are an opportunity for children and families to:

- Talk to the Social Worker about the proposed closure of Merrydale and Sunbeams;
- Discuss what impact the proposed closure may have on them; and
- Discuss what alternative overnight respite services could be available and explore what a suitable alternative care package might look like for them, if the homes close.

If children and young people who use either Merrydale or Sunbeams would like to have the support of an independent advocate to take part in the consultation and ensure their views are heard, or if a child/young person's Social Worker or parents/carers think the child/young person should have an advocate, the Social Worker will be able to arrange this.

# Section one: Proposals to close Merrydale and Sunbeams

The County Council is proposing to close Merrydale and Sunbeams for the following reasons:

- To respond to feedback from children and young people and their families and carers on the type of overnight respite they would prefer to use – please see below.
- Neither home is a purpose-built care home for children with disabilities. In their current form, the layout is not considered to be user-friendly in terms of accessibility. This presents challenges for the County Council in caring for children with disabilities, particularly in responding to the changing expectations and preferences of children and their families. To undertake further adaptations would require redesign and rebuild, and would come at considerable cost.
- Should the two homes close, the County Council would be able to reduce costs by approximately £450,000 per year, on the upkeep of buildings and facilities. Furthermore, some of the current funding used to provide care services at the two homes could be spent on purchasing alternative care support and respite services, provided by other organisations, to meet assessed care needs and preferences.

## National drivers for change

Central government reviews, such as the **'Aiming High for Disabled Children'** (May 2007) and the **Lenahan Review** (January 2017), have concluded that care for children and young people with disabilities should not be 'institutionalised' at an early age – i.e. children and young people with disabilities should not just be placed in a residential care home. These reviews call for a range of alternative services to be offered which enable disabled children and young people to remain in their communities, and for their right to a childhood to be acknowledged and respected.

## What children and families tell us they want from overnight respite

Feedback from children and young people with disabilities, their families and carers, as well as providers of overnight respite also suggests that there is an appetite for change. The County Council has been working with these groups to understand further what they need from overnight respite care.

Key findings from this engagement evidence that:

- There is a desire for a wider choice of overnight respite, beyond a stay in a traditional respite home;

- There is a desire to offer children and young people more opportunities to take part in exciting and stimulating activities as a core part of the respite offer;
- There is a need to support older children to develop further life and independent living skills as part of an overnight break;
- There is a need for parents and carers to have access to further help to find solutions for underlying issues, such as sleep deprivation, which could enable families to become more resilient;
- There is a desire to give parents and carers more choice in the length of overnight respite available, particularly when travel time to and from a respite setting is taken into account;
- Some families would like to be able to combine overnight respite with a break for the whole family; and
- There is a need to offer more age-appropriate overnight respite.

## Options considered and rejected

The County Council has considered and rejected the following options:

- Invest in the buildings to continue to provide services for the future. This option would not seek to improve wider outcomes for children; would not allow for investment in a wider range of services, which families tell the County Council they want; and would not be in line with the national approach to stop institutionalising care.
- Create a residential home for children with disabilities offering respite as well as permanent care. This option would not be financially sustainable and does not support the principles of developing a new and broader service for overnight respite provision.
- Use the buildings for a different purpose to meet the needs of children with disabilities. This option would not free up funding to offer families a wider range of choice or provide greater capacity to tailor services.
- No change/do nothing. This has been rejected because children and young people and their parents and carers have told the County Council that they would like more choice, control and flexibility. Also, this option would not improve value for money.

## Section two: Pilot projects

Working with the **Hampshire Parent Carer Network** (HPCN) and **Parent Voice**, in the summer and autumn of 2016 the County Council trialled alternative ways to deliver respite care. The pilot projects included:

- Disability Challengers Overnight Activity Breaks;
- Minstead Trust 16+ Overnight Independence Breaks;
- The Sebastian Action Trust Whole Family Overnight Break; and
- Kids Intensive Sleep Support Programme.

26 families took part in these pilot projects. The ages of the children ranged from four to 17 years old. The pilot projects were well-received by children and families and demonstrated that there are appropriate alternatives to overnight residential respite available. Feedback showed:

- Positive outcomes and experiences in relation to Overnight Activity Breaks, Overnight Independence Breaks and Whole Family Overnight Breaks;
- The need to ensure a variety of activities is on offer as part of any overnight respite;
- Potential to improve users' development of independent living skills through Overnight Independence Breaks;
- Demand for Whole Family Overnight Breaks was likely to be relatively low and more likely to meet the needs of families with younger children;
- Sleep intervention work needed to be appropriately targeted as an intervention rather than an alternative to overnight respite; and
- That all future services' premises must be accessible to children and young people with a disability, e.g. wheelchair users.

The County Council's engagement work during and after the pilot projects has told us that children and young people and their parents and carers want to have access to a wider range of overnight respite services.

## Case study: Improving outcomes

Abigail is 11 years old and has profound and multiple disabilities. Abigail is a wheelchair user and is unable to use words to communicate. Abigail's communication is limited to facial expressions and vocalisations. She is wholly dependent on others to meet her mobility and personal care needs. One of the targets that Abigail is working towards at school is to begin to develop choice-making skills.

Abigail is sociable and her behaviours and vocalisations indicate that she enjoys the company of others. However, she can become anxious in new situations. Abigail has a direct payment package where personal assistants care for her at home and she attends a local playscheme for children with complex needs. Abigail's parents find it difficult to identify suitable activities for Abigail to increase her access to the community. They need to be assured that the provider can meet her complex needs and care for her safely.

Abigail took part in the Overnight Short Breaks pilot in 2016. During this time, she had overnight stays with one provider and attended activities with another. The providers liaised with Abigail's school to understand the assistive technology and communication methods that they were supporting Abigail to use. Abigail was given a choice of activities and surprised her parents by being able to express her choices. She chose and enjoyed activities that her parents thought were beyond her capabilities due to her limited communication and mobility. These activities included climbing and archery.

This experience has given Abigail more freedom and expanded her opportunities to take part in activities. Abigail has shown others a side to her personality that she was unable to express previously. The use of pictures and other means of communication across settings enabled Abigail to have an understanding of what was happening next and this reduced her anxiety. The skills that Abigail is developing across school, home and other settings is enabling her care planning to become more person-centred and informed by Abigail's likes and dislikes.

## Case study: Independent life skills

Thomas took part in the 16+ pilot where he had two weekend breaks away and a one week stay during his college holidays. Thomas' Social Worker met with him, his parents and the provider at Thomas' house to explain what the provision would involve. Thomas was very excited about it and asked lots of questions. Thomas gets anxious in new places but he arranged with the worker from the 16+ provision that he would visit it before he went to stay.

While the respite gave Thomas' parents a break in caring, Thomas' experience was focused on supporting and developing his independence skills. Thomas struggled to accept that others could have a different point of view to him and often lost his temper if there was a disagreement. During his time at the pilot Thomas took part in team building activities and community-based activities with his peers to learn and develop his communication and self-management skills. Thomas also had responsibility for his own room which was something he struggled with at home. The aim of these activities was to prepare him to move onto living with peers as a young adult.

Thomas reported that he loved the outdoor games and he thought that having an ensuite bathroom was "incredible". He also took part in cooking activities. All the young people were buddied up and Thomas naturally began to support a young person who was less able than himself. Thomas was very pleased that he could have a week-long break as this made him feel "grown up". Having a peer group centred on supporting young people over 16 meant that activities and skills development could be tailored to meet the young people's interests and needs. Thomas' family felt this was really important and different to previous respite provision where there tended to be a lot of younger children.

Thomas has now turned 18 and he has moved into a care home with other disabled adults, in a local residential area close to his family. He is continuing to build on the skills he has learned and has made friends with the other residents, and he is enjoying college.

## Section three: About Merrydale and Sunbeams

### Merrydale

<b>Location:</b>	Kings Worthy, Winchester
<b>Number of beds:</b>	13
<b>Number of staff:</b>	24 members of staff
<b>Ofsted:</b>	Latest Ofsted inspection rating: <b>Good</b> Link to <b>the most recent Ofsted report</b>
<b>Website:</b>	<a href="http://www.hants.gov.uk/send-localoffer">www.hants.gov.uk/send-localoffer</a> Link to <b>Local Offer webpage</b>



#### About the current users:

As at 31 March 2017, there were 28 children and their families/carers using the home. The children and young people using Merrydale have severe learning difficulties and disabilities.

#### Background:

Merrydale was built in 1974 as a long stay residential children's respite home for children of all needs. Merrydale shares a site with other Council County buildings which provide services for adults. Over the years its purpose has changed and a number of adaptations have been made to the premises to ensure the needs of the children using the home are met.

#### Cost of providing services at Merrydale:

Merrydale's annual budget for 2017/18 is: £617,000

#### Potential impact of closing Merrydale

There are 28 children currently using Merrydale. Some children are approaching their eighteenth birthdays and will be looking to move on from Merrydale shortly. The remaining children would need to access alternative forms of provision if the home closed. The potential impacts would be different for each child and family using Merrydale. Those impacts, and alternative care support, including overnight respite options, will be discussed with children and their families as part of the consultation process. If the home closes, each child's transition from Merrydale to a new service would be managed sensitively and at a pace appropriate to the child, recognising the potential impact that change can have on children with disabilities.



## Sunbeams

<b>Location:</b>	Aldershot
<b>Number of beds:</b>	Four
<b>Number of staff:</b>	18 members of staff
<b>Ofsted:</b>	Latest Ofsted inspection rating: <b>Good</b> Link to <b>the most recent Ofsted report</b>
<b>Website:</b>	<a href="http://www.hants.gov.uk/send-localoffer">www.hants.gov.uk/send-localoffer</a> Link to <b>Local Offer webpage</b>



### About the current users:

As at 31 March 2017, there were 19 children and their families/carers using the home. The children and young people using Sunbeams have severe learning difficulties and disabilities.

### Background:

Sunbeams has been open as an overnight respite children's home since 1983. It is situated in a largely residential area of Aldershot and is co-located within premises that house other services for children and young people. The home was not originally a purpose-built home. Over the years a number of adaptations have been made to the premises to ensure the needs of the children and young people using the home are met.

### Cost of providing services at Sunbeams:

Sunbeams' annual budget for 2017/18 is: £448,000

### Potential impact of closing Sunbeams

There are 19 children currently using Sunbeams. These children would need to access alternative forms of provision if the home closed. The potential impacts would be different for each child and family using Sunbeams. Those impacts, and alternative care support, including overnight respite options, will be discussed with children and their families as part of the consultation process. If the home closes, each child's transition from Sunbeams to a new service would be managed sensitively and at a pace appropriate to the child, recognising the potential impact that change can have on children with disabilities.

## Section four: The current range of overnight respite services

Overnight residential respite is one in a range of services the County Council provides or purchases on behalf of children and young people with disabilities and their families. Most of these services are provided following an assessment of need by a Children's Social Worker from a Disabled Children's Team. A subsequent care planning process identifies services to meet assessed needs. All such plans are approved by a County Allocation Panel (CAP), which ensures the County Council is distributing its resources as fairly as possible.

In order to receive a service from the Disabled Children's Team, you need to be eligible for the service. For more information about eligibility, go to [www.hants.gov.uk/shortbreaks](http://www.hants.gov.uk/shortbreaks) and choose 'specialist services'.

If Merrydale and/or Sunbeams close, children and families would be asked to consider a range of alternative services which could be included in a suitable care package which meets assessed needs. This section of the Information Pack sets out alternative services which are available as part of current contracted overnight respite provision (as at July 2017). Further detail on each service is available on the County Council's Local Offer website:

[www.hants.gov.uk/send-localoffer](http://www.hants.gov.uk/send-localoffer)

### Please note:

- **Transport arrangements** to a residential setting are discussed and agreed on an individual basis, depending on the respite location. Transport would either be provided by the respite provider, or via County Council commissioned transport, for example by taxi. These arrangements would be agreed and put in place by the service provider and child's Social Worker.

## Firvale Residential Overnight Unit

**Service provider:** Hampshire County Council and Hampshire Hospitals NHS Foundation Trust

**Location:** Basingstoke

**Ofsted:** Latest Ofsted inspection rating: **Good**  
Link to **the most recent Ofsted report**

**Website:** [www.hants.gov.uk/send-localoffer](http://www.hants.gov.uk/send-localoffer)  
Link to **Local Offer webpage**

**Number of beds:** Nine (five social care, four Health)



### Description of the site and facilities

Firvale is a purpose built ground floor overnight residential respite unit that provides overnight respite care for children and young people. Owing to the high dependency of some of the children and young people who attend Firvale there is extensive equipment available to support their needs, including wet/shower room, adapted bath, ceiling track hoists, piped oxygen and suction, and specialist beds to meet the safety needs of the children. The building is wheelchair accessible to ensure that children and young people can move freely around the whole building.

There are two secure garden areas which all children and young people are able to access and enjoy. One contains a range of outdoor play equipment, while the other is being developed into a sensory area. There are two courtyard areas that can be reached from each of the two lounge areas.

Firvale has two lounge-dining rooms, as well as a messy play areas and a sensory room. There are nine single children's bedrooms; eight of these are attached to either a shower room or bathroom. The kitchen provides individual meals that meet the dietary requirements for all the children and young people who attend Firvale.

### Specialist services offered

The care offered at Firvale is guided by the philosophy that the children's welfare is of paramount importance in all decisions and planning. Children are children first; they should have with opportunities to mix and play with friends, to develop life and social skills and to achieve their full potential within a safe and secure environment.

Firvale aims to work effectively in partnership with families and wider professionals involved with each child to ensure the staff team has a sound knowledge of children's specific social and health care needs, along with their skills, interests and areas for learning and development to ensure consistent care delivery.

Firvale aims to:

- Provide an environment that supports children to be happy, healthy, safe from harm and able to develop, thrive and achieve;
- Value and nurture each child as an individual with talents, strengths and capabilities that can develop over time;
- Foster positive relationships, encouraging strong bonds between children and staff by jointly undertaking activities, sharing daily life, domestic and non-domestic routines and establish boundaries of acceptable behaviour;
- Be attentive to children's needs, supporting emotional, mental and physical health needs, developing a child's self-esteem and encouraging friendships;
- Ensure all staff and managers are engaged in ongoing learning about their role and the children and families they work with;
- Provide a safe, stimulating and comfortable environment for children to receive care; and
- Be flexible and responsive to changing needs and unpredictable family events where possible.

## Staff

The staffing team at Firvale comprises experienced staff who have either a nursing qualification or have achieved the QCF Level 3 Diploma for Children and Young People. The senior team has achieved the QCF Level 5 Diploma in Leadership for Health and Social Care and Young People.

Each child who has respite at Firvale is allocated a key worker. The key worker's role is to support children and young people to achieve their individual goals, whilst receiving overnight respite at Firvale. They do this by liaising with the family during the initial introductions and being present when the child has their first visit and overnight stay. The keyworker would be the family's first point of contact in the staff team to talk about anything to do with their child's stays at Firvale. The allocated key worker builds a professional relationship with both the child and the family and would be responsible for maintaining regular contact with the family.

## Current contracted overnight respite provision

### Beechside

**Service provider:** Portsmouth City Council

**Location:** Drayton/Cosham area, near Portsmouth

**Ofsted:** Latest Ofsted inspection rating: **Good**  
Link to **the most recent Ofsted report**

**Website:** [www.hants.gov.uk/send-localoffer](http://www.hants.gov.uk/send-localoffer)  
Link to **Local Offer webpage**

**Number of beds:** Six (currently open five nights a week, closed Sunday to Monday)



### Description of the site and facilities

All facilities for overnight respite are located on the ground floor. The layout of the ground floor is open plan and there is full wheelchair access to two large separate lounges, a dining area, a wet play area, laundry facilities and a purpose built sensory room. All of the six bedrooms have access to adapted beds and personal storage. Three of the six bedrooms have ceiling hoists.

One bedroom is specifically designed to focus on the needs of children and young people with autism by incorporating:

- Under floor heating, instead of radiators;
- A dimmer lighting system with the switch situated outside the room;
- Black out curtains and an external black out board system;
- High level sockets to enable video monitoring system to be used to reduce the likelihood of being disturbed during night checks;
- Situated by the main living area to enable night staff to maintain better observation at night;
- A removable half door system; and
- A nurse call system with an external door monitoring alarm.

There are three separate toilet areas which offer access to specially adapted equipment, including: a jacuzzi bath, a wet room with shower chairs, a changing table and a ceiling hoist.

Support to children and young people staying at Beechside is managed and planned by the staff team on duty in a number of ways, including through:

- Individual care plans;
- Preparation and management of the physical environment; and
- Individual planned menus that cater for allergies and personal likes and dislikes.

## Specialist services offered

Children and young people staying at Beechside are offered a positive, fun and individual experience during their overnight breaks, accessing activities including: an on-site sensory room, trips to local and surrounding community facilities via adapted accessible vehicles and local community transport.

Service provision is constantly reviewed, updated and developed to take account of the changing needs of the children and young people using the service. This is achieved by encouraging children/young people and their family/carer to feedback and contribute ideas as to how the service could be improved and developed.

Allocated keyworkers contact families using Beechside, via telephone, on a minimum of a monthly basis.

Beechside uses the Picture Exchange Communication System (PECS) to offer choices of activity, food etc. Where appropriate, PECS is used to provide a personalised time line to indicate and support transitions to and from different settings and activities. Makaton, an adapted version of sign language that is widely used by people with learning disabilities, is used alongside speech. All children/young people are provided with a home/Beechside book which is used to communicate and pass information to and from Beechside to the child, their family and any other agencies (e.g. school). This information may include what activities the child/young person has accessed, medication needs or how the overnight stay has gone.

## Staff

Beechside provides a service to children and young people with learning difficulties and physical disabilities. Individual assessments are completed by staff at the point of referral by the child/young person's allocated Social Worker. The identified support need is met by adapting the service around the needs of the child/young person.

The staff team undertake appropriate training and receives regular updates, as well as accessing support from specialist schools, Child and Mental Health Services Learning Disability services and the local community nurse team.

## Current contracted overnight respite provision



### Galena

**Service provider:** Keys Group (formerly Embrace)

**Location:** Woolston, Southampton

**Ofsted:** Latest Ofsted inspection rating: **Good**  
Link to **the most recent Ofsted report**

**Website:** <http://keysgrouppce.co.uk>  
Link to **Local Offer webpage**

**Number of beds:** Three for overnight respite

### Description of the site and facilities

Galena is a dual purpose home providing overnight respite and residential care. The overnight respite service can accommodate up to three children and young people. Both the overnight respite and residential care services support children and young people aged from two years who have learning and/or physical disabilities and may display challenging behaviour.

The two distinct services are provided within the same building and each operates in a manner that does not unduly impact on the other.

Galena is a two-storey house. The ground and first floor is the residential home. The ground floor is available for respite and is fully accessible to wheelchair users with widened doorways and corridors. There are two large wet rooms on the ground floor; one of which contains a bath and the other a shower. Galena has an Oxford mobile hoist but requests that families provide their child's own slings, if needed.

The young people using Galena are supported to have fun and participate in a wide range of activities both on and off-site. Within the home, the young people may take part in activities, such as baking, puzzles, and arts and crafts. There is also a sensory room, soft play room and computer games room, as well as a secure and well equipped garden with a swing and trampoline. Off-site, young people are encouraged to take part in a variety of activities from walks to the park or shops, trips to the cinema or theatre, inclusive cycling and swimming sessions, etc. Galena is happy to support a specific child's special interest.

## Specialist services offered

Galena welcomes boys and girls who have learning disabilities, physical disabilities, sensory impairment, complex health needs, autism and/or associated challenging behaviours.

Galena has specific experience of supporting children and young people who have: autism, ADHD, Global Development Delay, Prada-Willi Syndrome, Cri-Du-Chat Syndrome, epilepsy and cerebral palsy.

## Staff

Support from the staff team is offered on either a 2:1 or 1:1 basis. This includes intensive support 24 hours a day, or targeted support for specific activities. On referral, Galena works with children and young people and their families to identify specific needs, to ensure the child/young person receives the correct level of support and can fully benefit from their stay.

A flexible staffing model enables Galena to shape services to children and young people's specific needs including emergency, short-term and long-term breaks. Galena supports any specific cultural or religious needs, for example providing a specific diet, identifying suitable staff or ensuring time is made available for religious observance.



## Current contracted overnight respite provision

### KIDS House Respite Unit

**Service provider:** KIDS

**Location:** Fareham

**Ofsted:** Latest Ofsted inspection rating: **Good**  
Link to **the most recent Ofsted report**

**Website:** [www.kids.org.uk](http://www.kids.org.uk)  
Link to **Local Offer webpage**

**Number of beds:** Four



### Description of the site and facilities

There are four bedrooms which are wheelchair accessible, one bedroom is equipped with a ceiling hoist and an en-suite bathroom and two others which include profiling beds. KIDS House also has two separate wet rooms, both with toilets and showers and one with a bath. There is a communal lounge/dining room which has a flat screen TV, DVD player, arts and crafts and a selection of books and board games.

KIDS house has a well equipped kitchen that has restricted access for safety reasons. However, young people can use this kitchen with staff supervision. There is an enclosed accessible garden which will be updated in September 2017 to include more accessible facilities for the children and young people. There are also soft play and sensory rooms in the main building.

KIDS House regularly takes children and young people on outings, including: to parks, woods, the Sea Life Centre, the beach and for meals out. Activities provided for children/young people in KIDS House include: sensory time, story time, cooking, art and crafts, and outside play.

KIDS House has two vehicles to take the young people out, one being fully accessible.

## Specialist services offered

KIDS House can accommodate four young people between the ages of six and 19 years (either male or female) at any one time.

KIDS House can accommodate children and young people who have life limiting illnesses, mild and severe learning disabilities, physical disabilities and/or sensory impairment, children on the autism spectrum, Angelman syndrome, Down syndrome, Wolf Hirschhorn syndrome, Paediatric Bipolar Disorder, Pathological Demand Avoidance Syndrome, Rett syndrome, Microcephaly, Tourette syndrome, CHARGE syndrome, deletion syndrome and epilepsy.

KIDS House provides services for young people who: are in need of a living situation that provides clear boundaries and expectations; may display challenging behaviour; require social and independence skills development; as well as those who may require an emergency placement or have complex health needs.

## Staff

Staff aim to provide a safe environment in which the physical, cultural, social, intellectual and emotional development of every young person can be supported according to their need(s).

Staff also aim to provide an enriching experience through the allocated overnight stay, whilst also providing families with a break from caring.

## Current contracted overnight respite provision

### Oaks and Acorns

**Service provider:** Rose Road Association

**Location:** Alder Moor, Southampton

**Ofsted:** Latest Ofsted inspection rating: **Good**  
Link to **the most recent Ofsted report**

**Website:** [www.roseroad.org.uk](http://www.roseroad.org.uk)  
Link to **Local Offer webpage**

**Number of beds:** 15 beds in total: seven rooms in Acorns and six rooms in Oaks  
(one room in each of them has two beds)



### Description of the site and facilities

Oaks and Acorns provide a positive experience for children/young people through having a good understanding of their needs, likes and dislikes as well as ensuring their religious and cultural needs are met. Children/young people have opportunities to try new experiences, which broadens their choices and develops additional skills. Oaks and Acorns ensure that each person using the service is safe and booked in with a similar group, using the two separate groups of rooms to achieve this. Oaks and Acorns are suitable for children and young people with learning disabilities, physical disabilities and complex health needs, with accessible parking on site. The accommodation is in two spacious single-storey units providing separate accommodation for children and adults.

Both units have choices of single or shared bedrooms. All bedrooms have profile beds and overhead hoists, giving full access to users with physical disabilities and complex health needs. All equipment is also suitable for users who are physically able. Rooms are clearly identified with a Picture Exchange Communication System (PECS) symbol and word so users with communication difficulties can find their way around the building.

All bathrooms, wet rooms and toilets have overhead hoists. There are also adjustable baths. The building is secure with coded doors on all external doors, internal kitchen doors, laundry rooms, cleaning cupboards and store cupboards. These can be unlocked, if appropriate, to encourage service children/young people's independence.

There are safe gardens with play and seating facilities. The centre has a sensory, soft play and kitchen area called 'Space4You' to enable children/young people to explore new skills.

There is a hydrotherapy pool with changing rooms and full facilities which can be used during overnight respite, subject to availability and staffing. There is also a large hall and a courtyard for activities requiring more space during evenings, weekends and the school holidays. The kitchen, sensory and soft play are shared facilities used also by the outreach service.

## Specialist services offered

Children/young people have the opportunity to participate in activities including: arts and crafts, music and karaoke, swimming, cooking, and garden play. Oaks and Acorns encourage children/young people to develop their independence skills by supporting them to make drinks, assisting with meal preparation, tidying up, packing and unpacking bags, and with personal care.

Oaks and Acorns also provide opportunities to enjoy community-based activities including: bowling, cinema, theme parks, shopping trips, and boat trips. Children and young people are always offered opportunities to participate in activities and their choices are given, using their preferred method of communication.

## Staff

Each child/young person is allocated a keyworker who is a senior member of the Acorns team. The keyworker liaises with the family and young person during the referral and introduction process. When the child begins to stay overnight the keyworker acts as the link between the family and Rose Road. Following each stay a contact sheet is sent home which gives details of how the child/young person has been during their stay and what they have done. Sometimes photos of activities they participated in are sent home as well.

Oaks and Acorns follow individual communication plans to ensure optimum communication with the child. Staff regularly use alternative communication methods like Picture Exchange Communication System (PECS), Makaton, and schedules. Where English is not the first language, interpreters would be used if needed. Staff at Oaks and Acorns believe in regular communication with families, and welcome discussions with families about their child at any time. Oaks and Acorns regularly use feedback to evaluate the service, using this information to develop and improve.

## Specialist Respite Care

Formerly known as 'Family Link', Specialist Respite Care is an alternative form of respite for families. Specialist Respite Carers are registered foster carers who are linked to a family to provide overnight respite for children and are supported to develop specific knowledge and skills which mean they can care for children with additional needs. The specialist respite carers are supported by a supervising Children's Social Worker from the Children's Services Fostering Team and work closely with the child's Social Worker.

The County Council currently has 38 active Specialist Respite Carers, with 17 currently available offering a potential for 22 'links'. Specialist foster carers provide breaks which can be for a few hours at a time or can be for one night or more, depending on the needs of the family.

Specialist Respite Carers have a willingness and desire to understand and work with the family in support of the child. They have a range of experience and skills; for example from working in special schools or health services, or their own experience of caring for a family member. People interested in the service generally choose to become Specialist Respite Carers rather than foster carers because of their desire to work closely with families.

### Case study: Specialist respite care

Joshua is eight years old. He has received Specialist Respite Care (formerly called Family Link) for the past two years. Joshua has autism and severe learning disabilities. He can walk but struggles with walking longer distances. Joshua can sometimes become anxious and, when he is anxious, he will drop to the floor or withdraw himself and try to hide.

Joshua's specialist respite carers have a 14 year old son of their own who Joshua has developed a close bond with. Joshua loves football and he will often go to watch a football match with his Specialist Respite Carers and their son during his time with them. Joshua also enjoys helping his carers bake cakes and playing in their garden. Joshua is fully included in any activities that the family may be doing during the times he stays with them.

Joshua's parents know that Joshua loves his time with his Specialist Respite Carers and their son. Joshua's parents have a regular break in caring while being reassured that Joshua is being cared for safely and most importantly, having fun.

The carers have got to know Joshua's parents well and they are sometimes able to provide care when a difficult situation arises for the family. Joshua's wider family is unable to give practical support to him so this has really helped to build the family's resilience.

## Section five: Other overnight respite services

In the event that a decision is made to close Merrydale and Sunbeams, the County Council is aware of a number of other providers who could potentially provide overnight respite for Hampshire children and young people. Some of the alternative services listed below are available now, and others would require further development.

- Castle Gate – Newbury  
[www.westberks.gov.uk/localoffer](http://www.westberks.gov.uk/localoffer), enter 'Castle Gate' in keyword search
- Naomi House – Winchester  
[www.naomihouse.org.uk/our-services/naomi-house](http://www.naomihouse.org.uk/our-services/naomi-house)
- Shooting Star Chase – Guildford  
[www.shootingstarchase.org.uk](http://www.shootingstarchase.org.uk)
- Tree Tops at the White Lodge Centre – Chertsey, Surrey  
[www.whitelodgecentre.co.uk/children-young-peoples-services](http://www.whitelodgecentre.co.uk/children-young-peoples-services)

Other providers may be available. Where families have preferred providers that are not listed here, the County Council would seek to work with them to explore possible opportunities for support.

# Section six: Future overnight respite services

## Enhanced activities

Based on feedback from children and families, the County Council would look to support an enhanced range of activities which would be available within an overnight stay, as a supplementary offer to the standard overnight respite package. This additional investment would be available to all of the County Council's contracted or in-house overnight respite providers (i.e. those listed in this Information Pack, or providers of future services), and based on the identified needs of the child. The intention is that funding would be accessed by providers and assessed by a grant application process.

## Care Support

A family may wish to have a break in their own home, either for shorter periods during the day, or with a carer staying overnight. This means that the child does not need to stay away from home, for example in a residential setting. This could be with or without the parents or guardians present in the home.

If there is a demand for this service, the County Council would work with contracted providers for care support to increase capacity to be able to offer this type of respite more widely.

As with overnight respite in a residential setting, the child's Social Worker would make the necessary arrangements with the provider to put the service in place for the family.

Current contracted providers are:

- Interserve formerly Advantage Healthcare Group Ltd
- Andover and District Mencap
- Appletree Support LTD
- Autism Wessex
- J & K Recruitment Ltd
- KIDS
- Nurse Plus & Carer Plus UK
- Parkside
- Scope AHDC
- Smile Support & Care
- Sportfit Short Break Care Ltd
- Team Medical
- The Rose Road Association
- The Treloar Trust
- Unity in Care Ltd

Other providers may be available. Where families have preferred providers that are not listed here, the County Council would seek to work with them to explore possible opportunities for support.

## Family breaks

This would be a new arrangement which would provide an opportunity for the whole family to go away together in an accessible setting. There is potential for a wide range of providers to join the approved list for this service. Providers may be activity providers, and families may wish to access a whole family activity break, or they may be accommodation-only settings, for example, where families may prefer just a quiet weekend away somewhere. Families would be able to choose to stay at one or more sites.

Some examples of the types of providers who could be approached to offer family breaks are:

- Sebastian Action Trust: [www.sebastiansactiontrust.org](http://www.sebastiansactiontrust.org)
- Avon Tyrrell: [www.avontyrrell.org.uk](http://www.avontyrrell.org.uk)
- YMCA Fairthorne: [www.ymca-fg.org/for-families/fairthorne-manor-2/](http://www.ymca-fg.org/for-families/fairthorne-manor-2/)
- Qe2: [www.qe2activitycentre.co.uk/holidays.html](http://www.qe2activitycentre.co.uk/holidays.html)
- Calshot: [www.hants.gov.uk/calshot](http://www.hants.gov.uk/calshot)
- Smile: [www.smilesupport.org.uk](http://www.smilesupport.org.uk)
- IOW Caravan and Lodge: [www.iwight.com/Residents/care-and-Support/Short-Breaks/](http://www.iwight.com/Residents/care-and-Support/Short-Breaks/)

Other providers are available. Where families have preferred providers that are not listed here, the County Council would seek to work with them to explore possible opportunities for family breaks.

## Independence Breaks for young people aged 16 and over

Contracted overnight respite providers would supply targeted independence breaks for young people aged 16 and over. For planning purposes, it is likely that this service would be provided by the organisations already contracted to deliver overnight respite (see pages 11-21), as well as a member of new providers.

In commissioning this service, the County Council would aim to see a greater focus on young people developing their confidence and skills during their respite stay, meeting specific independence outcomes such as: independent care, improved awareness of personal safety, healthy cooking and eating, managing money, independent travel and finding information about local services for themselves.



## Section seven: Frequently asked questions

### **If the homes close, would children/young people and parents/carers be left without overnight respite services?**

No. If the decision is taken to close the two homes, every child and family affected by that decision would be offered an alternative and suitable care package that would meet their assessed needs. It is recognised that children and families would be likely to need additional support to adapt to their new care package, including moving across to new overnight respite services if that is required. Children's Social Workers would continue to provide support through the transition process.

### **Could a parent/carer choose to access more than one type of overnight or other respite break, or would they have to use the same break all the time?**

Parents and carers would be able to access more than one type of break, as is the case at the moment, as long as the overnight respite break meets the child's assessed care needs.

### **Could a parent/carer try all the different options to see which works best for them and their child/young person?**

It may not be practical to do this, and it may be disruptive for the child. Parents, children and young people would be able to explore and understand the options available to them with the help of their Social Worker. They could visit a place or places offering overnight respite before they try an option. If the child attends a provider but this doesn't seem to meet the child's needs, then in conjunction with their Social Worker, they may think about trying an alternative service.

### **Would children and families already in receipt of overnight respite have to be reassessed to receive an alternative offer?**

No. Reassessments are completed annually in line with statutory guidance, or if the needs of a child significantly change. Children and young people, and their parents and carers, would be offered a new care package which meets their current assessed care needs.

### **What if the child/young person doesn't like one or any of the alternative options, including residential respite with another provider?**

Families would be supported to explore alternative options. The proposed alternatives are not definitive – the County Council would like to work with families to identify creative ways that more closely meet the needs of children and young people. For example, the child's Social Worker could support the family to explore various options including: using a carer to stay in their home overnight, or any other service the family identifies that could meet the child's needs. Another example might be considering using a personal budget – funding allocated to children and families after an assessment which should be sufficient to meet their assessed needs. Children and families could take their personal budget as a direct payment.

### **What would happen to the buildings, if they close?**

If the decision is taken to close Merrydale and Sunbeams, the sites would eventually be sold.

### **What would happen to the staff if the homes close?**

There is a separate staff consultation running parallel to the public consultation. Staff, and the relevant Trade Unions, are involved in this.

### **Would transport provision be included?**

Transport arrangements to a residential setting are discussed and agreed on an individual basis, depending on the respite location. Transport would either be provided by the respite provider, or via County Council commissioned transport, for example by taxi. These arrangements would be agreed and put in place by the service provider and child's Social Worker.

# Conclusion

**Thank you** for reading through this Information Pack.

You are invited to give your views on the proposals to close Merrydale and Sunbeams. You can do this by using the online Response Form at: [www.hants.gov.uk/consultations](http://www.hants.gov.uk/consultations).

Paper copies of the Information Pack and Response Form are available upon request by emailing [overnight.respite@hants.gov.uk](mailto:overnight.respite@hants.gov.uk) or calling **0300 555 1384\***.

Easy Read versions of the Information Pack and Response Form are available online to download and print, or as paper copies upon request.

You can also email your response directly to Hampshire County Council using the email address [overnight.respite@hants.gov.uk](mailto:overnight.respite@hants.gov.uk).

This Information Pack and the Response Form are available in other formats such as large print, audio and Braille. To obtain an alternative format, or if you have any queries about this consultation, please email Hampshire County Council at: [overnight.respite@hants.gov.uk](mailto:overnight.respite@hants.gov.uk), or call: **0300 555 1384\***

The findings from this consultation will be published and presented to the Executive Lead Member for Children's Services for consideration of a decision on the proposed closure of Merrydale and Sunbeams later in the year.

\* Calls from a landline will be charged at a local rate, although mobile phone charges may vary.

Published: August 2017

## COMMUNITY POLICY AND REVIEW PANEL WORK PROGRAMME

Set out below are the key issues which form the Panel's on-going work programme. The topics covered reflect the following:

- the development of a new policy for recommendation to the Cabinet
- scrutiny of the process of the way in which decisions have been or are being made
- reviewing issues of concern to local people or which affect the Borough
- 
- review of performance and delivery of specific services
- monitoring and scrutinising the activities of others
- items raised by Members and agreed by the Panel for consideration
- review of policies and proposals developed by others

The purpose of the work programme is to identify the way in which topics are being dealt with and the progress made with them. An update will be submitted to each meeting of the Panel.

# HEALTH AND HOUSING PORTFOLIO

## ACCOUNTABILITY AND AREAS OF RESPONSIBILITY

### Housing Matters

- To carry out the Council's strategic housing and enabling role by identifying housing need and considering and developing initiatives to meet that need through work with the statutory, voluntary and private sectors.
- To consider, approve and keep under review the Housing Strategy in accordance with Department of the Environment, Transport and the Regions guidelines.
- To deal with matters relating to registered social landlords operating in the Borough and commit capital expenditure to develop new and improved affordable housing in the Borough.
- To carry out the Council's statutory duties under the homelessness legislation including the provision of a comprehensive free housing advice service and the responsibility for a homelessness strategy.
- To monitor and review the portfolio of temporary accommodation for the homeless and review that provided by registered social landlords.
- To maintain a housing register, allocations scheme and choice in lettings policies and the nominations policies and agreements with registered social landlords.
- To deal with all matters relating to the condition, repair, improvement, adaptation and energy efficiency of private sector dwellings, including houses in multiple occupation pursuant to the Housing Act 2004.
- To carry out the Council's statutory duties in relation to the licensing of houses in multiple occupation, pursuant to the Housing Act, 2004.

- To provide Private Sector Renewal Grants for the repair and adaptation of dwellings, in accordance with legislation and the Private Sector Housing Renewal Strategy.
- To carry out the Council's responsibilities under the home energy legislation, particularly in relation to energy efficiency and fuel poverty.

### Care in the Community Matters

- To undertake the Council's role in respect of care in the community policy issues, social needs and supporting people in conjunction with appropriate other organisations, including the County Council, Primary Care Trust, health trusts and the voluntary sector.
- To monitor and review services to the local community in relation to the Health and Housing Portfolio and administering grants as appropriate, in particular to the Hampshire Youth Bureau, Step by Step, Relate and the local home improvement agency.

### Health Matters

- To liaise and co-ordinate with local health organisations and bodies to improve facilities in the Borough.
- To work in partnership with local health organisations and bodies to promote the health needs of the Borough and in particular to support the activities of the Rushmoor Healthy Living.
- To exercise the Council's functions in relation to health education and to participate in local and national initiatives and campaigns as appropriate.

## SCRUTINY

DATE RAISED	ISSUE	CURRENT POSITION	PROCESS AND TIMETABLE	CONTACT (SERVICE MANAGER)
<b>HOUSING MATTERS</b>				
11.12.03	<b>Vivid Homes (VH) (was First Wessex) - Performance and Review</b>	VH to attend one meeting of the Community Panel each year to cover scrutiny, performance and delivery. Two Joint VH and RBC joint Business Meetings to be held per annum. Items for the Panel meeting to be submitted to the Head of Environmental Health Housing Services in advance.	<p>The latest FW / RBC Joint Business meeting took place on 3 August, 2017. The next meeting is planned for February, 2018.</p> <p>VH attended the meeting of the Panel on 17 November, 2016 to provide an update on garage sites.</p> <p>On 15 September, 2016, Peter Walters attended the meeting of the Panel to advise Members on the proposed merger between First Wessex and Sentinel Housing Association.</p> <p>VH will be invited to provide the Panel with an update during the 2017/18 Municipal Year.</p>	<p>Qamer Yasin            Head of Environmental Health and Housing            Tel. (01252) 398640            Email: qamer.yasin@rushmoor.gov.uk</p>

DATE RAISED	ISSUE	CURRENT POSITION	PROCESS AND TIMETABLE	CONTACT (SERVICE MANAGER)
15.06.06	<b>Registered Providers of Social Housing Review Group (RPSHs)</b>	<p>The RPSH Review Group has been set in order for Members to meet with Registered providers of social housing.</p> <p>The emphasis of the meetings was to question the landlords on:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• housing management,</li> <li>• maintenance of property</li> <li>• the environment</li> <li>• tenant involvement</li> <li>• customer service</li> <li>• with development issues being secondary.</li> </ul>	<p>Appointments to the Group were made at the Panel meeting on 15 June, 2017 for the 2017/18 Municipal year.</p> <p>A report and presentation on the Review of Registered Providers for 2016/17 was discussed at the Panel meeting held on 15 June, 2017.</p>	<p>Qamer Yasin  Head of Environmental Health and Housing  Tel. (01252) 398640  Email: qamer.yasin@rushmoor.gov.uk</p>



DATE RAISED	ISSUE	CURRENT POSITION	PROCESS AND TIMETABLE	CONTACT (SERVICE MANAGER)
<b>HEALTH MATTERS –</b>				
Jan, 2007	<p><b>Health Issues</b></p> <p>Monitoring and influencing the configuration and delivery of local health services.</p> <p>Review the implications of the Government's White Paper and to engage with the Director of Public Health, local GPs and Frimley Park Hospital.</p>	<p>The Panel has a key role in monitoring and influencing the public health agenda. The Panel has agreed that a Health Issues Standing Group would be appointed to discuss any current and future consultation relating to health issues / changes in the area. The outcome of the meeting would be submitted to the Panel for agreements.</p>	<p>Appointments to the Group were made at the meeting of the Panel on 15 June, 2017.</p> <p>Meetings of the Health Issues Standing Group to be organised for 2016 /17 Municipal Year and a programme of work to be developed for the Year.</p> <p>On 2 February, 2017 Sir Andrew Morris and Dr. Andrew Whitfield attended the Panel meeting to provide a detailed update on the Frimley Health and Care System Sustainability and Transformation Plan (STP). The development of the STP would be monitored by the Panel.</p>	tba (was Andrew Lloyd)

<b>CARE IN THE COMMUNITY</b>				
04.09.07	<b>Neighbourhood Renewal Strategy</b>	An update of the Neighbourhood Renewal Strategy was presented to the Panel on 4 February, 2016.	An update is due to be provided to the Panel in the 2017/18 Municipal Year.	Ian Harrison, Corporate Director Tel. (01252) 398400 ian.harrison@rushmoor.gov.uk

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## POLICY

<b>DATE RAISED</b>	<b>ISSUE</b>	<b>CURRENT POSITION</b>	<b>PROCESS AND TIMETABLE</b>	<b>CONTACT (SERVICE MANAGER)</b>
<b>HOUSING MATTERS</b>				
2008/2010	<b>Housing and Homelessness Strategies 2011-2016 and Action Plan</b>	The Panel has appointed a Housing Strategy Group, comprising councillors and representatives from a range of organisations, to debate the key themes and issues, help set the objectives and aims, look at options and assist in formulating actions and targets for the Housing Strategy.	<p>Appointments to the Group were made at the meeting of the Panel on 15 June, 2017</p> <p>The 2011-2016 Housing and Homelessness Strategy came to an end in March 2016. Consultation for the 2017-2021 had taken place in Spring 2016. Members would continue to play a key part in the development of the strategy.</p> <p>The Panel would continue to monitor the work of the Housing Options Team, the most recent update on the development of the new strategy was provided to the Panel on 15 June, 2017.</p>	Qamer Yasin Head of Environmental Health and Housing Tel. (01252) 398640 Email: qamer.yasin@rushmoor.gov.uk

DATE RAISED	ISSUE	CURRENT POSITION	PROCESS AND TIMETABLE	CONTACT (SERVICE MANAGER)
29.03.2012	<b>Welfare Reform</b>	<p>At the meeting of the Panel on 29<sup>th</sup> March, 2012, it was requested that this item would be added to the Panel's programme of work as a result of the significant changes to the Borough as a result of the Welfare Reform.</p> <p>The Panel agreed that a task and finish group should be established including the Cabinet Member for Concessions and Community Support in order to consider the preparation for the development of the council tax support scheme.</p>	<p>Ian Harrison provided details of the Welfare Reform and the requirement for local authorities to develop a local council tax support scheme at its meeting on 29<sup>th</sup> March, 2012. A task and finish Group was appointed to develop the support scheme.</p> <p>The Panel to receive yearly updates on progression.</p> <p>The last update was presented to the Panel on 19 November, 2015. A further update to be provided in the 2017/18 Municipal Year.</p>	<p>Ian Harrison, Corporate Director, Tel. (01252) 398400, Email. <a href="mailto:ian.harrison@rushmoor.gov.uk">ian.harrison@rushmoor.gov.uk</a></p>

## COMMUNITY POLICY AND REVIEW PANEL WORK FLOW – 2017 / 18

<b>14 September 2017</b>		<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Housing and Homelessness Strategy (part 1)</li> <li>• HCC consultation on overnight respite for children with disabilities</li> </ul>
<b>16 November 2017</b>		<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Welfare Reform Update</li> <li>• Air quality</li> <li>• Health education</li> </ul>
<b>25 January 2018</b>		
<b>29 March 2018</b>		<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Housing and Homelessness Strategy (part 2)</li> <li>• Frimley Sustainability and Transformation Plan (STP)</li> </ul>
<b>Future Items Suggested – Dates to be Confirmed</b>	Public Health Monitoring Vanguard Update Deprivation Improvement Strategy (was Neighbourhood Renewal Strategy) Improving Access to Psychological Therapies (IAPT) / TalkPlus	South East Coast Ambulance Service Vivid Homes update ?Housing Strategy Group – Terms of reference

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Last update: 06 September 2017