

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.

Theme	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
Vision for 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.	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

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 Assessment (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 homes 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 SHMA 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 th 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.

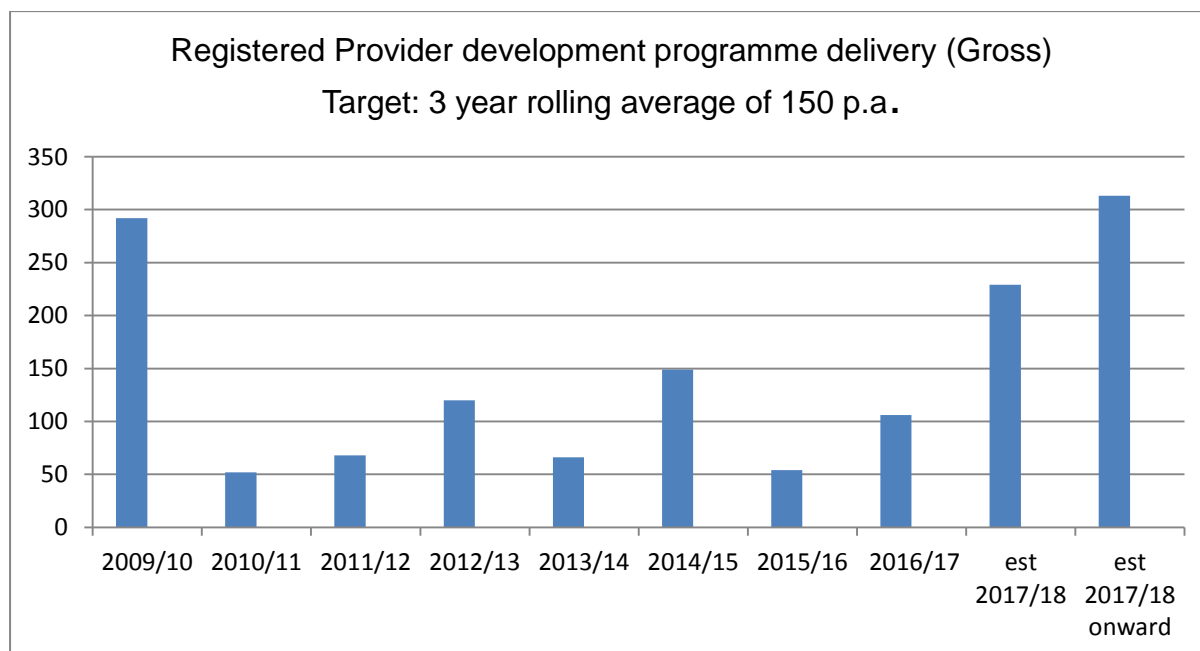
Housing delivery

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/farnboroughtowncentrespdpd>

<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 work

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.

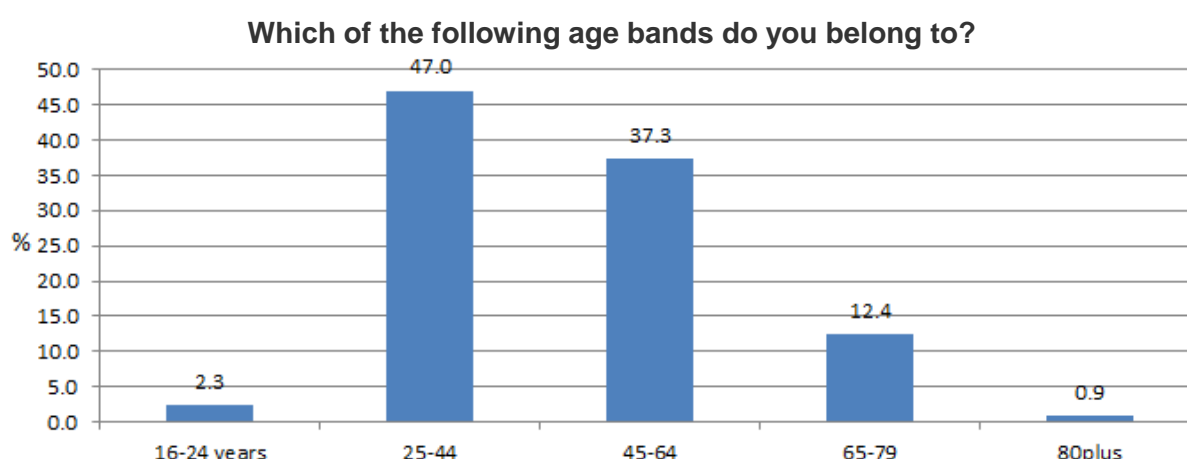
Characteristics of the respondents

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.

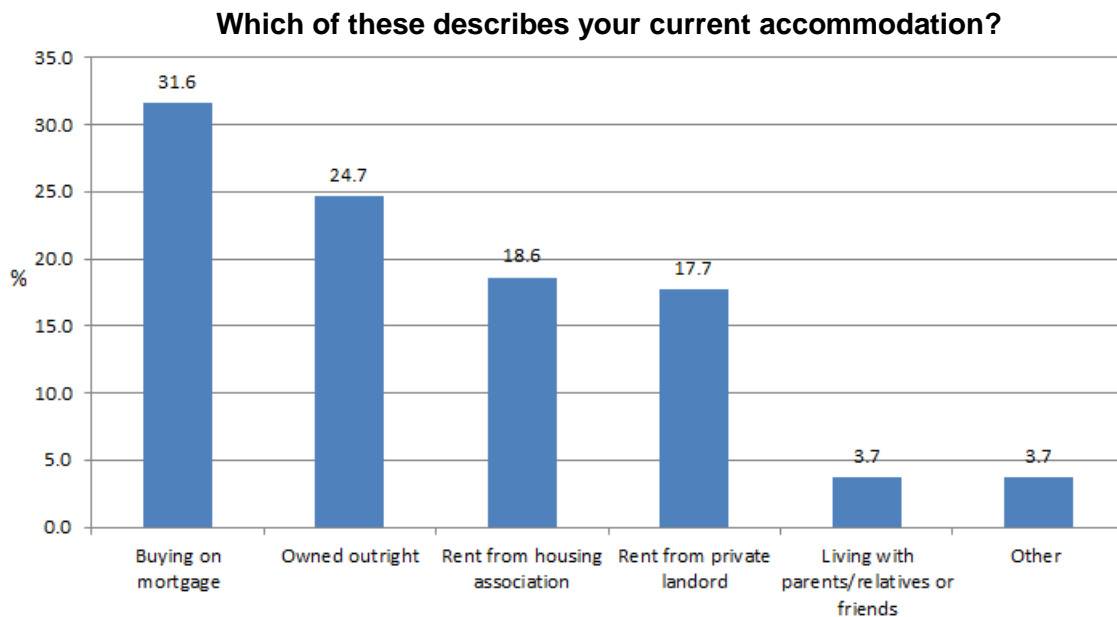


Conditions or disabilities, which limit daily activities

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.



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.

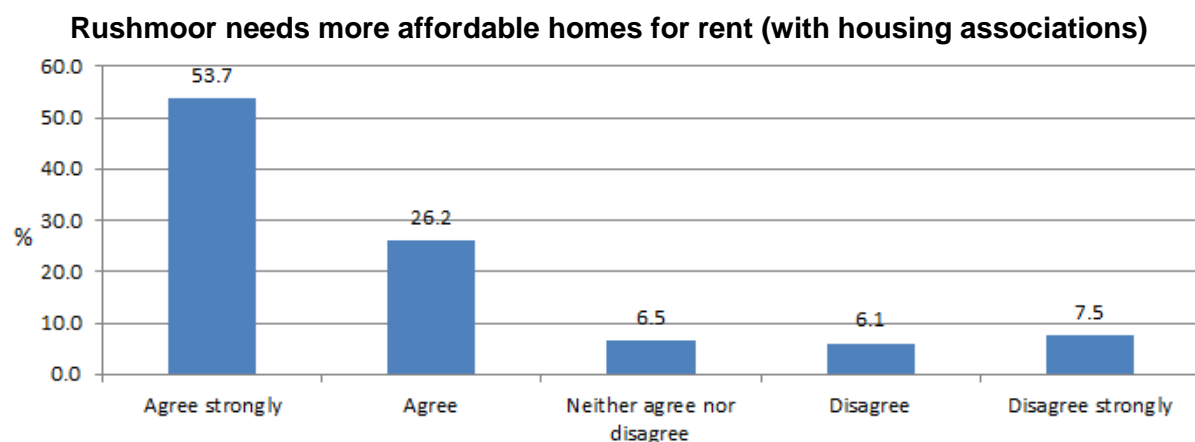
Consultation results

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.

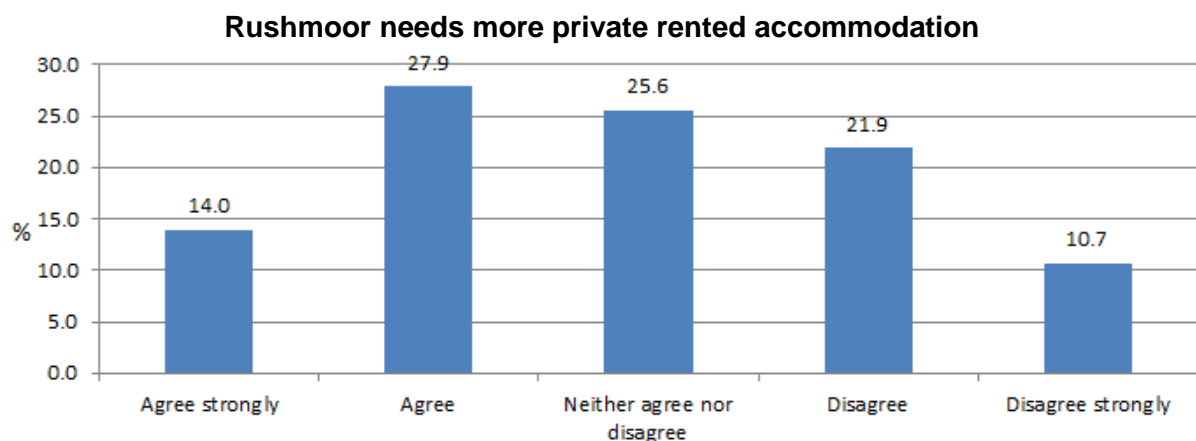
1. Rushmoor needs more affordable homes for rent (with housing associations)

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



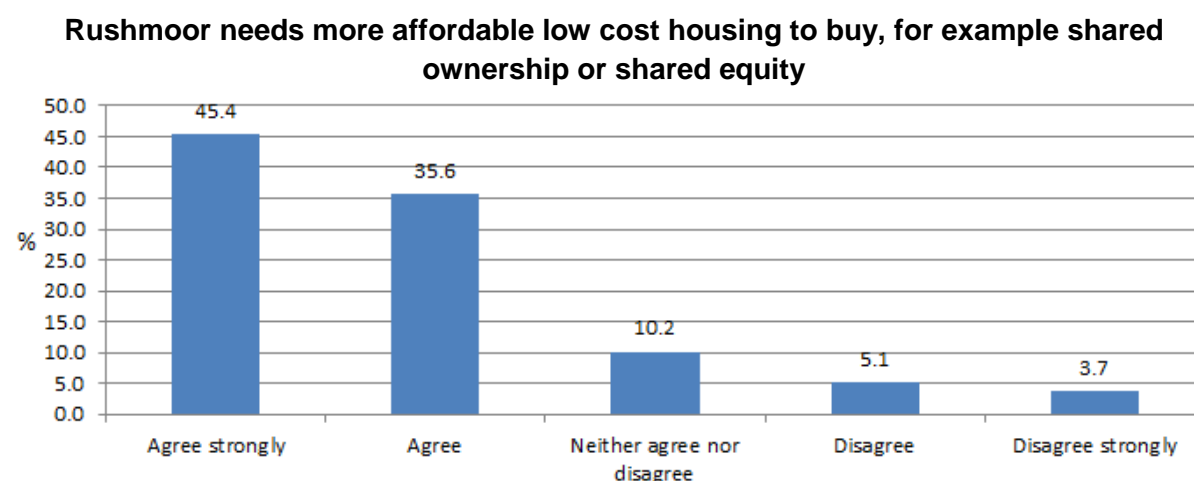
2. Rushmoor needs more private rented accommodation

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



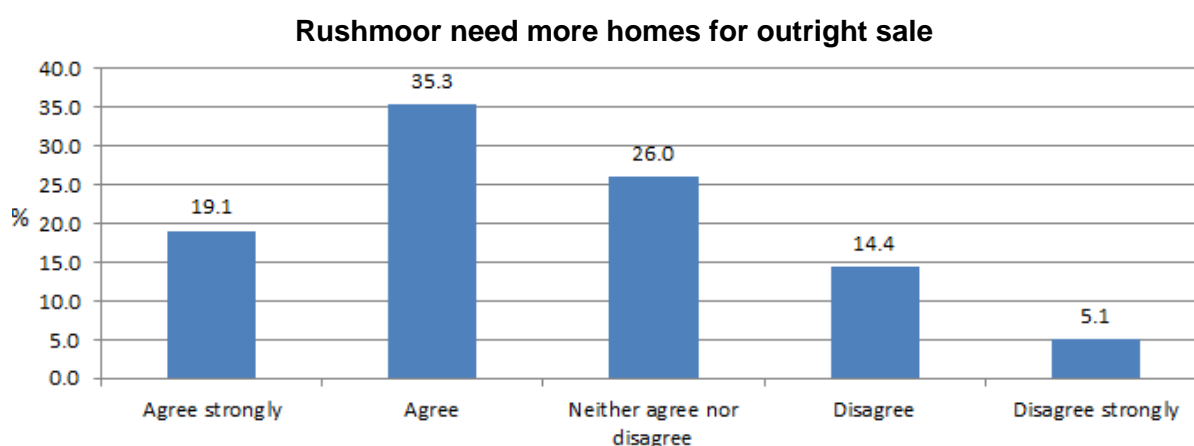
3. Rushmoor needs more affordable low cost housing to buy, for example shared ownership or shared equity

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



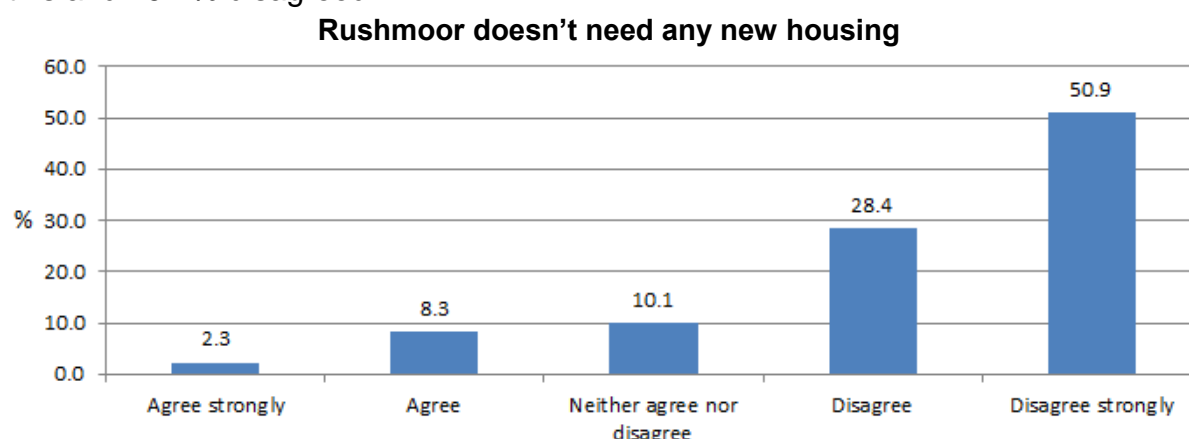
4. Rushmoor need more homes for outright sale

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



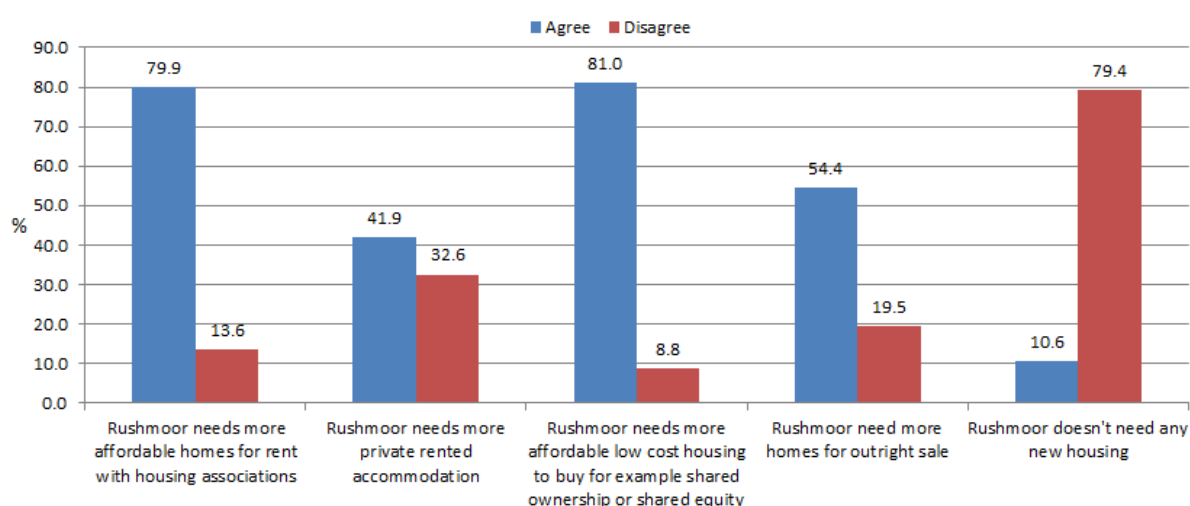
5. Rushmoor doesn't need any new housing

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.



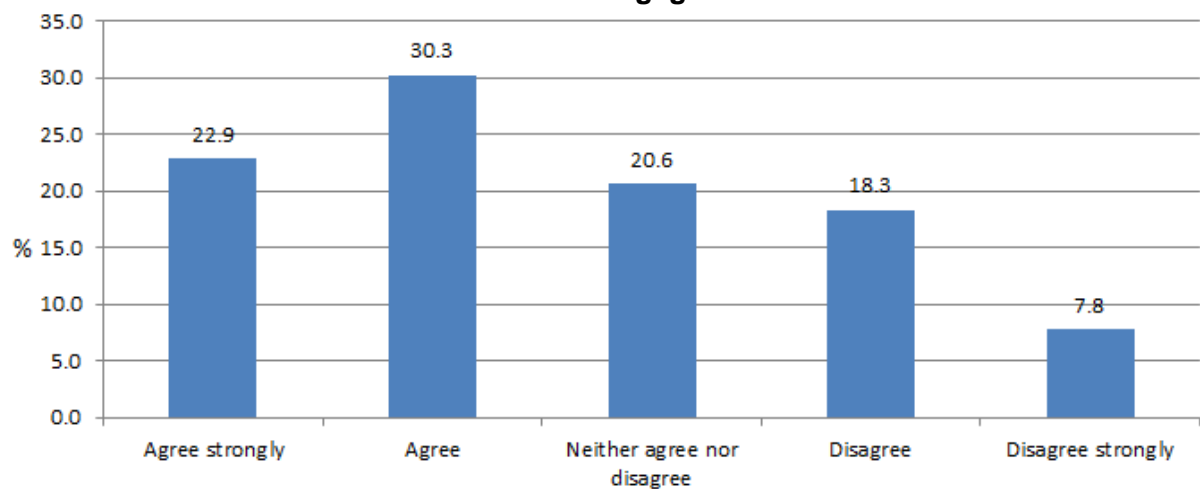
Who the new homes should be for

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.

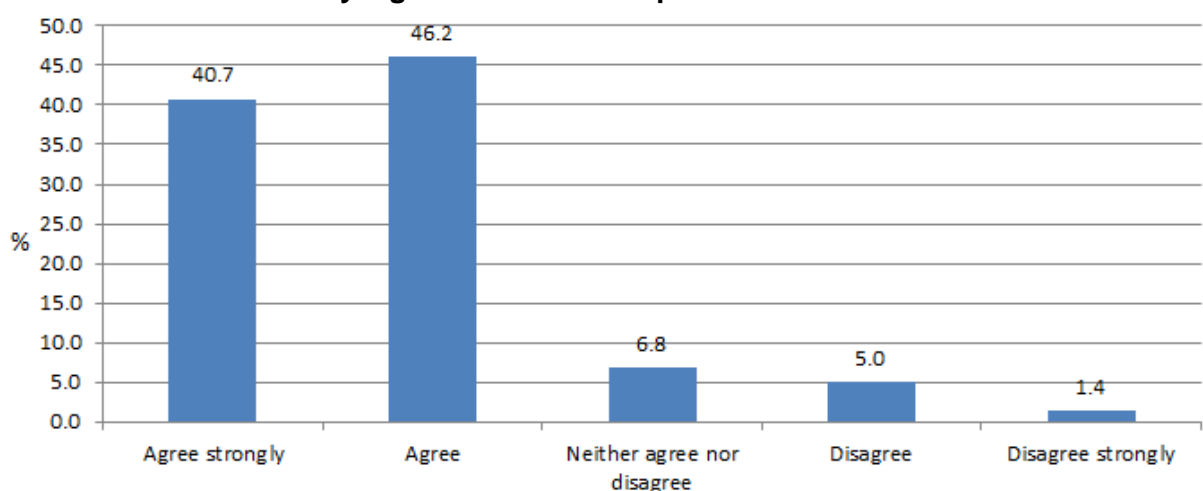
New homes should be for people who can afford to buy their own home with a deposit and mortgage



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.

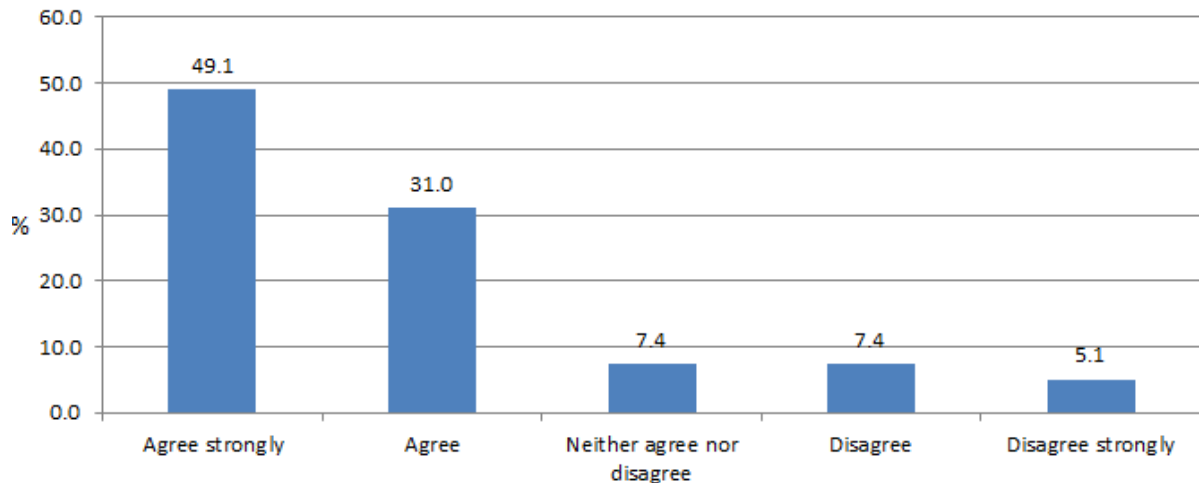
New homes should be for first time buyers who need affordable low cost homes to buy e.g. shared ownership or starter homes



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.

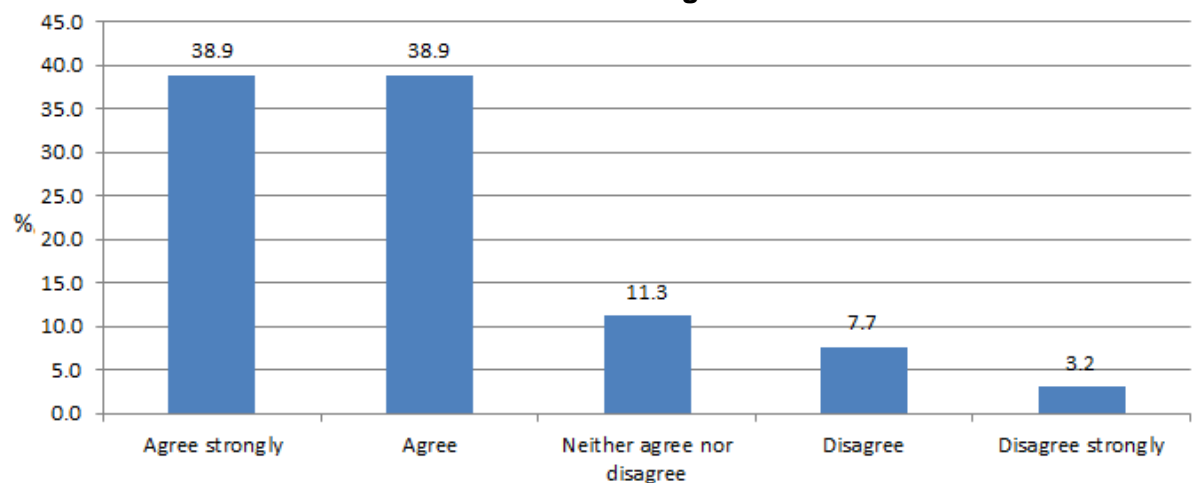
New homes should be for people who need affordable homes to rent because they have low incomes, are homeless, in crisis or living on the streets



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

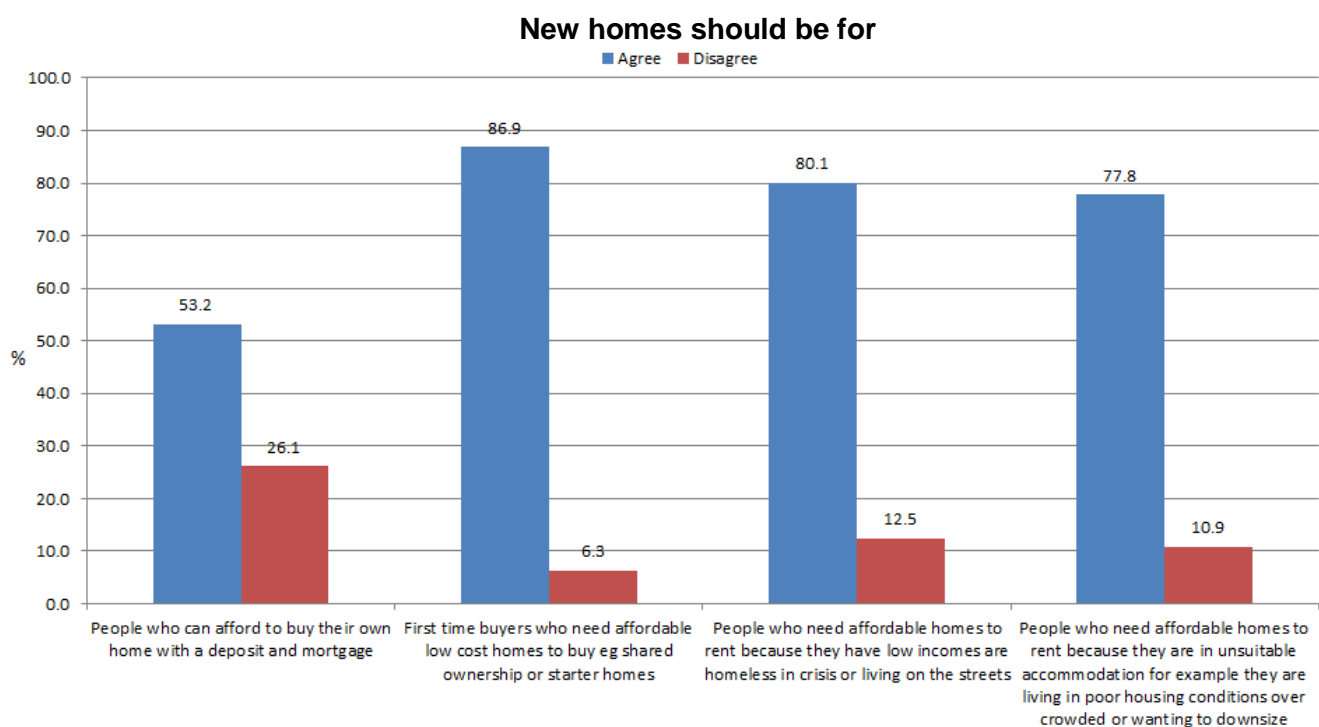
221 valid responses. In total 77.8% agreed with this and 10.9% disagreed.

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.



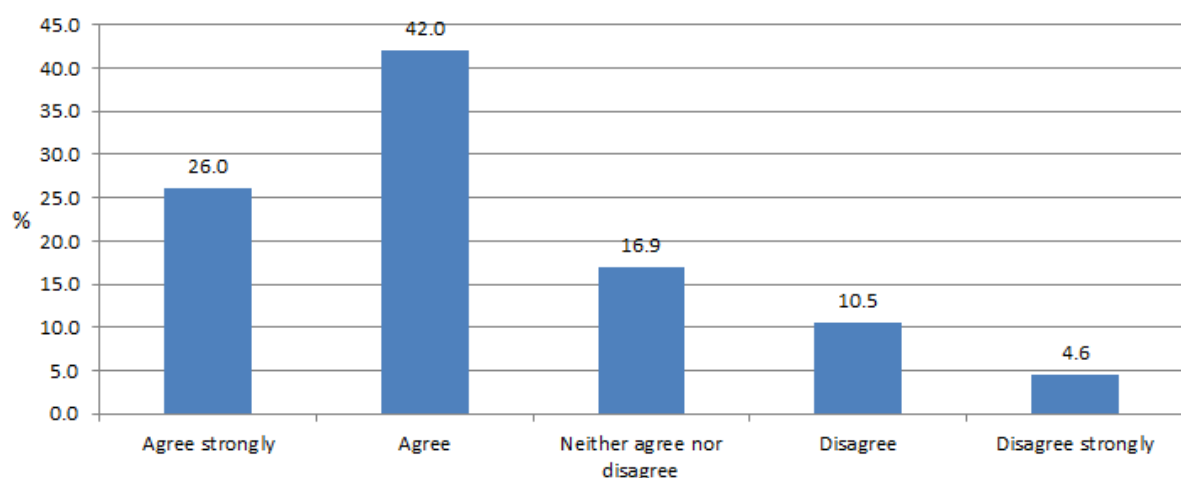
Types of households that should have priority

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.

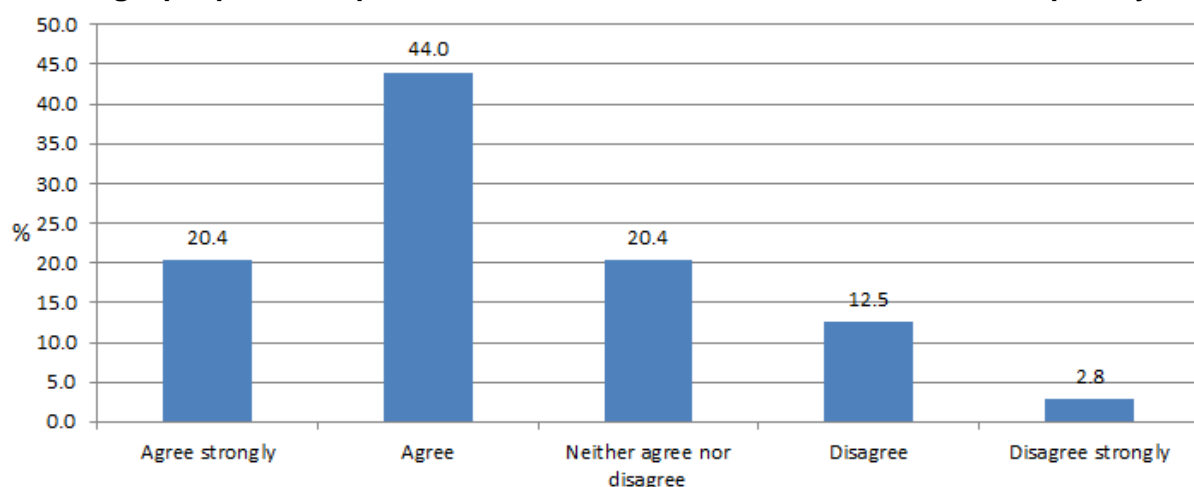
Older people who want to downsize because their current home is too large should have priority



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

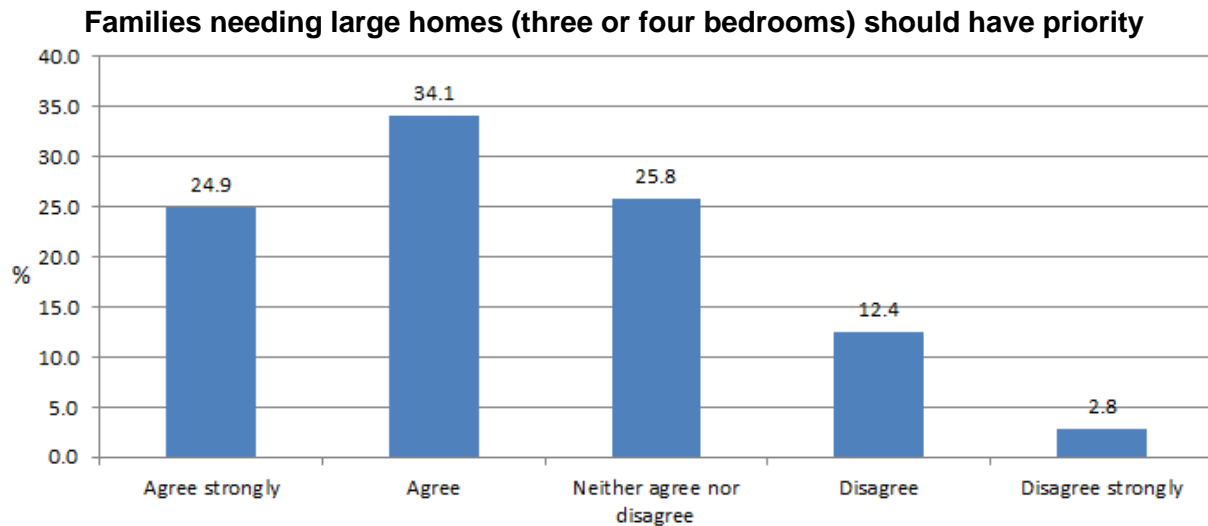
216 valid responses (excluding the two 'I don't knows'). In total 64.4% agreed with this and 15.3% disagreed.

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



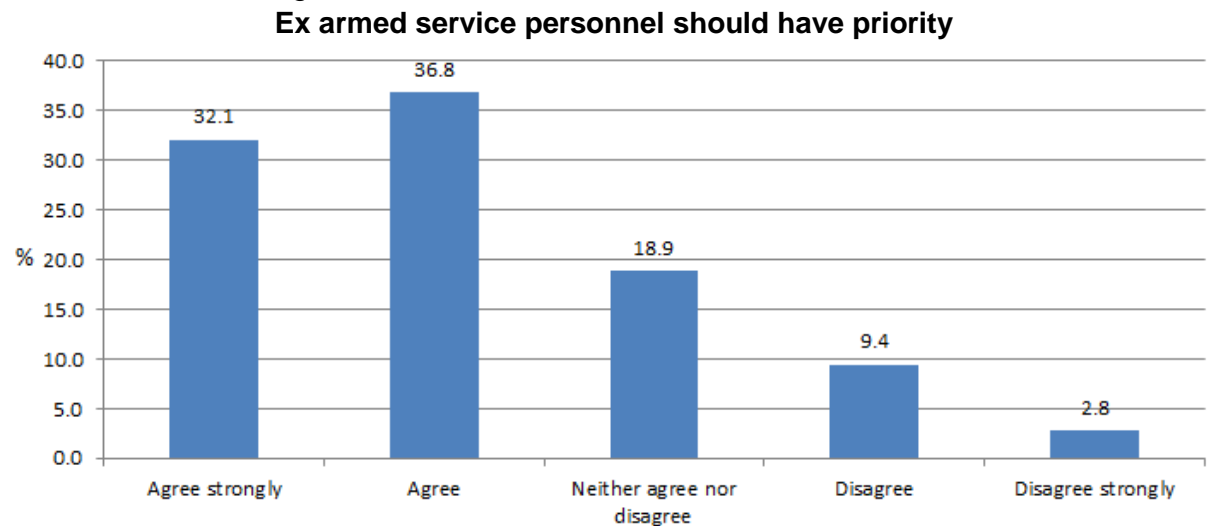
3. Families needing large homes (three or four bedrooms)

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

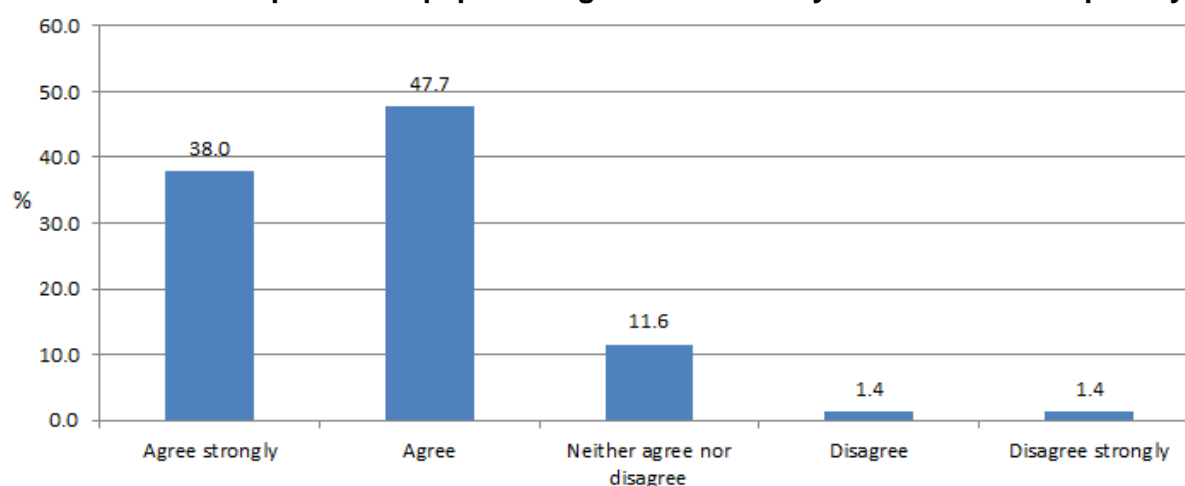
212 valid responses (excluding the three 'I don't knows'). In total 68.9% agreed with this and 12.3% disagreed.



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.

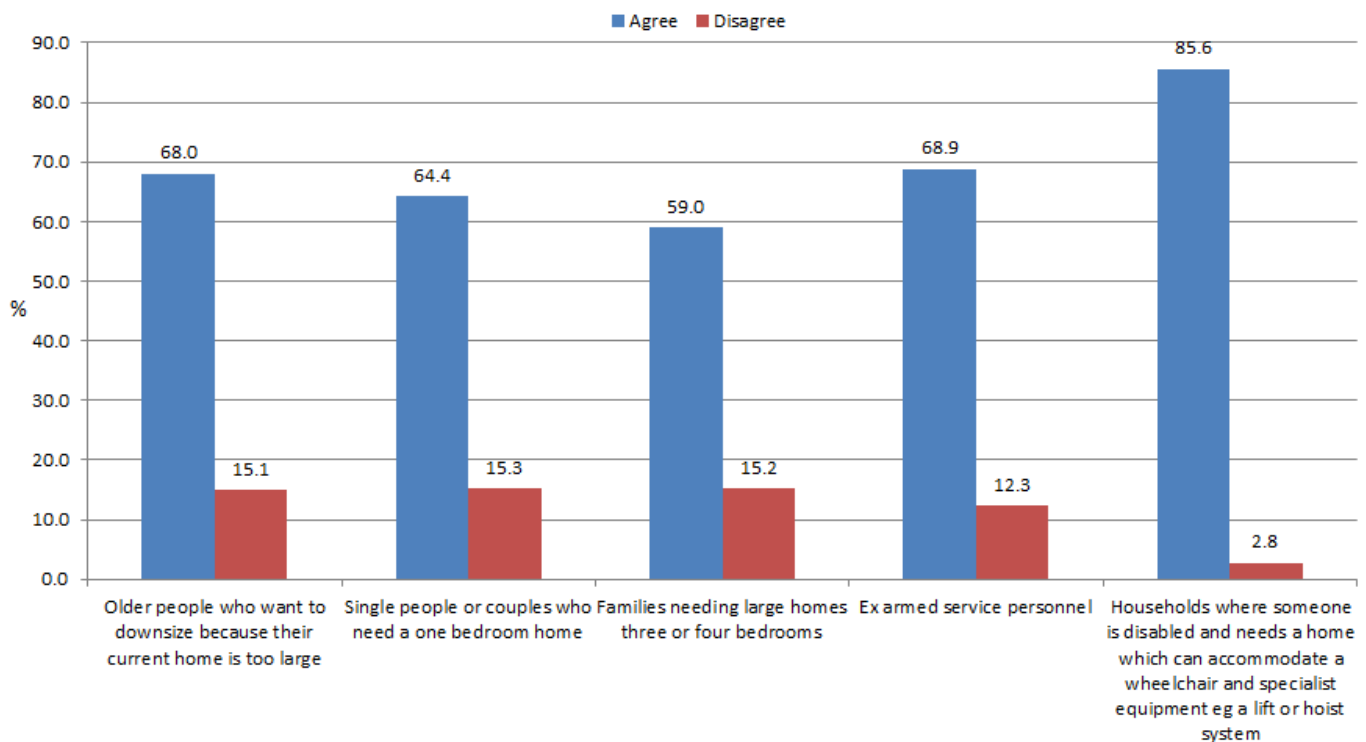
Households where someone is disabled and needs a home which can accommodate a wheelchair and specialist equipment e.g. a lift or hoist system should have priority



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

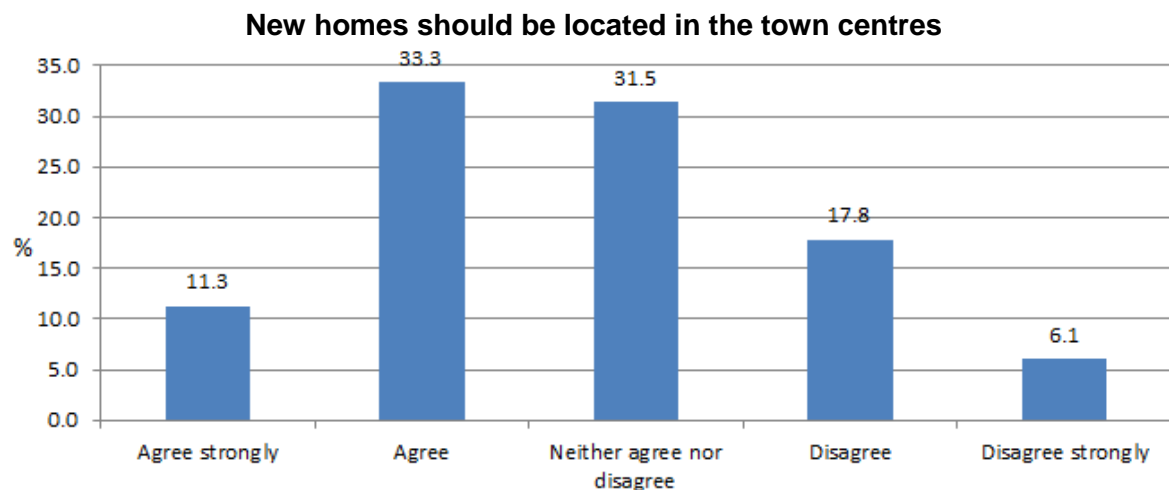


Location of new homes

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

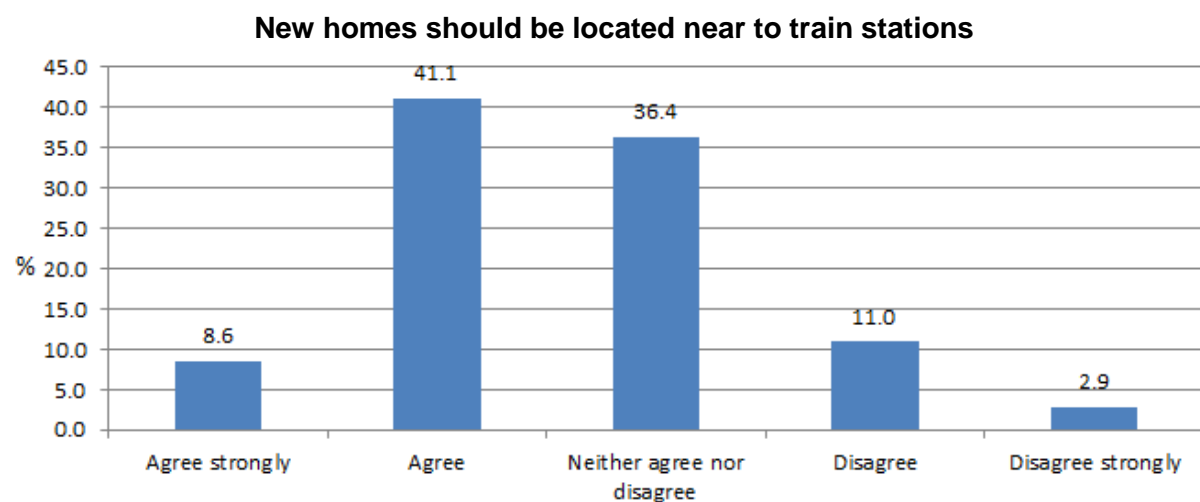
1. In the town centres

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



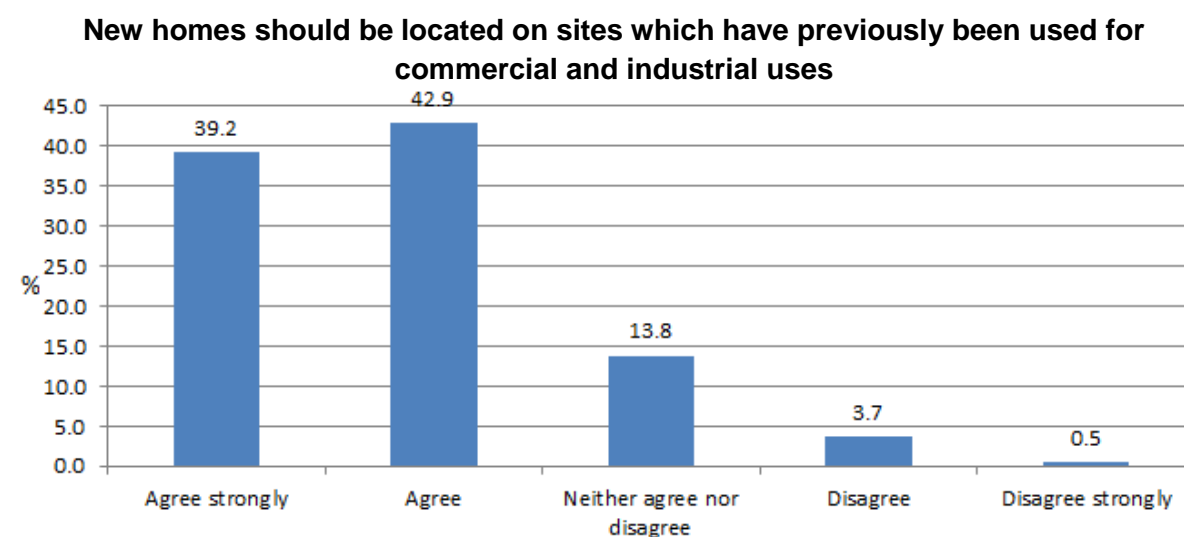
2. Near to train stations

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



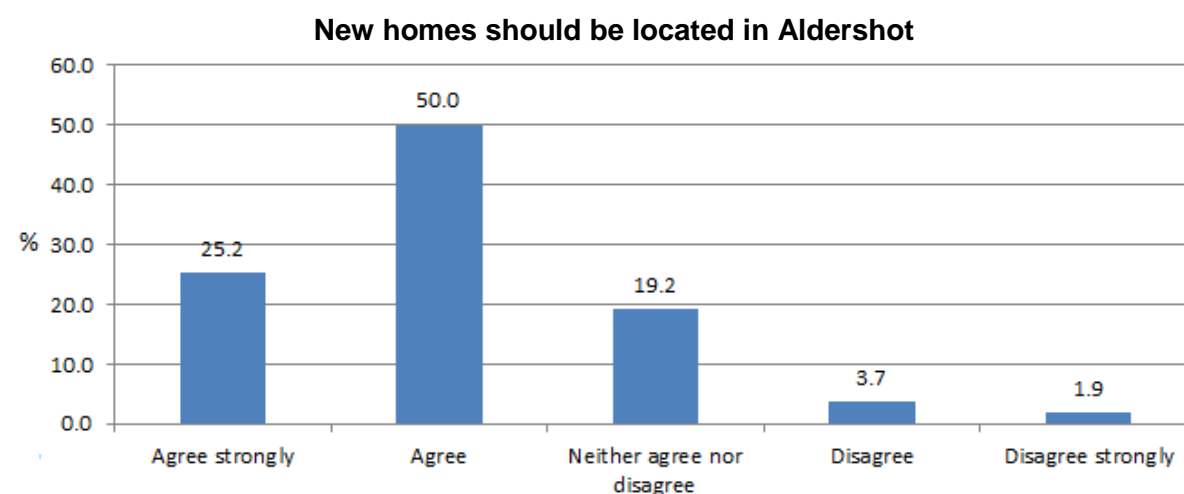
3. On sites which have previously been used for commercial and industrial uses

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



4. In Aldershot

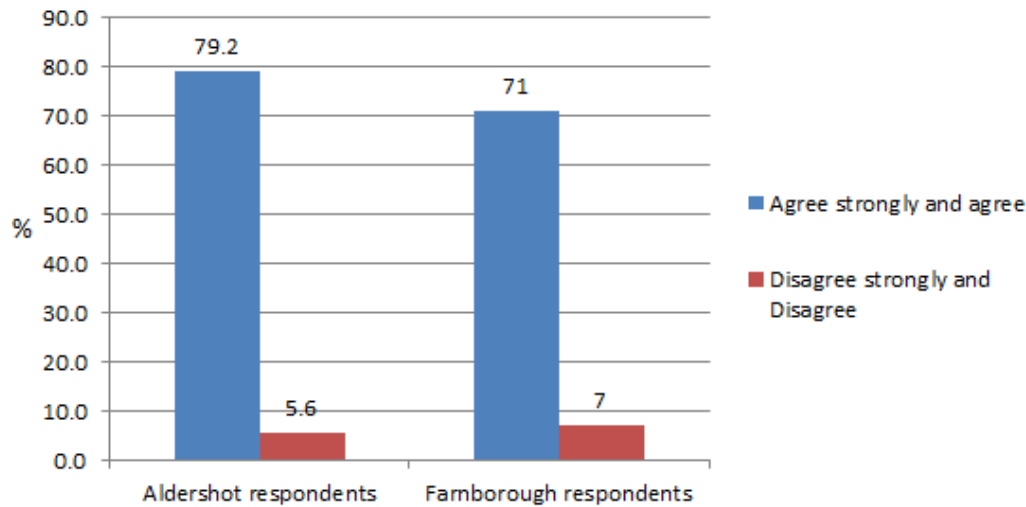
214 valid responses (excluding the three 'I don't knows'). In total 75.2% agreed with this and 5.6% disagreed.



Aldershot and Farnborough respondents view

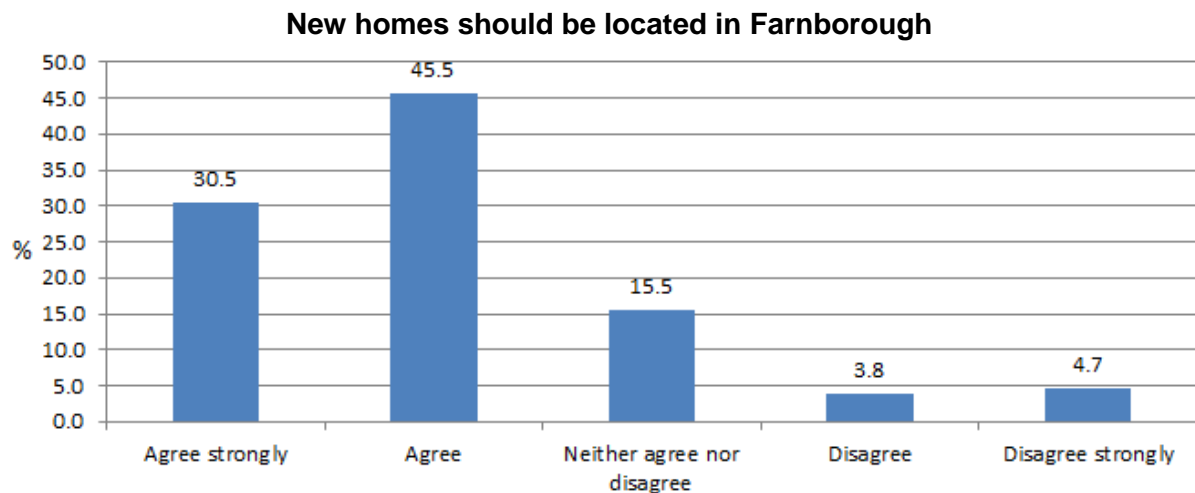
Of the respondents who filled in their postcode 79.2% of Aldershot resident agreed that new homes should be in Aldershot and 71% of Farnborough resident agreed that new homes should be in Aldershot.

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



5. In Farnborough

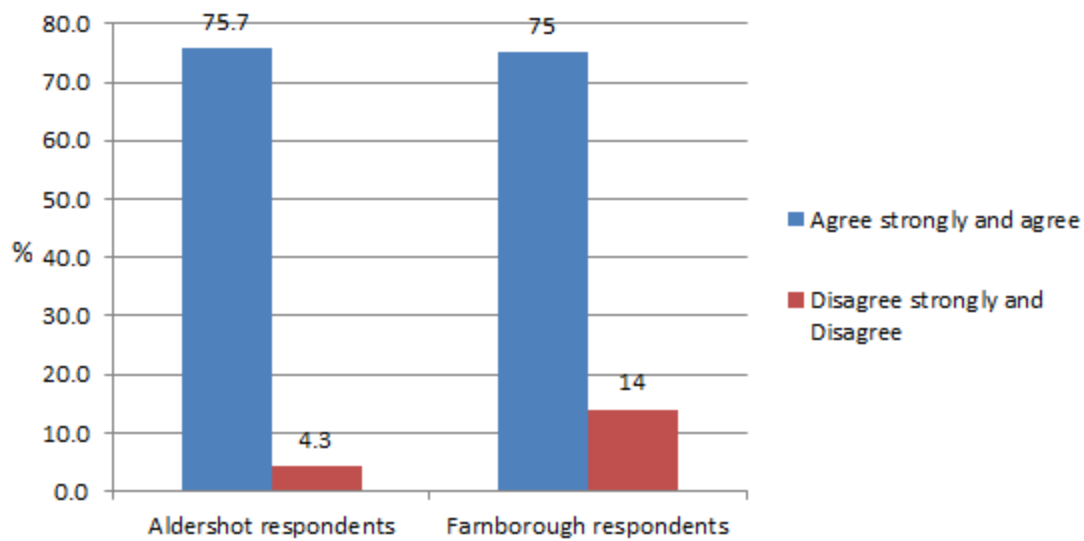
213 valid responses (excluding the seven 'I don't knows'). In total 76.1% agreed with this and 8.5% disagreed.



Aldershot and Farnborough respondents view

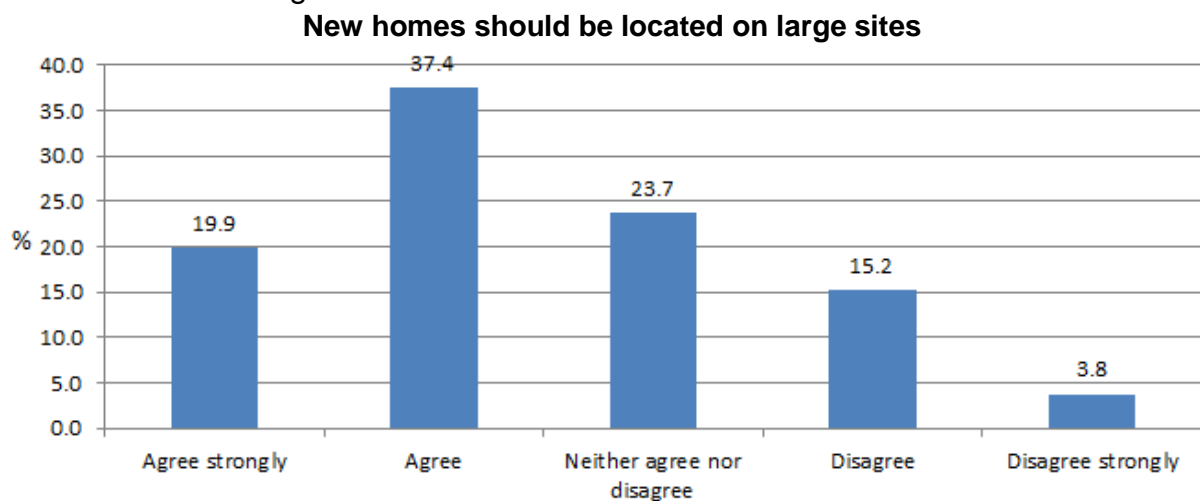
Of the respondents who filled in their postcode 75.7% of Aldershot resident agreed that new homes should be in Farnborough and 75% of Farnborough resident agreed that new homes should be in Farnborough.

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



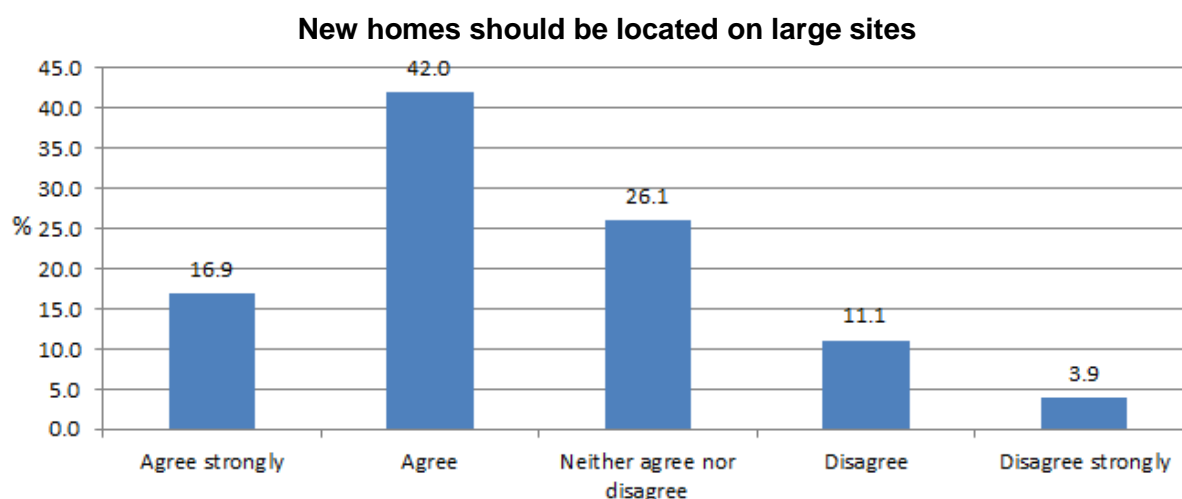
6. On large sites

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.



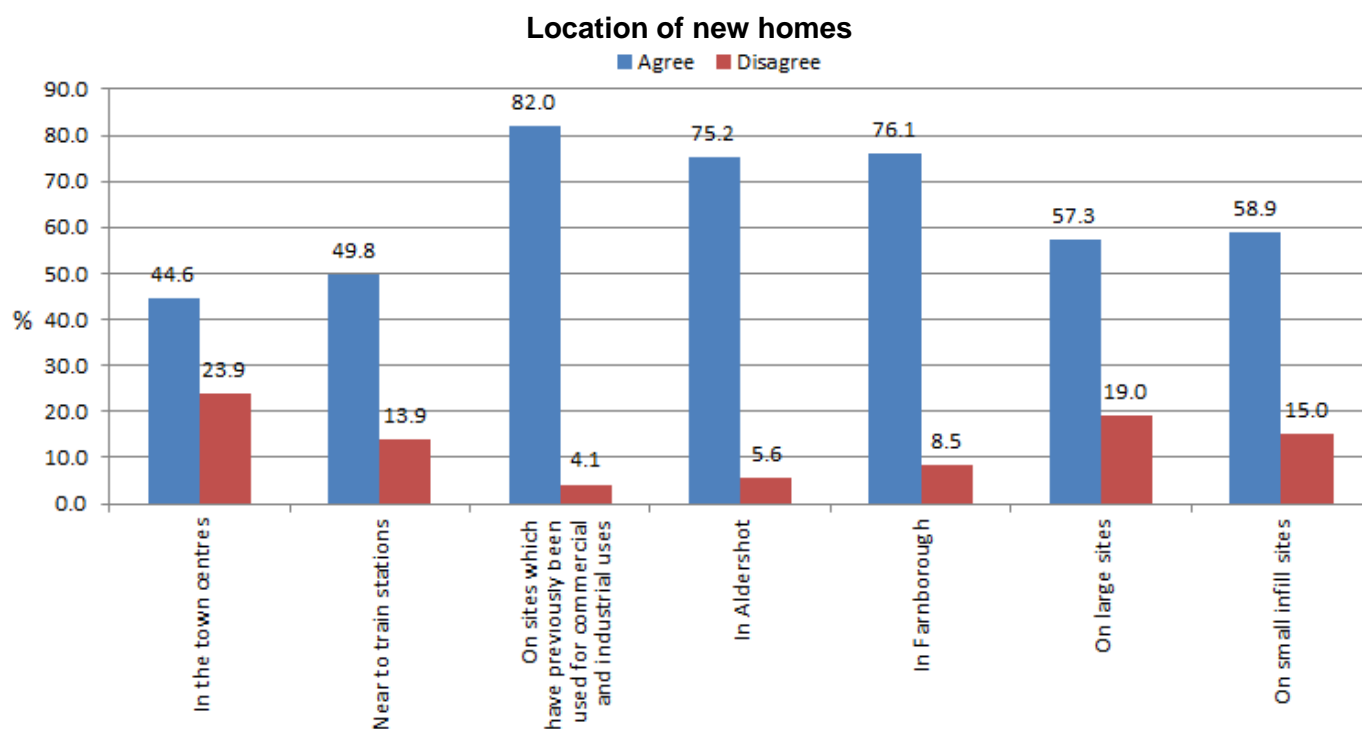
8. Other – please explain

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 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 and strongly disagreeing.



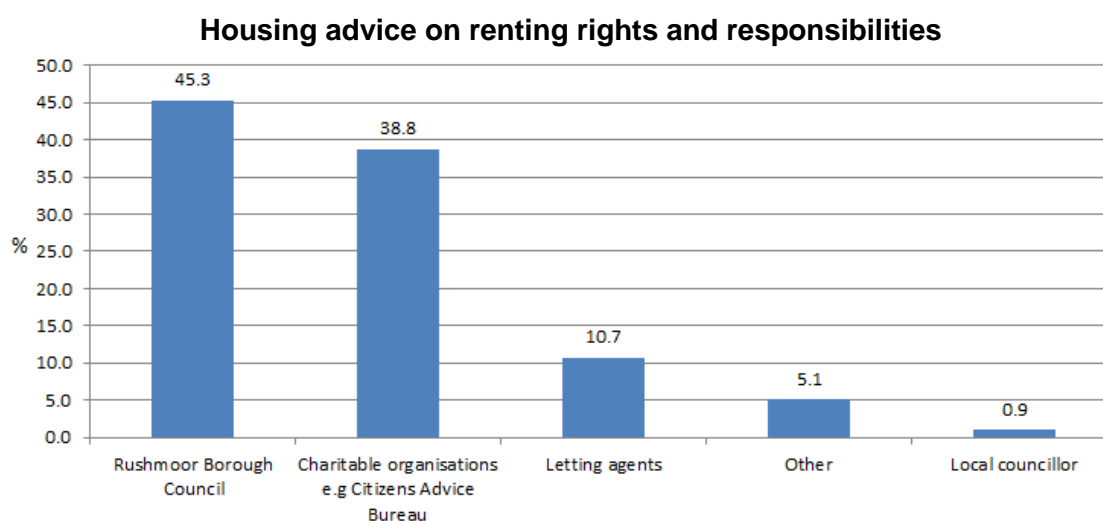
Housing advice

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).

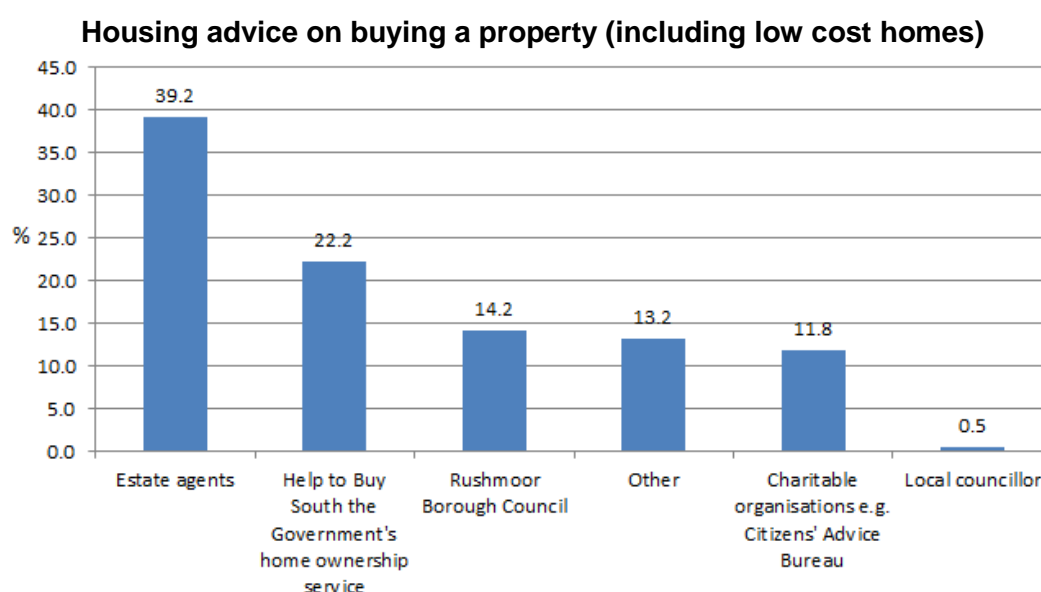
The highest percentage of respondents, 45.3% (97) would approach the council first for advice, the second highest percentage was charitable organisations e.g. Citizens Advice (38.8%).



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)

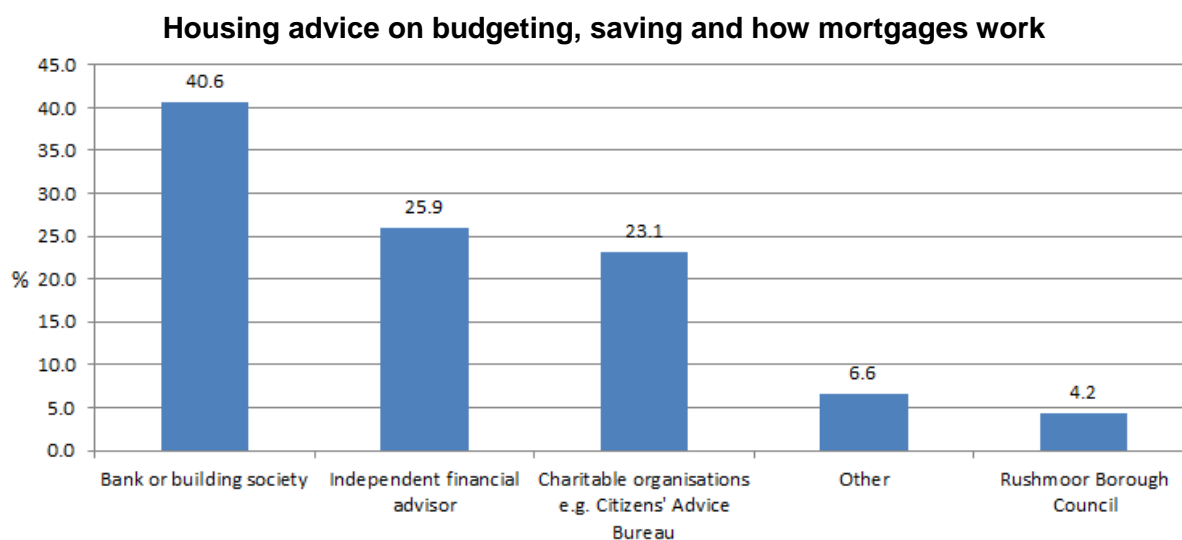
212 valid responses (including two respondents who selected more than one item). The highest percentage of respondents, 39.2% (83) would approach an estate agent first for advice, the second highest percent was Help to Buy South, the Government's home ownership service (22.2%).



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%).



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% 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

Appendix 4

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

	House size needed						
Income £	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 st 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.

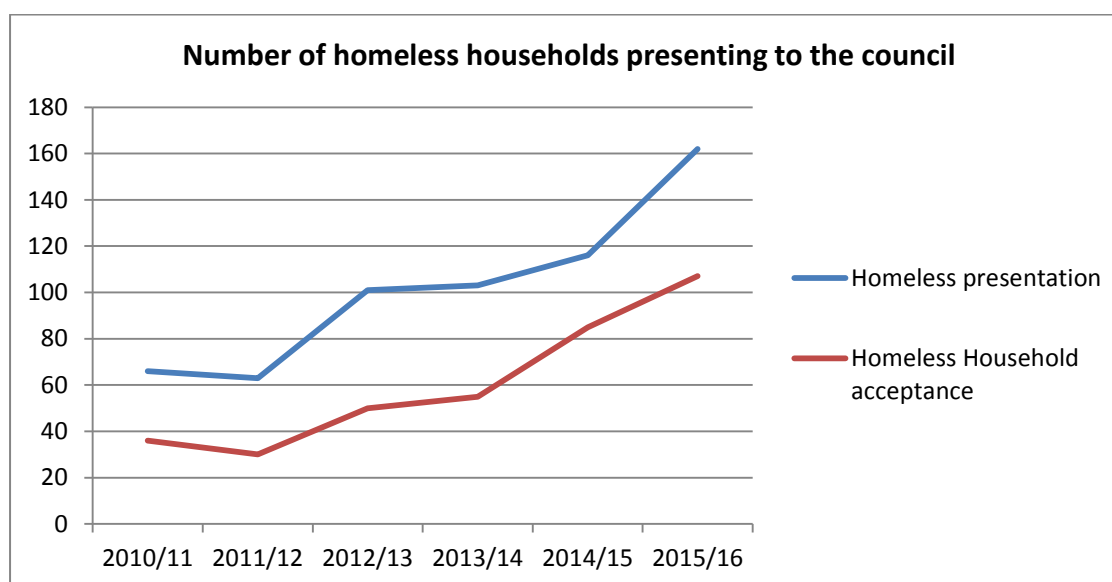


Table 2: Type of household accepted as homeless

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
Total	85	107

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
Total	85	107

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"> 138 clients received an individual support needs assessment and housing plan

	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • 41 clients were secured a private rented tenancy • 50 clients were assisted into hostel, night shelter or supported accommodation • 18 clients were assisted with a reconnection back to their home area • 36 clients were assisted to secure education, training, volunteering or employment opportunities
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 (SWEP).
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"> • Wet hostel?? for up to nine people • Clayton Court- 45 units of temporary • Night shelter - ten bed spaces (SWEP) • Brighstone - ten units; Mulberry House - four units and Aspen Court - three units • Mills House - seven units
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&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</p> <p>The Homelessness Code of Guidance for Local Authorities 2006</p> <p>Localism Act 2011</p> <p>Welfare Reform Act 2012</p> <p>Making Every Contact Count - published by the Government, 2012</p> <p>Rushmoor Borough Council's Housing Allocations Policy</p> <p>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&B.</p> <p>There has been no cold weather placements made into B&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>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.</p> <p>Step by Step - Specialist accommodation and supported lodgings for young people aged 16-21.</p> <p>Rushmoor Citizens Advice – 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"> • The Vine • Step by Step • Rushmoor Citizens Advice
Access to other sources of funding	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • £274,000 DCGL grant to develop a sub-regional, north Hampshire prevention of homelessness scheme • Funding secured for ex-offender tenancy support via Jigsaw • Oak Housing secured £695,000 HCA Empty Homes funding to help provide 45 units of temporary accommodation at Clayton Court • Hostel funding secured from CCG mental health, Hampshire County Council Drug & Alcohol dependency and Rushmoor Borough Council capital grant funding • Stoll secured HCA Care and Support Specialist Housing funding for its scheme of supported housing for ex-armed forces personnel and their dependent families • 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 • 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. • £90,000 of funding has been made available to the Blue Lamp Trust to provide home security and sanctuary measures across 11 Hampshire local

	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.

STAGE 1 CURRENT NEED	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	55
STAGE 2 NEWLY ARISING NEED	
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	637
STAGE 3 FUTURE SUPPLY OF AFFORDABLE HOUSING	
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	496
NET SHORTFALL OF AFFORDABLE UNITS PER ANNUM	197

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