

Record of member points and questions at Housing Strategy workshops September – October 2021

You said	We have
Social housing properties lying empty	Included within the draft strategy the importance of improved liaison with our Registered Provider (RP) partners including performance management and holding them to account including reporting on empty homes. We have included an action on this within the action plan which will sit under the strategy.
Do more re empty homes including EDMOs and increase use of No Use Empty Scheme	Explained that empty homes work which involves bringing long term problematic properties back into use is very resource intensive and would require a shift/increase in resources. The approach needs to be considered in the longer term. Included within the action plan to promote the No Use Empty Scheme.
There are Clarion properties lying empty and derelict. Can we have an update on number of Clarion empty properties.	Included within the draft strategy the importance of improved liaison with our RP partners including performance management and holding them to account including reporting on empty homes. We have included an action on this within the action plan which will sit under the strategy.
How many Clarion properties are lying empty? Do Clarion have to pay the 200% Council Tax premium and if so how many is this being paid on?	Included within the draft strategy for improved liaison with our RP partners including performance management and holding them to account including reporting on empty homes. <i>Follow up action: Clarified how many Clarion properties are empty and how many are paying the Council Tax premium.</i>
If someone is in social housing and their financial position appears to improve is anyone checking this and can we do anything if they don't need this form of affordable housing.	Explained this is difficult as they will often have a lifetime tenancy, and this cannot be ended by a change in circumstances. However, we should be encouraged by the social housing household having been able to improve their circumstances financially and having had the opportunity to do so.
Where does our responsibility for downsizing lie? Should we promote more? Better incentives?	Explained we can influence downsizing through our housing allocations policy and the priority we give. Explained our housing needs research will provide robust information on under occupation levels and need which will determine our response to this and any action will be contained within a future action plan which will sit under the strategy.
What can we do about independent living – is it a KCC responsibility? Where do our adaptations fit in? If someone is living in a 3 bed and only needs a 1 bed do we encourage them to move?	Explained independent living is both responsibility of KCC (through social services in the main) and TMBC through our DFG programme and in terms of DFGs there is always a conversation about moving to a more suitable property including where downsizing might be more appropriate. Clarion do refuse some adaptations on family homes if under occupied. Explained our housing needs research will provide robust information on under occupation levels and need which will determine our response to this and any action will be contained within a future action plan which will sit under the strategy.

Record of member points and questions at Housing Strategy workshops September – October 2021

What about intergenerational housing/communities?	Included within the draft strategy for some research on this and assessment if we can deliver this approach in T&M.
Support further energy efficiency grant work and the Minimum Energy Efficiency Standards work.	Included within the draft strategy objectives that focus on energy efficiency improvements and actions are contained within the action plan which will sit under the strategy.
Frustration with developers in delivering affordable housing.	Explained about the ongoing work to better align planning and housing requirements to strengthen our position on affordable housing delivery. Included within the action plan actions on this which will sit under the strategy.
Clarion are slow to respond and there needs to be a refresh of their services.	Included within the draft strategy the importance of improved liaison with our RP partners including performance management and holding them to account across all the services they deliver. We have included an action on this within the action plan which will sit under the strategy.
We should include social housing units within housing developments even when not in the rules or despite what Government say.	Understood the frustration of Members in housing delivery. Explained about the ongoing work to better align planning and housing requirements to strengthen our position on affordable housing delivery. Included within the action plan actions on this which will sit under the strategy.
Concern about losing land/shops to accommodation – we must be careful.	Explained balanced communities is clearly an important consideration.
Private rented sector is not accessible for many of those who are on the housing register and want to stay in their immediate area.	Explained our concern about the affordability of the private rented sector and its impact on our homelessness work in particular. Included within the draft strategy objectives that focus on working with landlords and considering our landlord offer and actions are contained within the action plan which will sit under the strategy. Explained about use of Local Lettings Plans.
Support for pro-active role in housing delivery including through use of Local Housing Company. We can then deliver social housing, use our own land effectively and have a long term income stream. Most excited by this within housing strategy.	Exploration of housing company will be included within the action plan which will sit under the strategy – will likely not be Year 1 but over longer term of strategy.
Need for social housing to be for local residents not for those moving out of London. We need to have more control.	Explained housing register process and local connection and use of local lettings plan.
Kings Hill new apartments – need LLP. Residential accommodation over shops – in London (Welling) where new supermarket being built it is residential above.	<i>Follow up action: Will check if LLP for apartments in Kings Hill.</i> Agreed closer work with planning re. housing opportunities – included within strategy.

Record of member points and questions at Housing Strategy workshops September – October 2021

Timescale in delivery of new homes is important – we should be able to make developers deliver what they say.	Explained constraints of planning system. J. Anderson advised that she thought land banking and issues was in current Government thinking to be addressed.
What do we mean by empty homes?	Agreed this is open to misinterpretation. In the main we will be talking about long term empty homes (over 6 months) however recognise we need to be clear about any definition within the strategy.
Could we consider a joint post across three West Kent LAs to tackle empty homes?	Explained that working across the West Kent districts is established practice especially in housing so it is something we will consider as part of our response to empty homes work
Social housing provided on developments can be the housing near the motorway, at the back of the site, poorer in quality and have noise issues.	Explained our role in liaising with both planning and housing developers and closer work with those will be included within the strategy.
Improving energy efficiency of homes should have more emphasis – we should really “up the anti” on insulation etc.	Included within the draft strategy objectives that focus on energy efficiency improvements and actions are contained within the action plan which will sit under the strategy.
Homes being built today are not sustainable. New houses need tiles changing every 20 years.	Explained our role in liaising with both planning and housing developers and closer work with those will be included within the strategy.
Housing and planning need to be more joined up.	Explained about the ongoing work to better align planning and housing requirements to strengthen our position on affordable housing delivery. Included within the action plan actions on this which will sit under the strategy.
Where empty properties are due to speculative buying can we increase Council Tax	Explained we are not aware this is a specific reason for empty properties in T&M. Also that we have in place Council Tax premiums for empty properties and the Finance team will take full advantage of opportunities re premium charges.
First time buyers with family in areas cannot access properties due to affordability. 60% Peters Village are moving in from London which is increasing the price for local people.	Explained we have no control over purchases on open market. Explained about use of Local Lettings Plans.
If insulation in PRS is improved then landlords can increase the rent.	Explained there are minimum standards of energy efficiency in the PRS and we would not expect to see a rent increase in terms of compliance with this. However setting of rent levels is out of the control of the local authority.
There seems to be a real disconnect between housing providers and remedial works especially when linked to health issues.	Included within the draft strategy the importance of improved liaison with our RP partners including performance management and holding them to account across all the services they deliver. We have included an action on this within the action plan which will sit under the strategy.

Record of member points and questions at Housing Strategy workshops September – October 2021

<p>A real concern about affordable housing. If I was a 21 year old starting again options would be non existent.</p>	<p>Explained about the ongoing work to better align planning and housing requirements to strengthen our position on affordable housing delivery. Included within the action plan actions on this which will sit under the strategy.</p>
<p>Look at modular type buildings. Offer at affordable rent for 10 year period and at same time offer a saving option so saving for a mortgage. They then hand property back to us and have a deposit for a house.</p>	<p>Explained exploration of housing company will be included within the action plan which will sit under the strategy – will likely not be Year 1 but over longer term of strategy. All options of delivering affordable housing will be considered.</p>
<p>Poets estate, Larkfield – parts were built as one/two beds so cheaper option to start with but could easily be extended to three/four beds as required.</p>	<p>All options of delivering affordable housing will be considered. R. Dalton advised some three beds in Burham are ready to be extended into four beds.</p>
<p>In villages we need to consider homes for older persons.</p>	<p>Explained our housing needs research will provide robust information on older persons housing need which will determine our response to this and any action will be contained within a future action plan which will sit under the strategy.</p>
<p>How many rough sleepers do we currently have?</p>	<p>Last official count – 6. Moving picture but housing team very aware of intelligence and all identified will have been offered support.</p>
<p>As new Armed Forces Champion how are housing working with ex forces residents/applicants</p>	<p>Explained priority on housing register and will be considered in forthcoming allocations review. Also very lucky to have strong connections with RBLI in T&M and links are established.</p>
<p>Its good that we haven't got a lot of rough sleepers however education for 17/18-year-olds who may be thinking of moving out from home etc would be positive. Target schools/colleges and give advice about the real world.</p>	<p>Included within the draft strategy are objectives that focus on homelessness prevention work and actions on this work are contained within the action plan which will sit under the strategy.</p>
<p>We have some holiday lets for retired people that are let as permanent and they are not in the right place in terms of lack of pavements/poor access.</p>	<p>Explained our housing needs research will provide robust information on older persons housing need which will determine our response to this and any action will be contained within a future action plan which will sit under the strategy.</p>
<p>Really pleased with approach being taken. Proactive not just reactive. Just what we need.</p>	<p>Thank you!</p>
<p>Aware of an empty Clarion property – empty for 4 years. How much control do we have?</p>	<p>Included within the draft strategy the importance of improved liaison with our RP partners including performance management and holding them to account including reporting on empty homes. We have included an action on this within the action plan which will sit under the strategy.</p>

Record of member points and questions at Housing Strategy workshops September – October 2021

<p>If someone has to move to another part of the borough how do we assess that need and do people tend to want to stay in the same area?</p>	<p>Explained about our housing allocations policy requiring a housing need to move. Explained our housing needs research will provide robust information on area preferences which will determine our response to this and any action will be contained within a future action plan which will sit under the strategy. Explained about use of Local Letting Plans</p>
<p>What does work with landlords mean?</p>	<p>Explained importance of PRS. Explained need for access to affordable homes in the PRS to assist with addressing housing needs.</p>
<p>Pleased to see a focus on rural areas</p>	
<p>Support for Local Housing Company</p>	<p>Explained exploration of housing company will be included within the action plan which will sit under the strategy – will likely not be Year 1 but over longer term of strategy.</p>
<p>We should be providing housing with outside space – even more important with Covid impacts etc.</p>	<p>Explained our role in liaising with both planning and housing developers and closer work with those will be included within the strategy.</p>