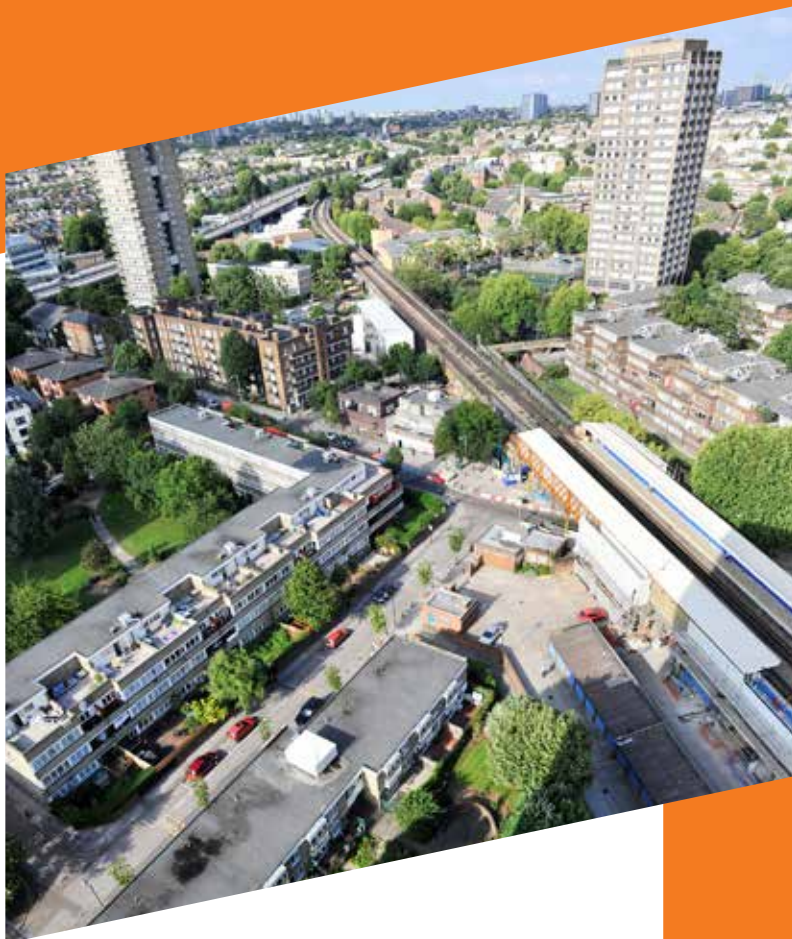


Royal Borough of Kensington and Chelsea

Housing Strategy



2013 - 2017

www.rbkc.gov.uk



THE ROYAL BOROUGH OF
KENSINGTON
AND CHELSEA

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The Royal Borough of Kensington and Chelsea

Housing Strategy 2013 - 17

The Royal Borough of Kensington and Chelsea's *Housing Strategy* sets out how we as a borough want to improve both the quality of accommodation and lives of people who live here by:

- **Resources** – Develop effective asset management and longer term business planning, taking advantage of the new regime for Council Housing finance (Self-financing see p7).
- **Development and regeneration** – Regenerate, renew and develop new affordable housing where opportunities arise.
- **Housing options** – Provide a service that enables people to make informed decisions about their housing options.
- **Vulnerable residents** – Support people who are vulnerable with appropriate accommodation and advice services.
- **Employment and training** – Enable people in social housing to access employment and training opportunities.

The current Government, through the Localism Act, has introduced reform to homelessness legislation, social housing tenure and a new regime for housing finance. The Royal Borough of Kensington and Chelsea's *Housing Strategy* is set within this context of change and supports the freedoms and flexibilities which have been granted to housing authorities and social landlords. Our *Housing Strategy* demonstrates how we will use these changes to improve the housing offer to people living and working in the borough and in particular to those in housing need.

This *Housing Strategy* is complemented by our *Tenancy Strategy*, which provides more detail on how we expect local social housing providers to use the changes in tenancy (such as fixed term tenancies and Affordable Rent tenancies) to tackle housing need and finance housing developments.

Our *Housing Allocation Scheme* describes how we allocate social housing in the Royal Borough, prioritise those most in need, move those seeking to move within the social housing sector, reduce under-occupation of much needed family homes and tackle the problem of overcrowding.

Our *Borough Investment Plan* and *Core Strategy* add further details to our ambitions in regards to regeneration and new affordable housing in the borough.

1. Resources and business planning

Social housing accounts for nearly a quarter of all housing in the Royal Borough of Kensington and Chelsea. The Council owns over 9,000 properties, of which approximately 7,000 are tenanted and 2,000 are leasehold. These properties are managed by Kensington and Chelsea Tenant Management Organisation (KCTMO), set up through the tenants exercising their Right to Manage in 1996. It is the only borough-wide tenant management organisation in the country.

In 2002 KCTMO took over the responsibility for major capital works from the Council to access extra resources and funding, which enabled KCTMO to bring the properties up to the Decent Homes Standard. This was set up by Government to create a minimum standard of housing across social housing.

KCTMO's Business Plan commits to achieving the best service quality and meeting published local service standards. These commitments are accompanied by ambitious strategic objectives for the growth of the business in order to contribute to the long-term sustainability of KCTMO. Alongside this, a Resident Engagement Panel has been set up to put residents at the heart of how KCTMO works and a local 'offer' has been developed with residents which will direct service development year on year.

Between 2008 and 2010, the Council undertook a Stock Options Review due to the identified potential deficit in the Housing Revenue Account (HRA). The review determined the projected deficit by assessing the investment needs of the housing stock and then proposed five options to address this deficit. Residents were then consulted on their preferred option. The consultation found that residents wanted to continue with existing arrangements with KCTMO managing the stock and for efficiency savings to be made, whilst the Council continued lobbying central government for changes to the way housing was financed.



KCTMO continues to strengthen in governance and service performance, as verified by the successful transition from Charter Mark to the Customer Excellence Award in June 2009. The Decent Homes Programme was completed by 2009; results against Performance Indicators remain good and KCTMO continues to implement a cost reduction programme, helping the Council to maintain a healthy Housing Revenue Account (HRA, which pays for housing services and is used to maintain our stock). To date this has reduced real service costs by some £1.5million, whilst resident satisfaction has increased from 68 per cent of residents being satisfied with the overall service in 2008 to 79 per cent in 2011.

Investing in the borough's housing

The Government has replaced the existing system of housing finance (where money collected from rents is returned to the Treasury and is then re-distributed to all councils) with a 'self-financing' system, which means the Council keeps money collected in rents and uses this to invest directly into its housing stock.

The introduction of self-financing has been broadly welcomed by local authorities. It improves an authority's ability to plan over the medium-term and in most cases improves the financial outlook for its Housing Revenue Account (HRA). Every council that owns and/or manages housing is required to maintain a HRA to pay for housing-related services and management of stock. In addition to these changes, the Right to Buy has been re-invigorated, with higher discounts and an expectation of a like for like replacement of units, which may be challenging in the Royal Borough.

These changes to the way council housing is financed will help us to maintain and improve our existing homes, and we will work closely with the KCTMO to ensure we invest resources prudently.

The way social housing is financed affects our ability to invest in our stock, which is key to maintaining and improving our homes. We want to ensure those living in our housing benefit from well-maintained homes and really good services. However, the quality of housing is not consistent across the borough and a number of our housing estates are in significant need of improvement because the stock is ageing and maintenance costs are high.

We are currently working through the impacts of the changes and the affect this will have on our finances. It is anticipated that there will be surpluses over the medium-term, and we are currently planning out how we will spend to meet the needs of our stock. A recent stock condition survey has identified that an additional £108 million is needed to fund our stock over the next five years, and over the life of this strategy. Ways to deliver this funding will be investigated and this could include new ways of working with KCTMO.

Working with KCTMO, we are currently identifying how best to ensure future investment in the Council's housing stock, and in particular how best to fund regeneration of housing estates (which is our second aim set out in this Housing Strategy) to improve the homes we own and to ensure they are places people want to live.

Effective asset management

A central part of ensuring the continued and improving quality of our housing stock is through asset management. We will continue to work with KCTMO to improve the way we manage our own stock and challenge existing assumptions about how we invest in it.

New information and monitoring systems are in place and we will use these with KCTMO to drive effective asset management. We will challenge assumptions about how and when we carry out some works, for example, the most appropriate long-term solutions to resolve those repair requirements driven by some residents' problem behaviour. We want to move from regimented programmed works to a more flexible process, responding to the needs of our stock and investing where it makes most sense, providing value for money, by targeting our time and resources at areas and types of works that need it most. For example rather than following prescriptive programmes for cyclical works to blocks, identifying early what works need to be done and prioritising these.

Using asset management data

Results of an update to the recent stock condition survey have been input into a new database called Keystone. This database allows much better forecasting of works, as well as containing information on blocks and properties.

Through effective use of this database, KCTMO has been able to identify where works such as window painting could be done at a reduced frequency based on the existing quality of the parts. This leads to reduced disruption to residents and savings to the cyclical works bill.

Given the variety of housing in our stock and the high value of some of our properties, we are looking at the potential benefits of selling a limited number of high value properties where they do not deliver the best quality of accommodation to our residents and are expensive to repair and maintain. This will allow investment in wider Council housing stock and achieve better results for more people.

We are currently working to define the standards we would like our stock to meet, and we are working with KCTMO to ensure this reflects resident aspirations. Whilst 99 per cent of our stock met Decent Homes Standards in 2009, over time the percentage of non-decent homes has increased. We are identifying options with KCTMO to invest in our housing stock over the medium to long-term.

We will make use of the freedoms granted around different tenancy types, which are set out in our *Tenancy Strategy* for all social housing providers in the borough, and in our own *Tenancy Policy*. These new tenancy types will support our stock investment planning by allowing us to review how we use our stock to enable effective asset management and tackle housing need.

Greener housing

Our aim is to promote and support greener housing across all tenures in the Royal Borough. By greener housing, we mean housing that is energy efficient, built and adapted in a way that reduces its impact on the environment.

Given the borough's limited capacity for new housing, we acknowledge the importance of seeking reasonable alterations to the existing building stock to mitigate the causes of and adapt to the effects likely to occur due to climate change. We have recently agreed to clad a high rise block in the north of the borough, which will improve the energy efficiency of all the properties within it.

We are aware of the need to use suitable technologies and introduce energy efficiency measures when improving our stock, both to the financial benefit and improved comfort of residents. We will investigate the possible roles the Council can play in the Government's Green Deal and consider standards within the *London Housing Strategy* to support any decisions we make.

Cavity wall insulation in KCTMO stock

Making our homes more efficient by reducing energy consumption is important to both the Council and KCTMO. Over the last four years, KCTMO has carried out insulation works which included loft and cavity wall insulation. In total, work on 1,800 properties has been completed with a total spend of £3.2 million. Over 1,300 properties had insulation work completed during 2010-11.

2. Development and regeneration

Development

The Royal Borough has a mix of housing from the very expensive and desirable to areas of deprivation, most notably in the larger areas of social housing in the north of the borough. The provision of decent, affordable homes to address housing need has been long pursued by both the Council and Registered Providers (RPs, and also known as housing associations).

Social housing accounts for a quarter of the housing within the borough. There is a large private rented sector which accounts for a further quarter of the housing, leaving just under half the homes in the borough owner occupied. Given the strength of the local housing market (with the average house price now being over £1million), access to affordable housing is limited. Due to the introduction of the Local Housing Allowance cap levels, the private rented sector is no longer an affordable option to those in low paid employment. With limited ability to develop any new housing due to the limited supply of land, we want to support the existing mix of housing tenures in the borough, to support its diverse population, which contributes to the borough's success.

C06 Strategic Objective for Diversity of Housing

Our strategic objective to have a diversity of housing is that at a local level it will cater for a variety of housing needs of borough residents, and is built for adaptability and to a high quality.

Building on Success, the Royal Borough's *Core Strategy* (2010 - 2020)¹

¹ A copy of our Core Strategy can be found using the following link:
www.rbkc.gov.uk/planningandconservation/planningpolicy/corestrategy.aspx

Our ambition is that new housing provision should achieve a diversity of supply, which is of good quality and well designed. To this end, we will work closely with Government and our partners to make investment decisions that will deliver development of the highest quality. We have set our investment priorities for new housing in the borough in our *Core Strategy* and *Borough Investment Plan*, and we will continue to re-assess development options in light of changes which take place to the planning and funding of housing developments.

Building affordable homes

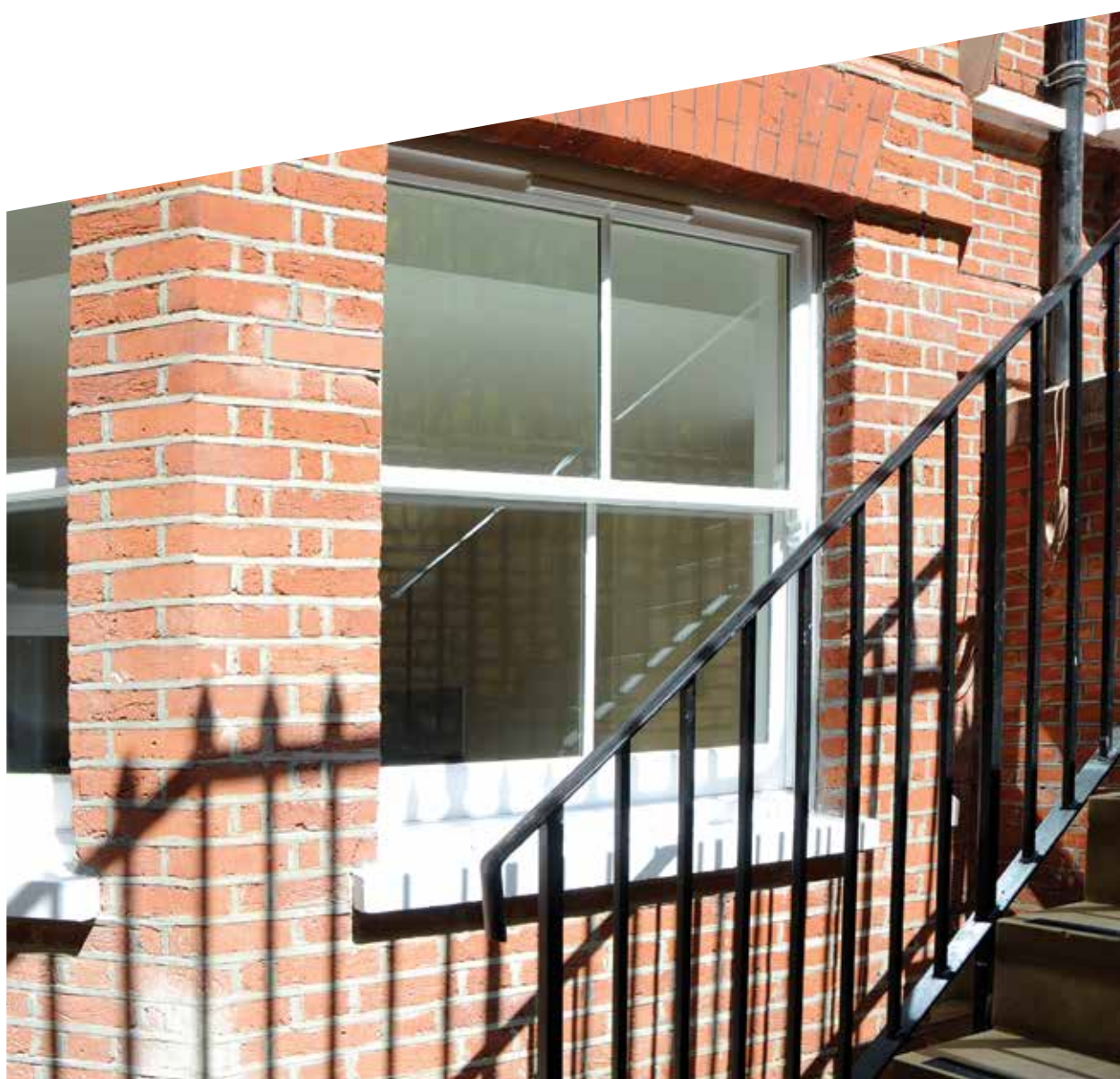
We want to be able to offer affordable housing options to residents. However, house prices in the Royal Borough are the highest in the country and affordability is a real issue. Changes to tenure and housing investment mean we are looking at how we define 'affordable housing' and how we will ensure affordable housing continues to be built to meet the needs of the range of people and incomes requiring housing in the borough. Whilst we will endeavour to maximise housing delivery, we will continue to balance this with the need to develop housing which will be affordable to those who need it most.

We recognise that the Royal Borough is a very expensive place to live and this means that there are fewer and fewer opportunities for those households on lower incomes with a local connection (and possibly a local job) to secure housing. Through our planning policies, we hope to set the right balance for building new market homes as well as affordable housing. Due to the market conditions in the borough, we acknowledge that market housing will often subsidise the development of affordable housing, and we will continue to work with our RP partners to maximise the delivery of affordable housing units in the borough.

We want to continue to ensure access to homes on a social or target rent, to provide a springboard so that tenants have a realistic chance of making the transition from being reliant on benefits to being financially independent and in paid employment. We will continue to support the development of affordable ownership options, such as shared ownership housing. We also want to support low and middle income earners by exploring how affordable housing can be provided for this group through new housing developments.

New affordable housing developed by the Council

Elm Park Gardens disused basement areas have been upgraded in order to create new homes, some for sale and some for intermediate and social rent. The scheme was completed in Summer 2011 and delivered three three-bed general needs units and five one-bed units for workers in the borough. The development was led by the Council and brought a disused area of an estate into use as affordable homes for our residents and workers.



Affordable Rent and new tenancies

As a borough we are unique in how the social housing and welfare reform changes will impact on us; the current low levels of mobility, the nature of demand and supply and the cost of the private rented sector in the borough bring their own local challenges that will need a more localised approach. The Affordable Rent tenure (which is a new form of tenure available to RPs which can be for fixed terms and the rent level can be up to 80 per cent of the market rent) will have a significant impact on the supply of affordable homes in the borough and there is particular concern about how its implementation will interplay with the new welfare reforms, given the high levels of market rent locally.

We want to explore the opportunities that the new Affordable Rent tenure can bring to develop more intermediate housing options. We have developed a policy on Affordable Rent to inform planning and future housing development. The Royal Borough wants to develop new affordable housing and is committed to finding practical solutions through the new funding model to achieve this. The Council's *Tenancy Strategy* sets out broad objectives to be taken into consideration by individual social landlords regarding their own policies on the granting and re-issuing of tenancies, and which we hope will support the development and business plans of local RPs.

The *Tenancy Strategy* has been developed with our RP partners to promote flexibility in the local social renting market and take account of changes in an individual's circumstances once they have been granted a social tenancy.

Local control of housing development funding

The local housing market is the most expensive and densely built in the UK. We will explore opportunities from the receipts of increased Right to Buy sales to finance development in times of reduced grants. We will also identify options under the new council housing finance system which allow greater financial freedom in the way we deliver new housing within the HRA. Given the land values in the Royal Borough, we will explore how we can use these freedoms to maximise the delivery of affordable housing, which could be through supporting regeneration (either led by the Council, KCTMO or a local RP) as well as supporting local mixed use developments.

Building larger homes

We are aware of the shortage of larger homes in the borough for those who are socially renting. In our *Core Strategy* we prioritise larger homes through planning gain on residential developments; however we need to look creatively at how we can ensure we tackle the housing need of our families. This includes looking at development options out of the borough, developing our own housing without the assistance of Government grants and making the most efficient use of the stock we already have.

Housing for an ageing population

The projected demographics of the borough make the provision of suitable housing for an ageing population a very high priority. Ongoing work based on the sheltered stock condition survey is being used to identify opportunities, within our own stock and our partners to renew the residential offer.



The Older People's Housing Strategy, which complements this strategy, sets out the priorities for development of mixed tenure housing schemes for older people, the need to improve the accessibility and standard of housing for older people, expansion of tailored services for older people, the development of extra care housing both social and private sector and the targeting of housing support services to those older people needing them the most, regardless of the tenure in which they live.

We are establishing our need for different housing types and tenures through evaluating population projection data, including predicted numbers of older residents with dementia and/or physical disabilities. We will then be developing a regeneration strategy for older people's housing and services with the aim of delivering high quality and sustainable options for the future.

Working with Viridian Housing Association

We have supported Viridian to provide new housing for older people in the borough. By providing Viridian with £2million (gained from the developer of Delves House in the south of the borough and specifically to be spent on affordable housing development), nine new units specifically for older people have been developed. Three of these properties are in Richard Castillo House (managed by Viridian Housing Association) and six units at Trevbovir Road (managed by Women's Pioneer Housing Association).

Building quality homes

Size of property is not just a matter of the number of bedrooms. We want to create homes people want to live in and which can be used flexibly over the lifetimes of residents to meet their needs. Due to the density of residential development within the borough, people need to be able to live in close proximity to one another yet in a safe and healthy environment. This means that different types and tenures of housing will be integrated with one another to cater for a variety of needs and the housing should be adaptable over time. By 2028, we want all newly built homes in the borough to meet the Lifetime Homes standard and ten per cent to be wheelchair accessible, supporting our aim of enabling people to maintain their independence in their own home.

Affordable Housing Design Standards

We believe good space standards, high quality design and build standards are important in all schemes. To achieve this we have developed Affordable Housing Design Standards to maintain quality and improve the lives of those that live in any new properties we develop. These standards include room space standards and the provision of outdoor space.

Regeneration

Regeneration is a key to achieving our aim of improving the quality and quantity of housing for people on low incomes. The focus for our ambitious regeneration is areas of North Kensington where much of the social housing stock is in large estates built in slum-clearance initiatives in the 1960s and 1970s. These are owned by the Council and managed by the KCTMO and RPs. However, regeneration is not solely a housing priority, and we will work with our partners in education services, community development and planning to ensure a holistic approach to areas.

Regenerating North Kensington

The Council's *Core Strategy* crystallises ambitions that taken together will regenerate North Kensington through better transport, housing and facilities. Specifically, the Council will work in partnership with residents and other partners to:

- establish a Crossrail station at Kensal and redevelop the gasworks site into a well connected, sustainable townscape with over 2,000 new homes, shops and community facilities
- renew the Wornington Green estate with Catalyst Housing Group and redevelop the site of the former Edenham Older People's Home and Silchester Garages
- foster the unique identity of Portobello and Golborne Roads and their street markets, and improve pedestrian links
- build a new secondary school in Latimer, as part of wider regeneration plans to transform the area through estate renewal, new street patterns, a new shopping centre and renewed sports facilities.

Cabinet Business Plan 2010-13

Small site developments

Some of our larger estates contain land which could be used for more beneficial purposes. Likewise, we own small pieces of land throughout the borough which might be able to provide much needed housing. A review of our estates and land is in progress, but we have already identified some opportunities for small scale developments, both to stimulate regeneration and to provide additional housing. Currently, sites have been identified to provide additional affordable homes which are within the existing footprint of buildings, for example the delivery of new social rented homes in Grenfell Tower.

Development on our estates

Despite high quality management and maintenance, the design of some of our estates has in some cases contributed to problems of antisocial behaviour, poor environmental quality, and disrepair, which can be expensive and disruptive to correct. We have the opportunity to start to develop our estates over the life of this strategy through two sites in the north of the borough.

A regeneration project team has been established to take forward the development and regeneration of the Silchester Garages Site on Freston Road, and the site adjoining Trellick Tower on Edenham Way.



Silchester Garages Site

In 2008, the Royal Borough was granted Outline Planning Permission to demolish the existing garages and nearby buildings and provide 63 new affordable homes and an alternative community or education facility. Since 2009 we have been working with the residents on the Silchester Estate (where the garages are located) about the regeneration of the garage site. We asked residents what they thought about a wider regeneration scheme for the estate and some 70 per cent said they would support this.

We are currently working with our partner, Peabody Housing Trust, to develop new and improved housing and facilities on the western edge of the Silchester Estate. The work is planned to take place in two phases and will provide new homes for rent, shared ownership and sale on the open market.

The first phase will involve developing new housing, a community facility and a new retail unit on the part of the Silchester Estate currently occupied by garages and the Latymer Children's Centre. Improvements to the ground floor of Frinstead House are also proposed.

The second phase will involve the demolition of 1 – 27 (odd) Shalfleet Drive to allow additional new homes to be built. Improvements to the green area between Frinstead House and Markland House are also being developed.

A total of 112 homes are being built; 84 affordable new homes (45 social rent and 39 shared ownership) and 28 market sale. The scheme demolishes 11 social rent and three market homes.

Edenham Way

This site consists of the area formerly occupied by Edenham Older People's Home and part of the area around the home which forms part of the housing estate. It could provide a significant number of new homes. This site may also provide an opportunity to generate funds for investment into the neighbouring Grade II* listed Trellick Tower, to continue to maintain this important building for the future.

As well as working on the physical regeneration of our estates, we have worked closely with partners at local RPs to carry out projects which support local regeneration as well as supporting local communities and residents of the Royal Borough.

Kensington and Chelsea Credit Union

The Council, in partnership with local voluntary organisations and businesses, is in the process of setting up a local credit union. The credit union will allow people who work or live in the Royal Borough to save and borrow money. Like a bank, credit unions offer a range of financial products that encourage saving, money management and provide access to borrowing. However, unlike banks they are co-operatives where every member owns a part share in the organisation.

An application has been submitted to the Financial Services Authority for assessment to ensure the proposed credit union is viable and meets its strict criteria. The application is being backed by a range of local organisations including: the Octavia Foundation, KCTMO, Kensington and Chelsea Partnership, NHS Kensington & Chelsea, Catalyst Housing Association, Women's Pioneer Housing, Affinity Sutton, Southern Housing Group, St Mungo's and London and Quadrant, as well as a variety of community organisations and advice agencies, who are all providing a range of funding and support.

3. Housing options

We want to deliver a service that enables our residents to realise their ambitions and make advantageous life choices for themselves. To do this, we must make best and fair use of our limited housing supply through a clear allocation process and easy to use Choice Based Lettings (CBL) scheme. We must also provide opportunities beyond social housing that offer people housing options which could enable them to find a property far quicker than waiting indefinitely for a social housing tenancy in the Royal Borough.

Homelessness prevention, advice and options

The Royal Borough is committed to preventing homelessness and improving life chances through giving appropriate, tailored and timely advice. We have invested substantial resources to fund homelessness prevention services and continue to move perceptions away from the historical notion that making a homeless application and being placed in temporary accommodation is the most advantageous route into social housing. Our Allocation Scheme re-enforces this by awarding priority to those in the worst housing conditions, not merely for living in temporary accommodation in the private rented sector.

Whilst the Homelessness system provides a crucial safety net for homeless, vulnerable people, it should not necessarily be the case that these households effectively gain priority over other local residents who may be in housing need, despite common waiting times of many years in temporary accommodation. A placement in temporary accommodation should not create a false expectation that an offer of social housing will follow quickly. During the first quarter of 2011-12, there were 11 two-bed properties offered to households who had been waiting an average of four years and 255 days. The four families who were offered three-bed properties had been waiting for an average of seven years.

Although the majority of temporary accommodation is procured outside of the borough, the cost to the Council is significant. Additionally, processing a homeless application can be resource intensive, with the outcome often being a refusal to accept a duty to house the applicant. We will help homeless households with realistic solutions to finding affordable homes in the public or private sector which may therefore not be in the Royal Borough. Some people experiencing homelessness may only have short-term housing need which may be met by the offer of a good quality private sector home. This also assists the allocation of a social home to those in longer term need. We will therefore pursue private sector options in respect of discharging our homelessness duty.

Advice is available to all our residents, not just homeless people. We offer targeted support to homeowners and tenants to enable them to maintain their homes and tenancies. We will continue to maintain our homeless acceptance rate as one of the lowest in London.

There has been an increase in approaches from the private rented sector since the turn of the year, and in particular an increase in the number of approaches due to the benefit cap changes. In April 2011, 23 per cent of homeless approaches were directly due to the cap changes. This increased to 43 per cent in March 2012.

We have already undertaken a large scale advice programme for residents to advise them of the potential effects of the recent welfare reform of the Local Housing Allowance; encouraging advanced thinking and planning ahead. The programme will continue to provide targeted and tailored advice including Local Housing Allowance Caps and Universal Credit information.

Rent Deposit Scheme

A new Rent Deposit Scheme (RDS) has been developed. The RDS will be offered to applicants as an alternative to making a homeless application and being placed into temporary accommodation. The scheme acts to aid independence, with minimal ongoing support from the Council, providing a 'leg up into housing'. Careful assessment of applicants is an integral part of the process to ensure they are able to manage and maintain a tenancy independently.

Housing allocation scheme

There are over 8,000 households on our Housing Register, although each year we expect fewer than 500 households to be housed into social rented housing, with usually half of homes being suitable only for single people and couples, and very few homes for families with three or more bedrooms. Most properties, including family homes, are flats rather than houses, with very few ground floor or accessible properties.

Despite there being 1,900 households with 200 or more points on our register and therefore considered as having a 'high priority' for housing, those households who are made an offer of social housing are likely to wait many years, particularly for family sized units. With most people on the register unlikely to be offered a social housing tenancy, we aim to ensure that property allocations are completed through a fair and transparent process underpinned by a policy that houses people in the greatest need, supporting employment and tackling overcrowding.

Our current Allocation Scheme was implemented in May 2011. We are currently updating the Scheme in light of new guidance and the introduction of the new Affordable Rent tenure. We will also consider how to best frame the scheme in respect of new requirements to meet the urgent housing needs of former armed services personnel and recognise working households. A new Allocation Scheme will be published in Autumn 2013.

Reviewing Choice Based Lettings

Reviewing the changes to be made to the Allocation Scheme forms one part of our Choice Based Lettings Review. This is also looking at: assisted choice for high priority applicants, letting of affordable rent tenancies and the development of online self-assessment. Our review aims to: ensure resources are targeted appropriately at those in greatest need, provide a clear message to applicants about their chances of being re-housed, offer tailored advice and options including the private rented sector and ensure a clear, fair and easy to administer scheme that is able to focus a tailored service for applicants who have a realistic chance of obtaining an offer of social housing.

Online self-assessment

An online self-assessment form has been offering potential applicants a screening to highlight their potential priority to move (in line with our Housing Allocation Scheme). This is an additional tool for residents and advice agencies to provide advice and assistance on top of existing provision. It is hoped that it will help to decrease the number of speculative housing applications.

Helping tenants to move

A number of schemes outside the Common Housing Register (CHR) are offered to enable social housing tenants to move to more suitable properties and also make best use of our housing stock. We will continue to operate as many schemes as possible to ensure people with varying reasons for and needs to move can do so. These include our Mobility Transfer Scheme which offers various incentives for tenants with no mobility issues who live in ground floor level access properties to move. With high demand, but very limited supply of accessible housing in the borough it is essential that steps are taken to ensure that it is allocated or made available to those who need it most. Our online Mutual Exchange scheme enables housing association or council tenants to swap their property with another tenant in order to move to a different sized property or area. Whilst we are keen to promote mobility both within and outside the borough, this has to be balanced with what our residents want, many of whom aspire to remain in the Royal Borough. As such, we will monitor the pan London Mobility scheme with interest, before taking a view on future participation. (This scheme sets aside a small proportion of the social housing that becomes available for letting in London for tenants who wish to move to a different borough).

Under-occupation and overcrowding

The Royal Borough is ranked fourth out of all local authorities in England and Wales for the proportion of households deemed overcrowded. This is a growing and intractable issue with 5.5 per cent of households in the borough, in both private and social sectors being overcrowded (more than double the national estimate of 2.5 per cent). Overcrowded families often face multiple forms of deprivation, including poor health, unemployment and poorer educational outcomes.

Tackling overcrowding is high on our agenda and we will continue to develop initiatives, including incentives for under-occupying households to free up larger units for families who need them. Changes in Housing Benefit rules may affect under-occupiers and we will have advice ready and available for those who need it. We will also continue to negotiate larger internal space standards and a greater proportion of larger sized units on new affordable housing schemes, although the impact of this on overcrowding is marginal because of the small number of units developed per annum.

The London Housing Strategy states that severe levels of overcrowding in social rented housing should be halved by 2016. Realistically, this is unlikely to be achieved, however we do agree with the aspiration. In working towards this, we take a holistic approach to addressing the mismatch of people and property in our stock, assisting both under-occupiers and severely overcrowded households, as reflected in our *Allocation Scheme* and the various forms of assistance and incentives we offer through the work of the Housing Opportunities Team. The team is currently seeking to match under-occupiers and severely overcrowded families that have registered to exchange their properties. By monitoring Homeswapper (a scheme for social tenants in rented property who want a home) and the Council's exchange website the team can proactively arrange viewings and offer advice and assistance in order to maximise the best use of stock.

The private rented sector

The private rented sector in the Royal Borough is proportionately one of the largest in the country with approximately 30 per cent of dwellings being privately rented.

Around 80 per cent of private dwellings in Kensington and Chelsea were built before 1919. Older housing may be associated with problems of disrepair, lack of modern facilities and poor energy efficiency.

We provide a range of services aimed at improving private sector housing and the health of occupiers. The private sector housing service has the following objectives:

- to improve housing conditions in the private rented sector
- to increase the supply of affordable housing
- to tackle “fuel poverty” and climate change
- to improve the health of residents living in poor quality housing, especially vulnerable people. This objective is a preventative role leading to potential cost savings to the NHS
- to help reduce incidents of burglary.

These objectives are realised through advice, education, informal interventions and formal enforcement. As well as prosecution, we use powers to carry out works in default to comply notices. This provides an effective remedy to people affected by poor housing conditions and the cost of the work is recharged to the people responsible.

Housing hazards

The five main housing hazards which have a significant impact on health and well-being are risk of harm from excess cold, falls, fire, damp, mould and entry by intruders.

Excess cold is the most prevalent hazard in the borough and leads to the most significant ill health for residents, especially older people. The health risks include cardiovascular and respiratory health problems. The prevalence of excess cold is known to be higher than the national average due to age profile of housing stock in the borough. Local healthcare costs are also higher than the national average. There is a clear correlation between excess cold and deprivation which ties in with fuel poverty.

Houses in Multiple Occupation (HMOs)

The worst housing conditions are found in buildings which are multiply occupied. HMOs provide valuable affordable accommodation but the increased risks of fire and poor standards in this sector make this work an important priority for action. Some types of HMO are required to be licensed under a Government scheme. We inspect HMOs to ensure that living conditions and standards for residents are acceptable.

Empty properties

By tackling the existence of long-term empty housing, we can increase the supply of good quality and affordable accommodation available to rent or to buy, and protect the quality of our environment.

The majority of empty homes are in the private sector with many being short-term vacant, pending sale or refurbishment. There will always be a 'churn' effect while properties are bought and sold and undergo repairs. However, we recognise that long-term vacant homes are a wasted resource and these are prioritised for attention.

Bringing back empty properties into use

During 2011 a total of 240 residential properties listed as being empty were brought back into use following intervention by the Council's Empty Property Officer. Of these, 97 had been empty for two years or more.

The New Homes Bonus focuses on increasing the overall net numbers of dwellings in the borough, by bringing empty property into use and the provision of new build. The majority of problematic empty properties have now been tackled and the Empty Property Officer will now focus more intensively on long-term empty properties and bidding for and making good use of national and regional funding opportunities.

Empty properties success

A large building in the south of the borough was left empty, blighting the neighbourhood and becoming occupied by squatters. The Empty Property Officer liaised with the receivers who were managing the property and the squatters were evicted. Enforcement action prevented further unauthorised entry and a danger to public health. The prospect of the Council taking enforcement action to bring the property back into use or acquiring management of it resulted in it being sold. The property is now occupied and forms part of a large residential redevelopment.

Private sector housing options

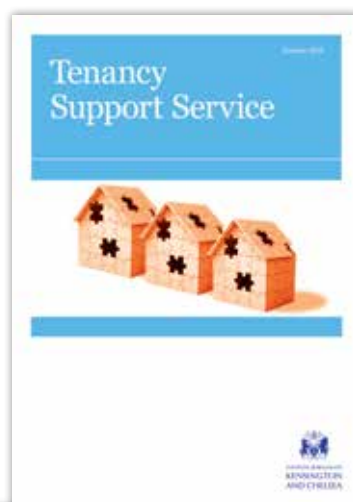
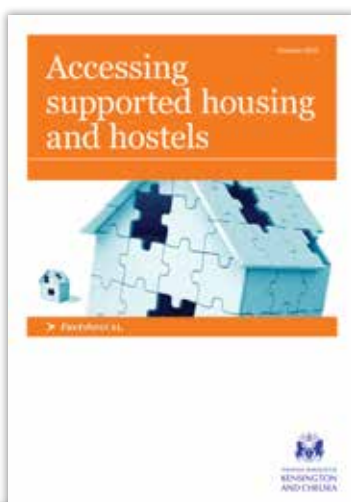
We intend to improve use of the private rented sector, by developing our service for applicants both within and outside of the borough; continuing to promote the Landlord Accreditation Scheme which improves the quality of private rented accommodation. We will use the private rented sector in creative ways to promote enhanced housing options by exploring the possibility of long-term private sector tenancies, through the development of landlord products and procurement processes and further explore the possibilities of discharging our homelessness duty here.

Procuring temporary accommodation (TA)

Like many other London boroughs, we need to increase out of London TA procurement. Procurement of TA has become increasingly difficult in London and has reduced over the course of 2011-12. With transitional relief ending, the introduction of benefit caps and changes in TA subsidy due in 2013, procurement will become increasingly difficult.

We will review our offer to landlords, including the support we give to landlords and tenants, to ensure procurement maximisation. Our joint work with providers on the Brent framework to procure accommodation out of London will continue and we will investigate further any joint working opportunities to access the private rented sector outside London.

We have already developed a policy detailing which households will be prioritised for temporary accommodation in-borough, out of borough and out of London.



4. Vulnerable residents

Social inclusion

The rich diversity of our borough contributes to its success. We will continue to encourage diversity and mixed communities through housing initiatives and service provision.

Supported housing providers

Just as we want to re-define the relationship between people and local government in respect of those seeking general needs housing, so we want to re-think how we provide services to those within supported housing. We will therefore ensure that people accessing these services do genuinely require this type and level of support, thus targeting reducing resources at people who are best placed to benefit from them, and to those who can become more independent with the right levels of assistance.

Where new developments meet our strategic aims, as set out in our *Supporting People Strategy 2007-12* and the *Older People's Housing Strategy*, we will support providers to secure capital funding from the Homes and Communities Agency. Strong partnership is needed to ensure that provider services, and therefore service users, are linked into statutory health, housing and social care services.

Social Inclusion Team

The Social Inclusion Team undertakes assessments and referrals for single adults and couples without children with a variety of support needs, including mental health issues, substance use, offending, physical disabilities and learning disabilities, as well as being in housing need. This team, established in partnership with Adult Social Care and the Primary Care Trust, provides access to supported housing, tenant support services and other outreach services to vulnerable adults and rough sleepers.

Home support

Social Inclusion Pilot Service (SIPS) helps people who are finding it difficult to look after themselves and manage their homes, for example people who need help to reduce cluttering or hoarding. It also helps people who are or may be at risk of being abused. This is a national programme aimed at supporting vulnerable people in their homes.

The team will continue to work in partnership with the local police, voluntary organisations and housing providers to address rough sleeping, making contact with rough sleepers and helping them to receive support including accommodation, health services, employment or training. However, a firm stance will be taken with those who are causing a nuisance within the community, for example where there is noise, littering, fouling or antisocial behaviour such as street drinking and aggressive begging.

Zero tolerance

Recently, we have been tackling street drinking, begging and rough sleeping. To reduce aggressive begging, we worked with the police to establish an exclusion zone in Brompton Ward. This zero tolerance approach has led to a noticeable decrease in beggars. An outreach team works with rough sleepers and helps them move to a more settled lifestyle.

Older residents

A positive indicator of local and national success is people living longer, healthier lives. These demographic changes are challenging traditional assumptions about older people and about ageing itself and mean having to move away from the idea that ageing is an inevitable decline into dependency.

We will work towards ensuring the right profile of accommodation and housing support services exists to meet older people's needs across the continuum of housing, health and social care. Delivering housing options for older people is not just about bricks and mortar; it is about developing and commissioning both building and community based services that prevent older people from losing their independence and help them to feel safe and secure in their own homes.

Cross tenure services

Traditionally our services are based in the social rented sector and we recognise that we have a much wider customer base living in the private sector that needs to receive services delivered on a cross tenure basis. Through the remodelling of sheltered housing services, we will release resources that enable us to commission a more flexible menu of services from handyperson services through to specialist floating support services that are tenure neutral.

Gypsy and Traveller Community

As with all communities living in the borough, the Council is committed to providing a safe, secure and desirable environment for the gypsies and travellers living at the Stable Way site, in north Kensington. This site is jointly provided by the Royal Borough and the London Borough of Hammersmith and Fulham. We recognise that a good quality, well-managed site plays an important part in achieving better social, health and educational outcomes for the whole community. We have developed a *Gypsy and Travellers' plan* with a series of actions with the full involvement of the community. This sets out how the Council is going to deliver services to this community.

The Supporting People programme funds a floating support service on the Stable Way site that works with the local community to deliver targeted services that both empower the community and increase their access to a range of housing, health and social care services.

Gypsy and Traveller Residents' Association

In 2011 the first formally constituted Gypsy and Traveller Residents' Association in the country was established. Residents now take an active part in improving standards on the site, from assisting with the procurement of a new site management service through to pursuing new funding opportunities to deliver training and employment services.

Domestic violence (DV)

The Community Safety Team and the Environmental Health Department continue to work in partnership on the Sanctuary Scheme which provides security works to the home in domestic violence cases. The security works recommended through the scheme are funded and carried out under a crime prevention grant from the Environmental Health Discretionary Grants allocation. This is due to our successful partnership working model and procedures recognised by the Local Government Regulation as good practice and which is included in a national guidance document.

Security and advice

In 2010-11 at total number of 27 urgent domestic violence referrals received security works under the Sanctuary Project totalling £30,807. In addition to this, 10 non-urgent cases were referred via the Housing Advice Service Kensington and Chelsea.

In response to the Council adopting a co-ordinated community response to domestic violence, a Domestic and Sexual Violence Working Group (DSVHWG) was set up. Chaired by the Director of Housing, the group includes representation from the Council's Housing Department, local social landlords, the Community Safety Unit, women's refuges and local advice agencies. It has undertaken work to improve the outcomes for victims in relation to housing. A network of DV champions has been set up within the housing provider network, enabling the dissemination of advice and guidance on areas such as DV training for staff, MARAC (Multi-Agency Risk Assessment Conference) referrals and best practice in the development of DV procedures. Steps have also been taken to improve the monitoring of DV incidents involving social tenants. It is hoped that this will lead to more effective referrals to specialist agencies and the MARAC. The working group plans to continue DV monitoring, to monitor DV training undertaken by RP and Housing staff and to ensure that all social landlords are referring correctly to the appropriate support agencies.

Single Persons' Housing Plan

The Supporting People (SP) programme funds a variety of housing support services for a range of vulnerable groups, whose primary presenting need is homelessness. They may have a mental health problem, be a care leaver or an offender or may just be struggling to manage their accommodation without support.

The Supporting People Housing Strategy 2007-12 found that the borough had, as a result of legacy provision, an oversupply of traditional accommodation-based services for single people with support needs. As a consequence a large hostel was decommissioned as the majority of occupants had low, or no support needs.

This loss of the hostel has not affected the borough's capacity to meet demand because new eligibility criteria and time limited stays were introduced to manage our supported housing portfolio more effectively.

Many of the current occupiers in our supported housing schemes no longer require a support package, but they do require housing; we are however paying for the support for contractual reasons. Due to the limited supply of social housing, the majority of people in our SP services will only be awarded move-on points if the Council has a statutory duty to provide accommodation. As a consequence the *Single Persons' Housing Plan* was developed to inform the commissioning and procurement of services for single people and to increase throughput in our services.



During 2011-13, we will re-designate many of our traditional low support services to either multiple needs or visiting support schemes based on need rather than capacity. We are in the process of completing the procurement of four preventative services for single people with a total capacity of 388 bed spaces.

Parallel with this a new “Getting Ready to Move Initiative” will maximise the benefit of the money spent on housing-related support through motivating and assisting young people and the single homeless to find their own housing solutions.

Getting Ready to Move

This initiative connects directly to a new project linking housing to worklessness. It will, through mentoring and volunteering, provide a launch pad into training, education and employment for people in our supported housing. The initiative will be run jointly by the Social Inclusion Team, providers and service users. The aim is to prepare people for constructive engagement with work through a coordinated approach linked to the Into Work and Housing Programme and a new Supported Housing Rent Deposit Scheme. This will free up bed spaces for people in need of support.

We will continue with our new time limited accommodation service for people in our support services who are working. This service has a capacity of 16 bed spaces.

Adaptations and accessible housing

The Accessible Housing Register project is identified as a beacon of good practice and we are hosting its roll out across London through the Greater London Authority. The Register enables us to make best use of resources, particularly in view of the London-wide shortage of accessible housing. We use information on the suitability of homes for disabled people and the accessibility of sheltered housing, obtained through the work of the Accessible Housing Register project, in order to allocate units appropriately and to plan accessibility improvement work.

We are currently reviewing the use of sheltered housing stock, to ensure that households in the highest priority need for sheltered housing are supported to access it and to reduce refusals for sheltered housing tenancies thereby reducing void periods and improving the efficiency of assessment and allocation processes.

Older people's lettings pilot

Under the Choice Based Lettings Review, a pilot project has been set up to evaluate the impacts on sheltered housing lettings of providing improved housing options advice to older people and providing assistance to applicants who need help to find a suitable property.

We recognise the links between housing and health. We will continue to explore joint working and signposting opportunities to integrate the two more closely to improve the well-being of residents, particularly those who may be vulnerable.



5. Employment and training

Providing incentives to work

We would like to break the long recognised links between social housing and unemployment. Recent changes to Government guidance on allocations, mean the Council will have greater freedom to use social housing as an incentive, to encourage applicants into work alongside the housing provision for applicants in the ‘reasonable preference’ categories to whom we have a duty.

Linked to our *Tenancy Strategy*, we will investigate the options to develop a tenure policy linked to household income that recognises and rewards employment, alongside generating additional income to invest in our stock. Our thinking around this extends to people with low support needs.

Into Work and Housing; the direct lets pilot

This was the first pilot to use social housing as an employment incentive in Kensington and Chelsea. All studio properties in Kensington and Chelsea that become available to the CHR are assessed by the CBL team. Those assessed as likely to be ‘not a sought after property’ are put forward for the ‘direct lets’ scheme.

Applicants for the scheme must live in Supporting People accommodation, and be assessed as ready to move on, to be working for 16 hours or more per week and to have been in employment for over three months.

To date, 21 direct lets have been made, alongside a ten bed ‘Into Work and Housing Hostel’. Evidence from Supporting People providers suggests that a number of service users in their schemes are now actively seeking employment as they are aware it is likely to be their only opportunity to gain a social housing tenancy. This is a real marker of success. The ‘direct lets’ model is successfully promoting the benefits of employment to a group who have traditionally been very challenging to engage in work or training.

North Kensington Neighbourhood Management

The Council is committed to improving the environment in North Kensington. Through working with our Registered Provider partners we have established the Dalgarno Neighbourhood Management Alliance (DNMA) in and around the Dalgarno Estate. This was previously a crime and antisocial behaviour hotspot and had its fair share of problems but is now a much better place to live due to the combined efforts of all the partners. Co-ordinated activities include: assisting residents back into work, tackling antisocial behaviour and regenerating underused areas of the estate. We will continue to work with the Community Safety Team and the Police to ensure that our neighbourhoods are safe places to live.

As well as working on the physical regeneration of our estates, we have worked closely with partners at local RPs to carry out projects which support local regeneration as well as supporting local communities and residents of the Royal Borough.

Wornington Green Employment and Skills Plan

As part of the redevelopment of the 538 homes of the Wornington Green Estate in Golborne ward, Catalyst Housing has agreed an Employment and Skills Plan with the main construction contractor, Ardmere. The Employment and Skills Plan uses a model recommended by the Homes and Communities Agency (HCA) to ensure new social housing developments also bring employment and training opportunities for local people. The Employment and Skills Plan sets a number of targets during the construction phase for apprenticeships, work experience and skills training. The Council, as well as the local Connexions service and Kensington and Chelsea College are part of a group which help steer the project to get the best for local people.

Housing and Worklessness Co-ordinator

Changes in housing and welfare policy proposed by the current Government have brought to the fore the high levels of worklessness amongst social housing tenants. National patterns are reflected locally. We have set up an 18 month project to work with housing providers in the Royal Borough, to raise awareness amongst their residents of the support available to help them prepare for and secure employment, and to provide a more coherent service to our residents in the borough.

The Project aims to improve the way we work with housing providers in the borough to help them to better support their residents by:

- contacting their residents and ensuring that they receive information, advice and guidance to direct them into training and employment
- helping to prepare residents to respond to the benefits and tenancy changes coming their way
- developing improved joint working practices among housing providers and local agencies to ensure support is targeted where it is needed most, and is not duplicating existing provision
- buying into each other's existing training and employment services and other services already available in the borough

The *Pathways to Work Charter* is a product of the Housing and Worklessness Project and sets out the commitment we are asking social housing providers to pledge to, working with us and with specialist local agencies to tackle worklessness within the Royal Borough.



Action plan for delivering the Housing Strategy

We will develop effective asset management and business planning.			
Actions	Council aims	Resident/ partner involvement	Target completion date
Explore the financial freedoms granted to us, and identify the implications and options available to us.	Renewing the legacy Really good services	KCTMO	2013
Work with the KCTMO to improve asset management.	Really good services Responding to residents Renewing the legacy	KCTMO, residents	Ongoing
Explore the option of selling a limited number of individual street properties.	Renewing the legacy	KCTMO, residents	2013
Maximise the income from our property assets and investigate opportunities to develop other income-generating services.	Really good services Renewing the legacy	KCTMO	Ongoing

We will regenerate, renew and develop new affordable housing where opportunities arise.

Actions	Council aims	Resident/ partner involvement	Target completion date
Continue to build affordable homes in the borough, and work closely with housing associations to secure sites for affordable housing developments.	Renewing the legacy Really good services Responding to residents	KCTMO, DCLG, RP partners, HCA	Ongoing
Explore options to improve our housing offer for older people, to deliver quality homes and to build larger homes.	Renewing the legacy	Registered Providers, KCTMO, residents	2014
Review our housing planning policies to ensure the right balance of housing is built in the borough to the best quality and at a price which is affordable.	Renewing the legacy	Planning department, Registered Providers, KCTMO, residents	2015
Investigate developing areas within our housing estates which could be converted into extra living space or otherwise developed.	Renewing the legacy	KCTMO	Ongoing

We will regenerate, renew and develop new affordable housing where opportunities arise.

Actions	Council aims	Resident/ partner involvement	Target completion date
Take forward plans to develop the Silchester Garages Site with a minimum of 63 homes, and look at the potential for a wider regeneration scheme in consultation with residents on the site.	Really good services Responding to residents Renewing the legacy	Registered Providers, KCTMO, residents	2014
Carry out further work to determine the possible options for the Edenham Way site in more detail. We will explore various options to ensure the site is put to the best use.	Renewing the legacy	Registered Providers, KCTMO, residents	Ongoing
Improve the energy efficiency of housing in the borough, with our partners and through the support of various sources of funding.	Renewing the legacy	Registered Providers, KCTMO, residents	Ongoing

We will deliver a service that enables our residents to realise their ambitions and make advantageous life choices for themselves.

Actions	Council aims	Resident/ partner involvement	Target completion date
Explore housing opportunities in all sectors and areas to widen housing options available and encourage mobility and choice.	Really good services Responding to residents	Registered Providers, private landlords, agencies	Ongoing
Provide specialist housing advice to help older people and people with learning disabilities find suitable housing options.	Really good services Responding to residents	Advice agencies	Ongoing
Manage the performance of local advice services to ensure the best service quality and meet published standards.	Really good services	Advice agencies	Ongoing
Continue homeless prevention work and use a new Rent Deposit Scheme as a viable alternative to making a homeless application.	Really good services Responding to residents	Advice agencies, Registered Providers, private landlords	Ongoing
Continue to work in partnership to address rough sleeping and offer rough sleepers support.	Really good services	Voluntary agencies	Ongoing
Develop a <i>Tenancy Strategy</i> and a <i>Tenancy Policy</i> .	Really good services	KCTMO, Registered Providers	2013

We will support households with appropriate housing and levels of support.			
Actions	Council aims	Resident/ partner involvement	Target completion date
Monitor and review the <i>Housing Allocation Scheme</i> to ensure its compliance and effectiveness and continue to target overcrowding and under-occupation.	Really good services Responding to residents	KCTMO, Registered Providers	2013
Use the Accessible Housing Register to allocate units appropriately and plan accessibility improvement work.	Really good services Responding to residents	KCTMO, Registered Providers	Ongoing
Run a pilot project to evaluate the impacts on sheltered housing lettings of providing improved housing options advice to older people and assisting those who are unable to use CBL to place bids and view properties.	Really good services Responding to residents	KCTMO, Registered Providers	2012-13

We will support households with appropriate housing and levels of support.

Actions	Council aims	Resident/ partner involvement	Target completion date
Develop and sustain specialist accommodation that can support vulnerable people across a range of complex needs, including the implementation of the <i>Single Persons' Housing Plan (SPHP)</i> and <i>Older People's Housing Strategy</i> .	Really good services Responding to residents Renewing the legacy	KCTMO, Registered Providers, residents	2012-13
Continue to explore joint working and signposting opportunities to integrate health and housing in order to improve the well-being of residents.	Really good services. Responding to residents	Tri-borough Public Health Team	Ongoing

We will use our greater freedoms to incentivise and encourage applicants into work.

Actions	Council aims	Resident/ partner involvement	Target completion date
Incentivise employment and training to promote mobility for social housing tenants through working with the KCTMO and Registered Providers.	Really good services Responding to residents	KCTMO, Registered Providers, agencies, residents	Ongoing
Include options to recognise and reward employment in the development of the <i>Tenancy Strategy</i> .	Really good services	KCTMO, Registered Providers	2013
Ensure employment initiatives are a key component of the <i>Single Persons' Housing Plan</i> .	Really good services		2013

Glossary of terms

Accessible Housing Register

The Accessible Housing Register provides access information for social housing properties. It is a way of storing and displaying information about whether a property has steps or is step-free or has any adaptations such as a level access shower or a stair-lift.

Affordable Rent

Affordable Rent is a new type of social housing introduced in 2011 which can only be offered by housing associations. The tenancy can be for a fixed period and the rent that can be charged can be up to 80 per cent of the private sector rents in the area (up to the maximum amount that would be paid by Local Housing Allowance).

Benefit Caps

During 2013, a limit will be put on the total amount of benefit that most people aged 16 to 64 can get.

Brent Framework

The West London Boroughs' agreement for the procurement and management of temporary accommodation for homeless households and those threatened with homelessness.

Choice based lettings

Choice based lettings is the name given to the process for letting some social housing in the Royal Borough. As properties become available, they are advertised on a website and printed lists. People assessed as needing to be rehoused can then bid for them.

Green Deal

The Green Deal is the new Government initiative that is designed to help residents and businesses make energy saving improvements to their properties without having to pay the full cost up front.

Housing Allocation Scheme

The Housing Allocation Scheme sets out who is given priority for social housing in the Royal Borough.

Housing Need

Housing need is used to describe households who need re-housing. For example, this could mean the household is homeless, or they are living in an overcrowded home.

Housing Revenue Account

An account of expenditure and income that must be kept by the Housing Department. The account is kept separate or ring fenced from other council activities.

Intermediate Rent

Intermediate Rent is a form of tenure that may apply to newly developed homes where the rent is set at a level above those charged by social landlords and below those charged in the local private rented market.

Local Housing Allowance

The Local Housing Allowance (LHA) is a type of Housing Benefit paid to people who live in the private rented sector rather than social housing. Recent changes to LHA have introduced a cap (or limit) on the amount which will be paid each week.

Localism Act 2011

This is a new law which was passed in 2011. It reforms social housing and introduces fixed term tenancies and the requirement for every strategic housing authority to have a Tenancy Strategy.

Target Rent

This is the formula used to set rent levels for social rented housing. The Council uses this formula to help set the rents for its own properties.

Transitional Relief

The time limited protection of Housing Benefit for some households as the Government introduces its reforms to welfare benefits.

Universal Credit

Universal Credit is a new single payment for people who are looking for work or on a low income. It will be introduced from April 2013 and it will replace Income Support, Income Based Jobseekers Allowance, Income Related Employment and Support Allowance, Housing Benefit, Child Tax Credits and Working Tax Credits.

Housing Strategy

Statistical Appendix

Household income

According to our latest Strategic Housing Market Assessment, in March 2009 there were approximately 84,200 households in Kensington and Chelsea, with an estimated population of 169,000. Although the borough contains areas of extreme wealth, it is polarised and there is a wide disparity in income levels: almost 30 per cent of households have an income of less than £20,000 per year, but a similar proportion have an annual income in excess of £100,000.

Property prices

The average price of a property in the borough is over six times that of the national average and almost three times the London average.

	Average price (£)
RBKC	1,082,000
London	364,819
England	163,376

Source: Land Registry House Price Index; August 2012

Rental levels

In common with all London boroughs, there is a marked disparity between social and private rent levels in the Royal Borough. This disparity explains, in part, the high demand for social housing locally.

Cross-tenure comparison of weekly average rents in RBKC, 2011

Property size	Council weekly rent (£)	Private sector weekly rent (median) (£)
Studio	79.36	265
1 bedroom	94.72	407
2 bedroom	112.60	600
3 bedroom	123.61	1065
4 bedroom	138.07	5000

Source: London Rents Map and K&CTMO (July 2012)

Tenure profile

There is a varied mix of housing in Kensington and Chelsea. The findings of our latest Strategic Housing Market Assessment 2009 include:

- 43.8 per cent of households in the borough are owner-occupiers, much lower than the national (68.7 per cent) and regional (56.6 per cent) average
- the proportion of owner-occupiers without a mortgage is higher than the London average (27.3 per cent compared with 22.1 per cent)
- just over a quarter of households live in the social rented sector, similar to the London average
- a quarter of households in the borough live in private rented accommodation, much higher than the London average of 14 per cent
- some 7.5 per cent of dwellings in the borough are second homes. This is much higher than the regional and national average (1.5 per cent and 0.9 per cent respectively)
- the annual rate of turnover in the private rented sector in Kensington and Chelsea, at 36.8 per cent, is much higher than that recorded in both the social rented and owner-occupied sectors (2.4 per cent and 4.3 per cent respectively).

Household composition

According to the most reliable available data, the 2001 Census, the Royal Borough is ranked third highest of all local authorities in England and Wales for the proportion of single person households (33.5 per cent) and there is a lower than national average number of one parent households (4.5 per cent). Higher concentrations of single person households can be found in the south of the borough, higher concentrations of older persons can be found in the south and centre and higher concentrations of one parent households with dependent children can be found in the north of the borough.

Social housing stock

In terms of the Council's own housing stock, KCTMO manages 9,459 properties of which 6,873 are tenanted and 2,586 are leasehold dwellings. 98 per cent of our properties are flats, of which 25 per cent are in blocks of 10 storeys or more. The table below details the total social rented stock in the borough, and is split between KCTMO stock and Registered Provider (RP) stock. As the table shows, nearly 50 per cent of all the social housing is either a studio or one bedroom property.

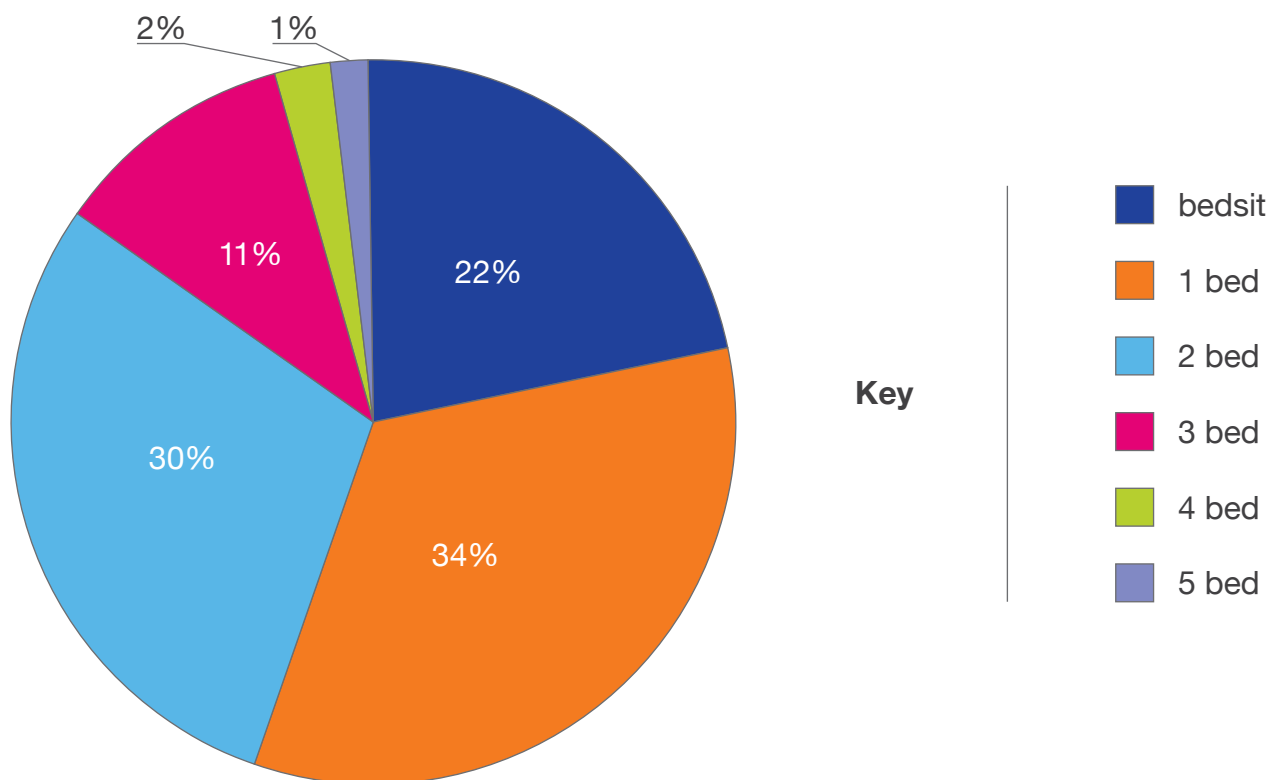
Bedroom size	KCTMO	Registered provider	Total
Studio	947	1,593	2,540
1	1,798	5,123	6,921
2	2,461	3,468	5,929
3	1,413	1,539	2,952
4	241	364	605
5	12	20	32
6	1	3	4
7	0	0	0
8	0	0	0
Total	6,873	12,110	18,983

Lettings

On average, there are 1,500 applicants per year, compared with an average 500 lettings per year. The table below details the number of lettings for the last six years.

	2006-07	2007-08	2008-09	2009-10	2010-11	2011-12
Total no. of lettings	538	388	491	556	473	588

Lettings by bed size 2011-12



Common Housing Register and people waiting to be housed

The table below highlights the number of people requiring properties of different sizes currently on our Common Housing Register. Compared to 588 lettings in 2011-12, it is clear that demand far outstrips supply.

Number of bedrooms required	Number of households
Studio	4,249
1	687
2	2,182
3	882
4	137
5	14
6	7
TOTAL	8,158

Taken from the CHR in October 2011

Homelessness prevention

On average 1,100 households approach the Council for assistance each year. The table below shows the number of people who have come to us for homelessness assistance in the last seven years and shows how many people we accepted as homeless.

	Accepted	Not accepted
2005-06	299	579
2006-07	269	712
2007-08	Figures unavailable	606
2008-09	253	805
2009-10	239	861
2010-11	466	983
2011-12	534	1017

Information taken from the P1E return

Registered provider partners in the borough

Over 50 registered providers (RPs) have stock in the Royal Borough, although there are only 12 RPs with more than 300 properties.

Number of properties managed/owned*	Number of housing associations**
1-10	12
11-100	17
101 – 500	11
501 – 1000	3
1001 – 3,500	3
3,500+	1
TOTAL	47

* Figures should be regarded as indicative only

** Includes supported housing providers

New social housing

The tables below highlight the number of new social housing units which have been made available to us for social lettings. As the second table shows, most of the properties have been outside the borough.

	No of new lettings to new builds				TOTAL
	1 bed	2 bed	3 bed	4 bed+	
2005-06	15	67	10	8	100
2006-07	12	65	17	3	97
2007-08	4	21	3	0	28
2008-09	11	25	17	4	57
2009-10	2	17	4	2	25
2010-11	9	38	10	1	58
2011-12	17	52	7	4	80
TOTAL	70	285	68	22	445

	In borough	Out of borough
2005-06	68	32
2006-07	44	56
2007-08	0	28
2008-09	26	31
2009-10	10	15
2010-11	0	58
2011-12	33	47
TOTAL	181	267

English

Information from this document can be made available in alternative formats and in different languages. If you require further assistance please use the contact details below.

Arabic

يمكن توفير المعلومات التي وردت في هذا المستند بصيغ بديلة ولغات أخرى. إذا كنت في حاجة إلى مزيد من المساعدة، الرجاء استخدام بيانات الاتصال الواردة أدناه.

Farsi

اطلاعات حاوی در این مدارک به صورتهای دیگر و به زبانهای مختلف در دسترس می باشد. در صورت نیاز به کمک بیشتر لطفاً از جزئیات تماس ذکر شده در ذیل استفاده کنید.

French

Les informations présentées dans ce document peuvent vous être fournies dans d'autres formats et d'autres langues. Si vous avez besoin d'une aide complémentaire, veuillez utiliser les coordonnées ci-dessous.

Portuguese

A informação presente neste documento pode ser disponibilizada em formatos alternativos e em línguas diferentes. Se desejar mais assistência, use por favor os contactos fornecidos abaixo.

Somali

Macluumaadka dokumentigan waxaa lagu heli karaa qaabab kale iyo luuqado kala duwan. Haddii aad u baahan tahay caawinaad intaas dhaafsiisan fadlan isticmaal xiriirka faahfaahinta hoose.

Spanish

La información en este documento puede facilitarse en formatos alternativos y en diferentes idiomas. Si necesita más ayuda por favor utilice la siguiente información de contacto.

Housingline

T: 020 7361 3008 | E: housing@rbkc.gov.uk