

Hackney Housing Strategy 2017-22

Consultation Report

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1. Aim of the Hackney Housing Strategy Consultation

- 1.1 The Council is introducing a new Hackney Housing Strategy for the next five years, 2017-22. The new strategy must respond to an unprecedented housing crisis in the borough. Despite the Council's housebuilding programme and a range of other action taken, Hackney faces a range of challenges as a result of national policy, housing market pressures and changing demand for housing.
- 1.2 In this report, we summarise the findings and responses from the public and other stakeholder consultation that ran from 27 March to 22 May. However, this marked the culmination of a much longer process that took place as part of our year-long engagement with residents 'Hackney: a place for everyone'. Specific housing activities included a stakeholder engagement event in November 2015 and a public meeting in March 2016. We know from a major resident survey carried out in the summer of 2016, and from face to face interviews with residents, that housing affordability is the top concern for Hackney's residents.
- 1.3 The aim of the Housing Strategy Consultation was to find out, and understand better, the most important housing issues for residents and other respondents, as well seeking views on the relative importance of the Council's proposals for addressing those issues.
- 1.4 In particular, primarily through a questionnaire survey and accompanying summary of proposals, the consultation sought to understand the importance to residents and other stakeholders of:
1. *Building as many council and housing association homes as possible, with rents that people on low incomes can afford to pay*
 2. *With our partners, building new homes for shared ownership or for 'London Living Rent', affordable to those on middle incomes*
 3. *Using Council land to build new homes, where there is support from the residents affected by the proposals*
 4. *Ensuring high standards of energy efficiency in new homes, as well as measures to improve the energy efficiency of existing homes, to help provide affordable warmth and reduce fuel poverty*
 5. *Helping people to voluntarily move to smaller, more suitable homes, freeing-up larger homes for families*
 6. *Exploring ways of ensuring that Hackney residents are given first priority for the purchase of newly built homes in the borough*
 7. *Promoting the development of new homes specifically for private rent, including shared housing, where these are good quality, well-managed, and affordable to those on low to middle incomes*
 8. *Working with landlords and tenants to improve conditions in the private rented sector, and using all the legal powers available to the Council to take action against bad landlords*

9. *Making the case to central government for more powers to tackle poor conditions and rapidly increasing rent levels in some privately rented homes*
 10. *Working closely with housing and health providers to identify and provide better and earlier support to residents with health needs*
 11. *Expanding the ways that the Council and partners help local residents to get jobs so that they can directly benefit from Hackney's growing economy, including through apprenticeships and training*
 12. *Maintaining our diverse communities, for example through estate regeneration and new housing developments, where a mix of people live together in the same neighbourhood.*
- 1.5 In addition, residents and other respondents were asked whether there were any other priorities not mentioned that should be addressed in the Council's Housing Strategy.
- 1.6 As part of the consultation the Council also held focus groups for private tenants and a workshop event to seek the views of Housing Associations working in the borough (please see overleaf).

For more information on the Council's proposals please see Appendix 2.

2. Methodology

2.1 When did the consultation take place?

The consultation ran for eight weeks from 27 March to 22 May 2017.

2.2 How could participants take part?

An online survey on the Council's consultation hub 'Citizen Space' was promoted (appendix 1) alongside a consultation summary document and glossary of terms (appendix 2).

Hard copies of all documents were available on request by telephone, as well as at the receptions of the Hackney Service Centre and six neighbourhood housing offices.

Information and a link to the survey could also be found under the 'get involved' section of the Housing Strategy webpage.

The Housing Director presented the proposals and plans for consultation to the borough-wide Residents' Liaison Panel. Details of the consultation were sent to all Tenants and Residents Associations in the borough, as well as to resident representative groups on estates undergoing regeneration.

Two focus groups were held with private tenants, invited from the Council's Hackney Matters e-panel of residents, to discuss the Housing Strategy proposals and whether these met tenants' highest priorities.

A workshop event was held with representatives from Housing Associations working in the borough to discuss the Housing Strategy proposals and ways of meeting the housing challenges ahead. Messages were separately sent to all individual Housing Associations asking them to highlight the consultation with their residents in the borough, for example through newsletters and other communications.

2.3 Communications

On 27 March 2017, the Consultation was launched through a full-page article in the Council's newspaper, 'Hackney Today', which has a print run of 108,000 copies and is delivered free to every home and business in the borough.

During the consultation period, the consultation was promoted through social media and through press releases. A press release published on 21 April 2017 resulted in coverage in the local newspapers.

2.4 Response rate

A total of 150 responses to the consultation were received. There were 147 responses to the questionnaire survey, and three responses from residents who did not use the questionnaire. This is considered a good response rate, relative to other Council surveys of this kind.

- Online responses: 146 (97% of total responses)
- Hard copy responses: 4 (3% of total responses)

2.5 Data inputting and analysis

The vast majority of responses were online. Only one hard copy of the questionnaire was received, and this was inputted manually. The three hard copy responses in 'letter / email format' cover a wide range of different topics and have therefore been summarised separately in the report.

2.6 Qualitative data (comments)

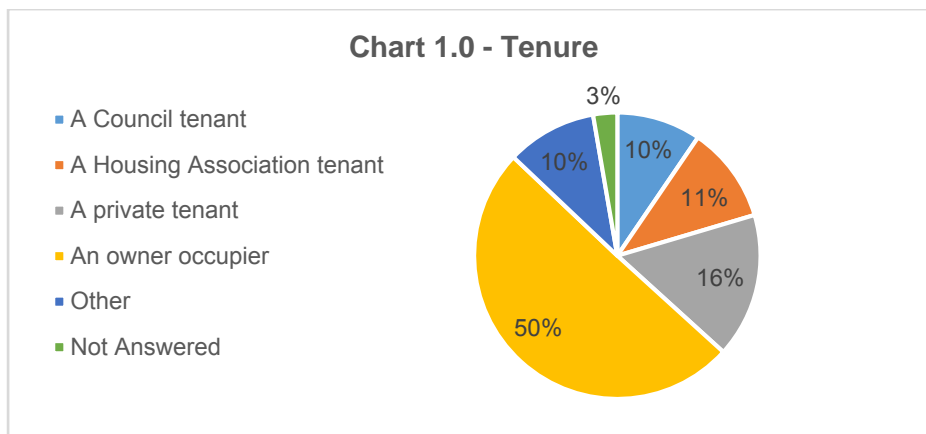
In respect of all questions in the survey, respondents were asked to select a specific response. However, respondents were also given space to record their additional comments if they wished to expand on or give reasons for their response. All of the comments made were analysed and summarised. Where comments have been highlighted in this report, it is because the frequency of the comment or theme was relatively high compared to other comments and themes.

3. Who took part?

3.1 In total, there were 150 responses to the consultation, and the make-up of respondents is shown below.

Q14: Tenure

3.2 The chart below shows the breakdown of responses by tenure, of the 88 respondents who answered the question. Homeowners were over-represented relative to their proportion of Hackney’s population (50% of responses compared to around 26% of the borough’s households), while other tenures were relatively under-represented. This pattern of tenure breakdown is not unusual in the Council’s consultations.

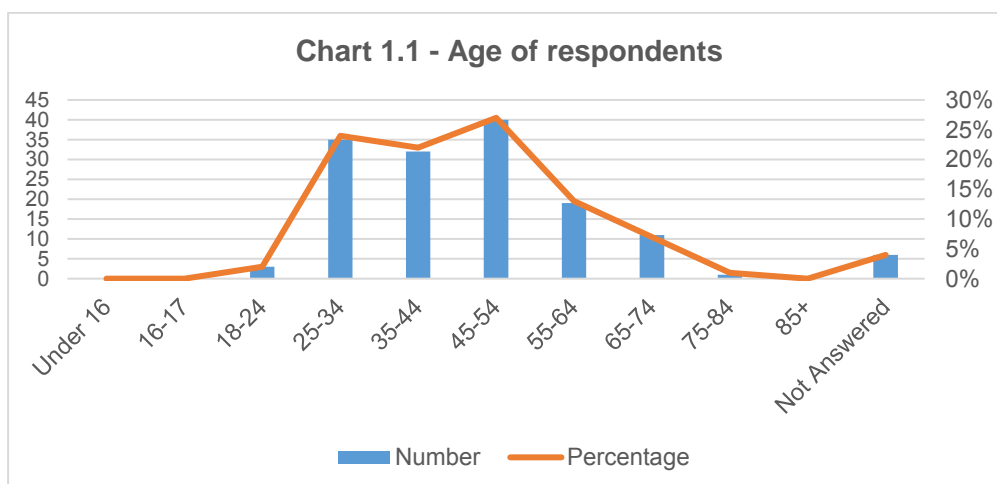


Demographic data

3.3 Equalities monitoring information is part of all consultations at Hackney Council, and monitoring demographic data helps us to understand how well various groups are represented in consultation findings.

Q15: Age

- There was a relatively good spread of representation in the 25 to 74 age groups, with very few responses from the under-25s or over-75s.



Q16: Gender

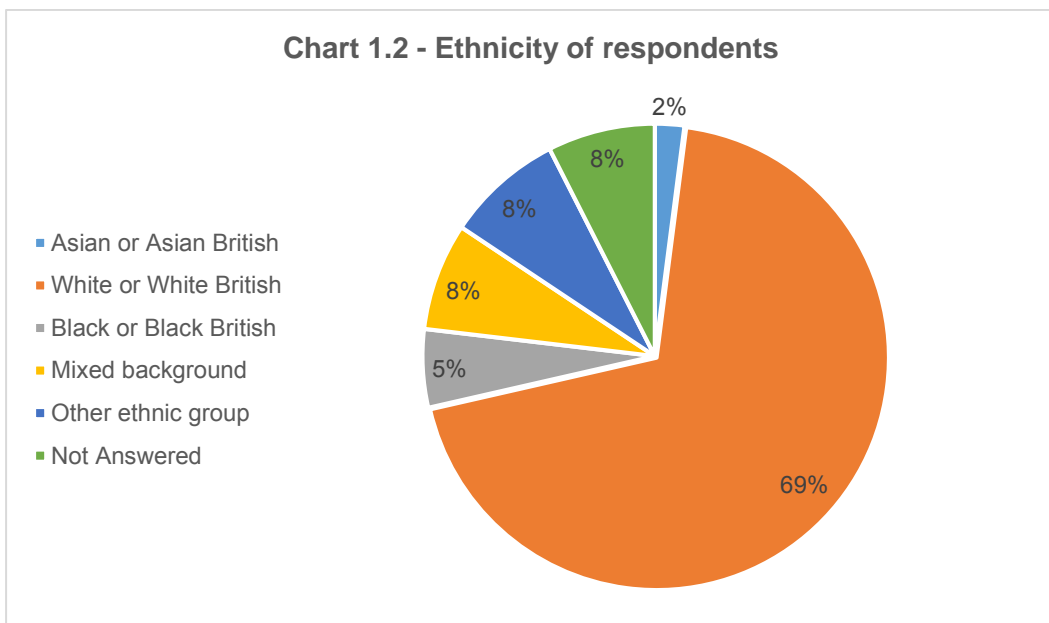
- There was very even representation of genders, with **49%** female and **45%** male (6% did not respond to this question).

Q18: Disability

- **9%** of respondents considered themselves to be disabled under the Equality Act definition (a physical or mental impairment that has a 'substantial' and 'long-term' negative effect on a person's ability to carry out normal daily activities), compared to 14.5% of residents in Hackney (Census 2011).

Q19: Ethnicity

- The majority of respondents, 69%, were White or White British. This compares to 55% as a percentage of Hackney's residents (Census 2011).



4. Summary of key findings

- 4.1 This section of the report summarises the findings of the consultation in terms of responses overall, and under each of the key themes of the Housing Strategy.

Responses overall

- 4.2 A summary breakdown of 147 responses to the online questionnaire is shown in the table below. There was generally strong support amongst respondents for the Council's proposals, with over 70% indicating that most proposals were important or somewhat important. The exception was the proposal for promoting newly built homes for private rent which, though it received support from a majority of 63% respondents, was less highly rated than the other proposals. Further analysis is summarised below.

Question	Important or somewhat important	Unimportant or somewhat unimportant	Neither important nor unimportant	Don't know / not answered
1. Building homes that people on low incomes can afford	84%	13%	2%	1%
2. Building homes affordable to people on middle incomes	79%	12%	5%	2%
3. Using Council land to build new homes	82%	8%	2%	7%
4. Measures to improve energy efficiency	93%	4%	2%	2%
5. Helping people to voluntarily move to smaller homes	82%	4%	10%	4%
6. First priority to residents for buying new homes	71%	14%	12%	1%
7. Promoting newly built homes for private rent	63%	21%	13%	4%
8. Improving conditions in the private rented sector	90%	4%	3%	2%
9. More powers to tackle problems in the private rented sector	86%	8%	3%	3%
10. Support to residents with health needs	85%	7%	5%	4%
11. Helping local residents to get jobs	85%	5%	7%	2%
12. Maintaining diverse communities	74%	15%	5%	5%

Key themes of the Housing Strategy – summary

4.3 Building high quality, well-designed, and genuinely affordable new homes

There was strong support amongst respondents for increasing the supply of good quality, genuinely housing affordable to households with low and middle incomes (Q1 and Q2 in the table). Fourteen respondents added that rented homes for people on low incomes must be genuinely affordable (10%), and social rents were preferred.

Over 80% of respondents supported the proposal to use Council land to build new homes, provided there is support from the residents affected by the proposals (Q3 in the table).

4.4 Making best use of new and existing homes

Ensuring high standards of energy efficiency in new homes (Q4 in the table) received the highest level of support of respondents; 93% indicated it was important or somewhat important. Housing Associations confirmed that ensuring efficient and economical heating, energy and water systems was an important priority for them, and they were keen to work with the Council to help residents improve their fuel use.

Helping people to voluntarily move to smaller, more suitable homes was strongly supported by 82% of respondents (Q5 in the table), with six adding that smaller homes should be available locally so that those downsizing do not have to leave their networks of family and friends (4%).

Giving first priority to Hackney residents for purchasing new homes in the borough, was supported by over 70% of respondents, although around a quarter did not think this was a priority for the Housing Strategy (Q6 in the table). Of those respondents who did not support the proposal, eight felt that it is important for the economy that new homes are available to those who move into the borough from elsewhere, as well as to local people (6%). A majority of respondents taking this view were owner occupiers.

4.5 Addressing standards and affordability in the private rented sector

Respondents strongly supported proposals to improve conditions in the private rented sector (90%) and also for making the case to Government for more powers to tackle poor conditions and affordability in the sector (86%) – Q8 and Q9 in the table.

In the Private tenant focus groups, greater enforcement in the private rented sector was the issue that almost all participants selected as one of their three highest priorities for the Housing Strategy.

The proposal for promoting the development of new homes for private rent, including shared housing, was supported by a majority of respondents (63%), though it was less well supported than other proposals (Q7 in the table). Around one third of respondents did not see the proposal as an important priority for the strategy, and 67% of those who took this view were owner occupiers. From additional comments received to the online survey, the main concern of eight respondents appeared to be that new private rented housing should not be provided at the expense of genuinely affordable social and intermediate housing (5%). Five respondents expressed

concern that newly built private rented homes would suffer some of the same problems found elsewhere in the sector, for example relating to quality and affordability (3%).

Housing Associations made the case that there is a high level of need for accommodation at rents within the Local Housing Allowance caps, particularly for the under-35s without dependent children.

4.6 Meeting people's housing needs and helping tackle housing-related health and support needs

The proposal to work closely with housing and health providers to provide better and earlier support to residents with health needs was supported as a priority by 85% of respondents (Q10 in the table).

4.7 Promoting employment and sustainable communities

Helping residents get jobs was supported as a priority for the Housing Strategy by 85% of respondents (Q11 in the table).

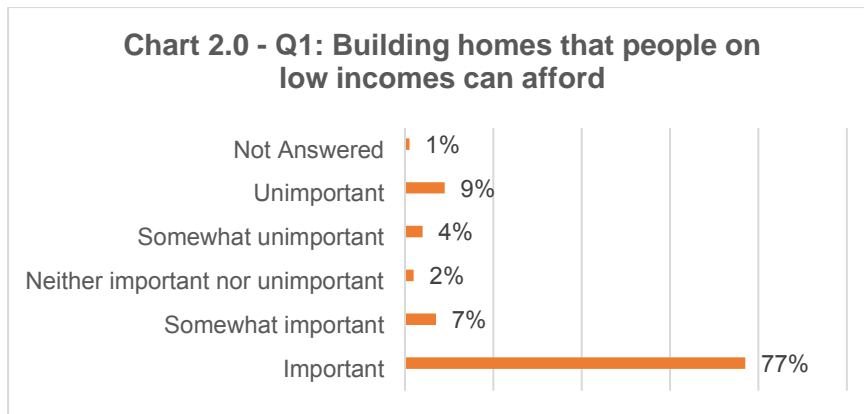
74% of respondents indicated that maintaining our diverse communities is a priority for the Housing Strategy (Q12 in the table).

In response to a survey question asking for any other priorities not mentioned in the consultation proposals, eight respondents stressed the importance of adequate infrastructure and open spaces as an essential part of any new housing developments (9%).

5. Analysis or responses to the proposals

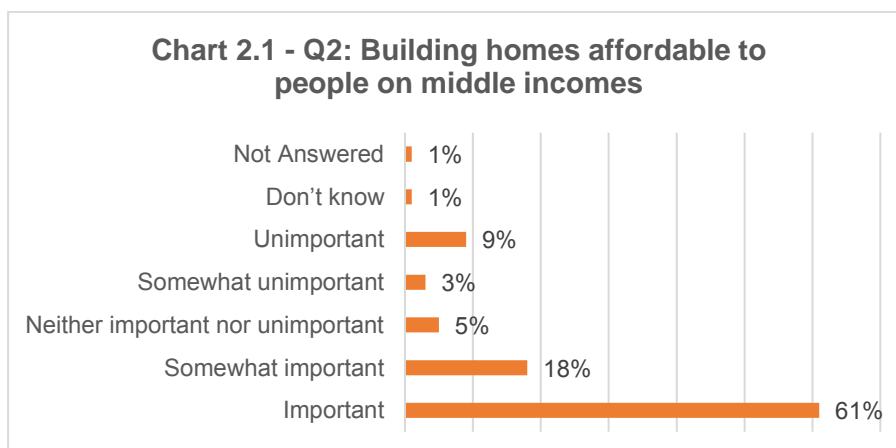
5.1 This section provides a more detailed breakdown of responses to each question in the survey, including a summary of the main additional comments that were made by respondents. (Numbers in brackets indicate the number of individual respondents making the broad point described).

Q1: Building as many council and housing association homes as possible, with rents that people on low incomes can afford to pay



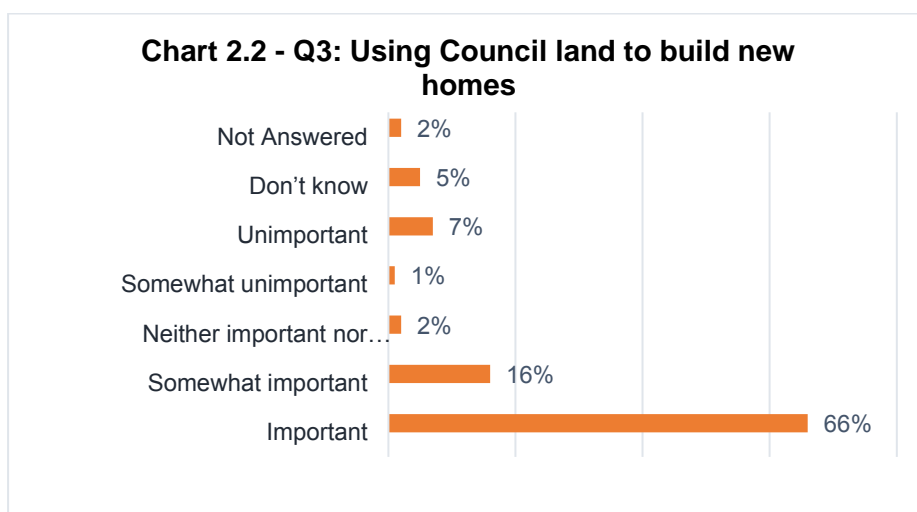
- **84%** of respondents said that this proposal is important or somewhat important for Hackney's housing strategy, with most of these (77%) saying it was important (145 responses in total)
- A number of respondents (14) said that it is particularly important to build new homes that are genuinely affordable to households on low incomes, and many of these specifically preferred social rents (10)
- Some respondents expressed the view that it is equally if not more important is to create inclusive, mixed communities (6)
- Others felt that the council should stop demolishing its own estates (4) and instead make the best use of, and keep maintained, existing social housing (4).

Q2: With our partners, building new homes for shared ownership or for 'London Living Rent', affordable to those on middle incomes (for example households on incomes of between £25,000 and £45,000 per year)



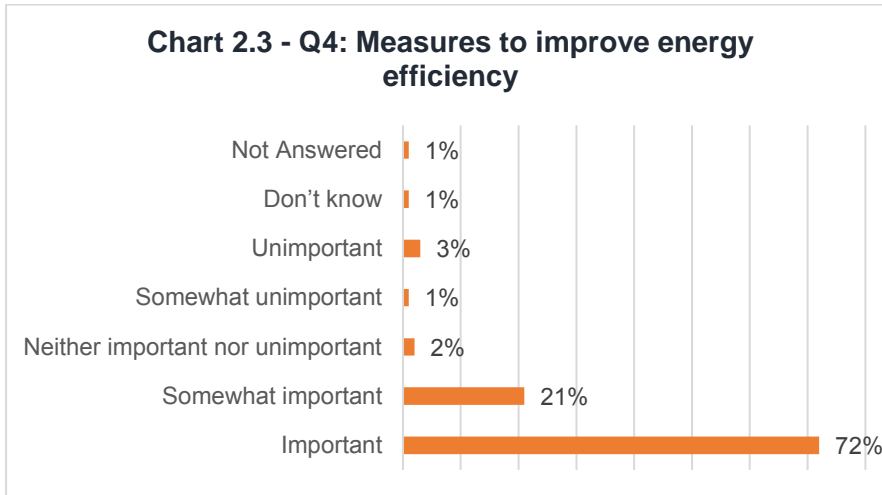
- There was a high level of support for building intermediate homes, with **79%** responding that this was an important or somewhat important priority (145 responses in total).
- A number of respondents said that building social housing was more important than building new homes for people on middle incomes (8), while some wanted to know what the options were for those on incomes of less than £25,000 p.a. (3)
- Some expressed concern about the Shared Ownership and London Living Rent models being too expensive to Hackney residents on medium incomes (4).

Q3: Using Council land to build new homes, where there is support from the residents affected by the proposals



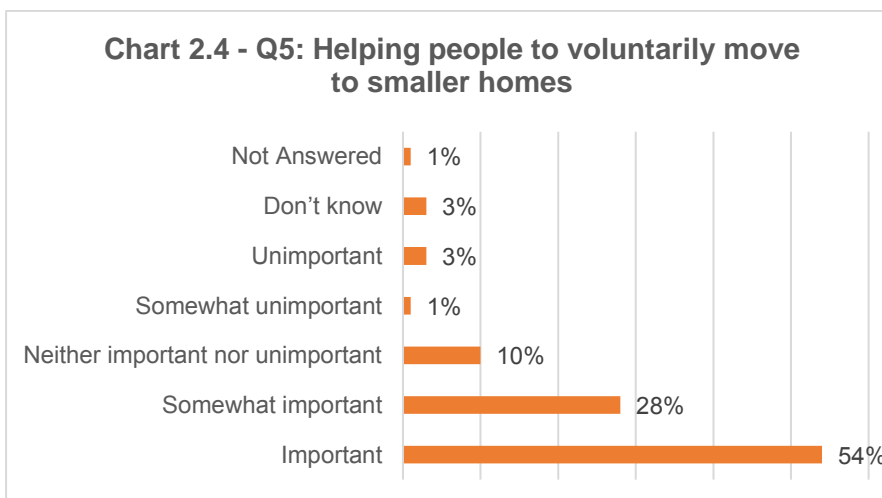
- **82%** of respondents felt that it was important or somewhat important to use Council land to build new homes, where there is support from residents affected by the proposals (146 responses in total)
- 12 Respondents stressed the importance of gaining the support of the residents affected before building new homes, and some expressed the view that there should be a majority of affected residents in favour before proposals proceed (4)
- Some respondents said that retaining community open space was essential (6) and some that Hackney's green spaces should never be used for building (6).

Q4: Ensuring high standards of energy efficiency in new homes, as well as measures to improve the energy efficiency of existing homes, to help provide affordable warmth and reduce fuel poverty



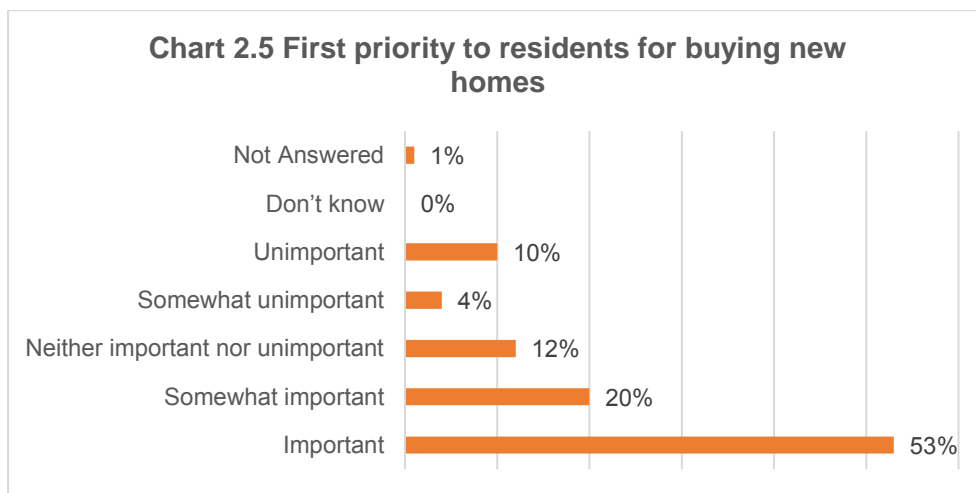
- With **93%** of respondents expressing the view that measures to improve energy efficiency were important or somewhat important, this was one of the most popular proposals in the questionnaire (146 responses in total)
- There were relatively few specific comments regarding this question, but some respondents said that the aspiration could best be achieved by helping refurbish existing homes (4)
- Some felt that the Council needed to be more proactive in this area (2) and that there is a role for the Council in promoting low cost technical improvements (3).

Q5: Helping people to voluntarily move to smaller, more suitable homes, freeing-up larger homes for families



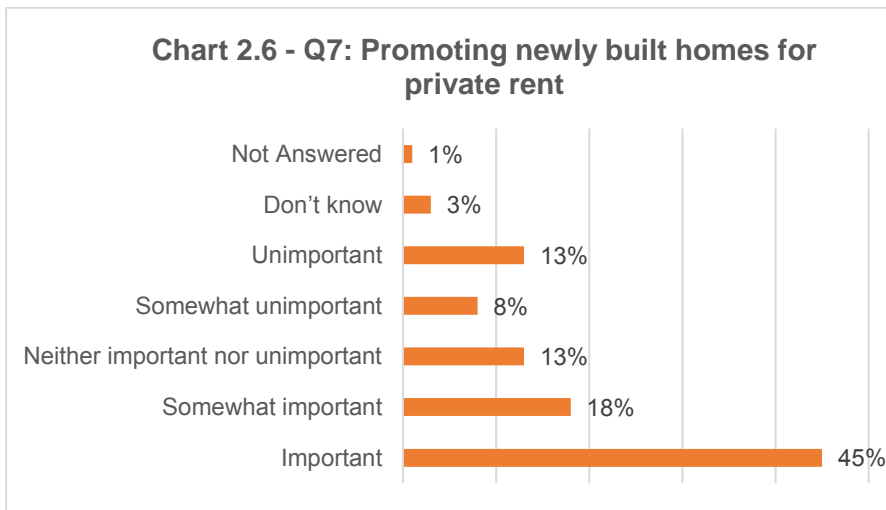
- **82%** of respondents said that it was important or somewhat important for the Council to help people to voluntarily move to a smaller, more suitable home (147 responses in total)
- A number of respondents said that smaller homes should be available locally so that, for example, those downsizing do not have to leave their networks of family and friends (6)
- Some respondents stressed that there should be no pressure placed on people to move (4) and some that there are reasons why some people need an 'extra' room, for example for carers / family members (4)
- Others felt that potential downsizers should be given more incentives or support to move (5)
- Some respondents expressed the view that moves to smaller homes should be compulsory for those with 'extra' rooms, to make the best use of scarce social housing (4).

Q6: Exploring ways of ensuring that Hackney residents are given first priority for the purchase of newly built homes in the borough



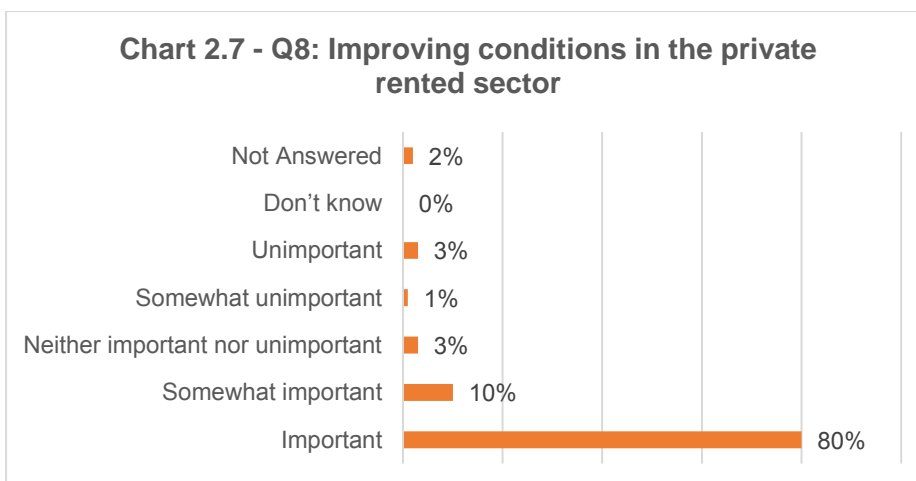
- **71%** of respondents felt that it is important or somewhat important to give Hackney residents first priority for the purchase of new homes (145 responses in total)
- A number of respondents felt it was important that new homes are available to incomers, as well as to local Hackney people (8). Over half of these respondents were owner occupiers (5)
- Some said that local people could not afford Hackney's house prices (4) and that genuinely affordable homes are a more important priority for the Housing Strategy (8)
- On the other hand, some felt that giving priority to local buyers is important to retaining local communities (5), and that new homes should not be available for purchase to overseas investors who may let out the homes or leave them empty (3).

Q7: Promoting the development of new homes specifically for private rent, including shared housing, where these are good quality, well-managed, and affordable to those on low to middle incomes



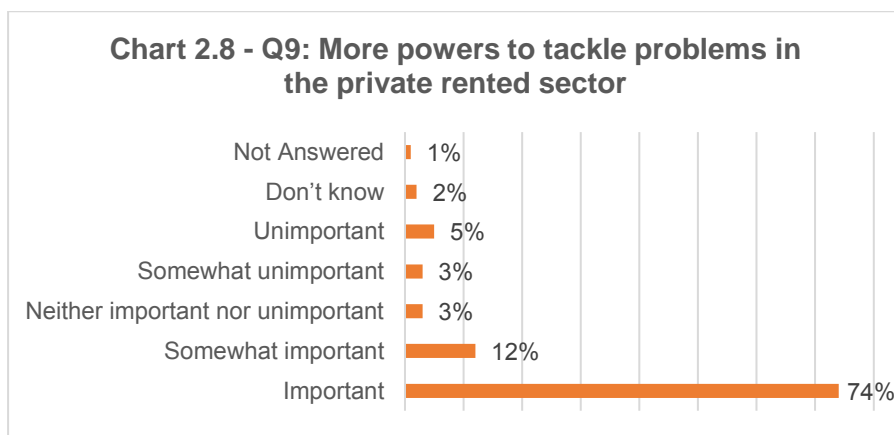
- A majority of **63%** felt that promoting good quality new homes for private renting is important or somewhat important, though there was relatively less support for this proposal compared to most others (146 responses in total)
- 34% of respondents indicated that the proposal was not important for the Housing Strategy, and 67% taking this view (32 out of 48) were owner occupiers
- The main concern was that the provision of private rented housing should not be at the expense of social housing (8)
- Respondents also made the points that privately rented homes should be genuinely affordable (3), that there should be safeguards around quality and affordability (5), and that measures should be in place to tackle rogue landlords (3).

Q 8: Working with landlords and tenants to improve conditions in the private rented sector, and using all the legal powers available to the Council to take action against bad landlords



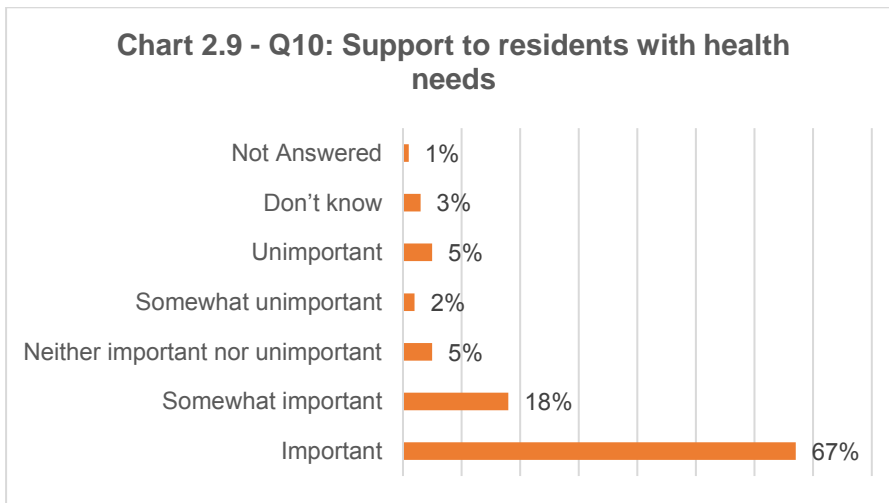
- There was strong support for proposals to improve conditions in the private rented sector, with **90%** of respondents indicating that this was important or somewhat important (144 responses in total)
- Though not specifically mentioned in the question, some respondents expressed the view the Council should introduce a licensing scheme to help enforce high standards in all privately rented properties in the borough (6)
- Others believe that caps on rents in the private sector are needed, as rent levels have become unaffordable (4).

Q9: Making the case to central government for more powers to tackle poor conditions and rapidly increasing rent levels in some privately rented homes



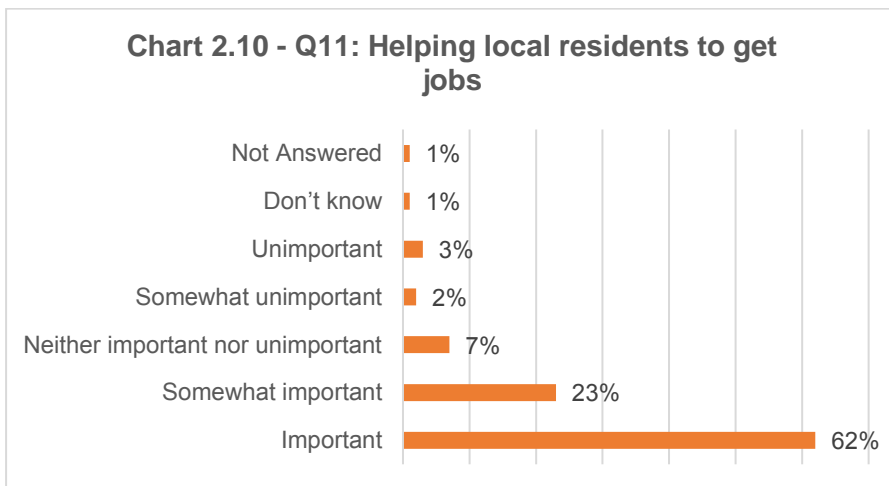
- **86%** of respondents supported the proposal that the Council should make the case to central Government for more powers to tackle problems in the private rented sector (145 responses in total)
- As under Q8, some respondents expressed the view that the Council should make the case for a cap on rents (7)
- Others made the case that rent levels were determined by market forces (3) and that the Council should make the best use of its existing powers rather than seeking additional powers (3)

Q10: Working closely with housing and health providers to identify and provide better and earlier support to residents with health needs



- **85%** of respondents indicate that providing earlier and better support to residents with health needs is an important or somewhat important priority (146 responses in total)
- There was support for joined-up, integrated services including housing and health providers, and across public, voluntary and private agencies / landlords (5)

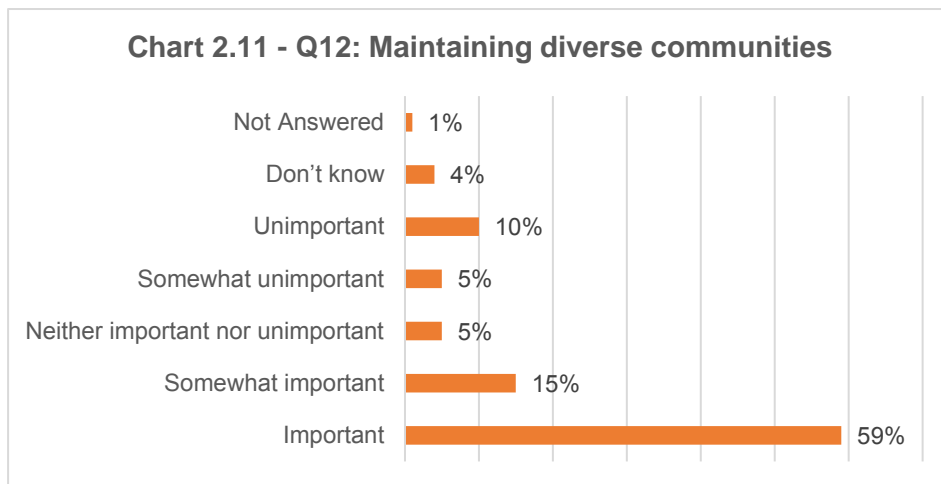
Q11: Expanding the ways that the Council and partners help local residents to get jobs so that they can directly benefit from Hackney's growing economy, including through apprenticeships and training



- **85%** of respondents indicated that helping local residents to get jobs is an important or somewhat important priority for the Housing Strategy (145 responses in total)
- Some respondents emphasised the importance for local employment of providing housing that people on low incomes can afford (5)

- There was support for the Council / businesses offering employment and training opportunities and apprenticeships (6)
- Some respondents said that employment opportunities should focus on local people (3), and that this was particularly important for the younger generation (3).

Q12: Maintaining our diverse communities, for example through estate regeneration and new housing developments, where a mix of people live together in the same neighbourhood



- **74%** of respondents indicated that maintaining our diverse communities was an important or somewhat important priority for the Housing Strategy (145 responses in total)
- Building on their initial response to the question, some respondents re-stated their support for cohesive, mixed communities (5), and some emphasised the role of affordable housing in helping ensure diversity (3)
- There were some respondents who said that Council policies do not support the objective of diverse communities (5), and specifically estate regeneration (demolition and rebuilding) (6) and the need to avoid gentrification (2) were mentioned.

Q13: Are there any other priorities not mentioned above, or in the summary document, that you think should be addressed in the Council's housing strategy?

There were 88 responses to this question and respondents provided a wide range of suggestions, including:

- Stressing the importance of adequate infrastructure and open spaces as an essential part of any new housing developments (8)
- High housing design and quality standards are important on new housing developments (5)
- Some respondents reiterated their support for rent caps in the private rented sector (4)

- Other respondents felt that the Housing Strategy should give priority to tackling gangs and anti-social behavior (4), as well as addressing noise and pollution (3)
- Some respondents expressed the view that the Council should ensure a higher proportion of affordable homes are delivered on housing developments (3)
- Some said that tackling homelessness, including rough sleeping, should be the top priority for the Housing Strategy (3)

Submissions in letter / email format

Three responses were received from residents in email / letter format, rather than completed questionnaires. The main points can be summarised as support for the following issues to be addressed in the Housing Strategy:

- the promotion of not-for-profit, collectively owned housing (1),
- self-build projects as an alternative to other forms of housing development (1)
- high design standards in new developments, and involvement of the local community in design (1)
- restricting demand for housing in the capital to London residents, and providing support for residents who want to leave London (1).

7. Private tenant focus groups

Background

- 7.1 The Council has a good understanding of the main concerns of private tenants in the borough from the consultation and engagement activities that have taken place in recent years, and that are summarised in the list below. However, as part of consultation on the Housing Strategy, private tenant focus groups were set up to seek views on the most important issues for tenants, and on the housing strategy proposals for the next five year.
- i. In 2014/15, the Council carried out a private rented sector stakeholder engagement exercise, to consult all stakeholders on the main issues faced in Hackney's PRS (private rented sector), and what could be done by the Council and its partners to address the issues. The exercise involved a borough-wide online survey, stakeholder focus groups, and face-to-face and telephone interviews. A report of the main findings of this exercise is available on the Council's website: <http://hackney.gov.uk/private-sector-housing>.
 - ii. At a public meeting in March 2016, held as part of 'Hackney – a place for everyone', a tenant representative from Digs (Hackney Renters) was on the panel for the event, and many private tenants raised issues and participated in the discussion.
 - iii. Lead Cabinet Members and senior managers have met regularly with groups representing private tenants in the borough, for example Digs and Hackney Citizens, to discuss issues of concern and possible action.

Focus groups

- 7.2 The Council commissioned consultants, HQN, to facilitate two focus groups with private rented sector (PRS) tenants on 2 May 2017.
- 7.3 Participants were recruited from the Council's Hackney Matters e-panel, which was set up to gather the views and opinions of Hackney residents. A total of 13 attended in all, five came to the morning session and eight to the evening session.
- 7.4 The purpose of the focus groups was to:
- Consult PRS tenants on the priorities and measures set out in the Council's draft Housing Strategy on issues affecting the PRS
 - Ask for views on:
 - The main issues faced by PRS tenants
 - The Council's proposals for improving the PRS
 - What other steps could be taken by the Council, the Council's partners and tenants themselves to improve conditions in the PRS locally.

Summary of participants' views

Private tenants' priorities

- 7.5 Participants agreed with the priorities identified by the Council. Each person was asked to look at the Council's list of priorities and, using post-it notes, indicate their first, second and third priorities. Table one below summarises the rankings they gave.
- 7.6 Unaffordable rents was the issue that most participants saw as a priority and, in the discussions, participants said that the situation in Hackney was getting worse. Even if part of the rent was paid through benefits, tenants usually had to find 'top ups' to pay the full rent. Furthermore it was becoming increasingly difficult to access discretionary housing payments.
- 7.7 The barriers discussed included:
- Landlords and agents preferred to let to single people rather than to couples or to people with children
 - Many landlords did not want to let their properties to tenants on benefits
 - Rapid access to the internet was necessary to know when a property came on the market
 - The shortage of property to rent had several consequences, including competition between potential tenants and 'gazumping' (making a higher offer for a property than someone whose offer has already been accepted by the landlord)
 - Having to raise funds for a sizeable deposit; this made it particularly difficult to move as a significant sum had been sunk into the deposit for a tenant's current accommodation.
 - Letting agents' fees contributed to the 'unaffordability' of PRS housing but there were some concerns that their abolition might result in higher rents or other charges.

Table one: Priorities allocated to issues identified by Hackney Council

	First Priority	Second Priority	Third Priority
A. Instability/insecurity	1	1	1
B. Unaffordable rents	6	3	3
C. Large letting fees	1	1	1
D. Poor conditions	1	1	3
E. Barriers to renting	2	2	2
F. Poor management	1	4	-
G. Neglectful/criminal landlords	1	1	2
H. Other	-	-	Lack of privacy. Landlord enters property at will

Licensing private landlords

- 7.8 There was general support for licensing of Hackney's PRS and participants wanted licensing to be extended to all privately rented properties, not just to smaller HMOs or to properties in just 20% of the borough. Participants, did though, recognise that no licensing scheme would eliminate all rogue landlords and that raising property standards at the bottom end of the market was likely to result in higher rents.
- 7.9 Licensing was supported as long as it was accompanied by rigorous monitoring and enforcement and the associated costs were not passed on to tenants.
- 7.10 In both sessions, participants raised the power imbalance between landlords/letting agents and tenants and the difficulty tenants had in getting information about their rights.

The draft Housing Strategy

- 7.11 Participants considered that the Council's housing strategy proposals broadly addressed the right issues although there were doubts about the Council's ability to achieve some of its objectives, notably on capping rent levels and increasing supply. The support for professional landlords was welcomed.
- 7.12 Participants were asked to look at the Council's proposals and indicate their first, second and third priorities. Table two shows the priorities allocated to each proposal. More enforcement was the issue that almost all participants selected as one of their three priorities. Some explained that they had selected that proposal over capping rents increases and increasing supply on the basis that this was something that was within the Council's powers. Indeed much debate focussed on the *feasibility* against the *importance* of the issues contained in the Council's draft strategy for the PRS. The Council should address this issue when finalising the strategy and clarify the degree of influence the authority has over each of the initiatives.

Table two: priorities allocated to the Council's proposals

	First Priority	Second Priority	Third Priority
A. More enforcement	8	1	2
B. Ban fees	-	2	3
C. Tackle rogue landlords	-	5	3
D. Cap rent increases	2	4	2
E. Increase supply	3	1	3

What more could be done

- 7.13 The discussion covered the lack of properties to rent, high rent levels, barriers to families accessing the sector and the lack of information provided to tenants about their rights. Participants mostly returned to earlier themes, including the need to address the landlord-tenant power imbalance, increase the supply of rented homes and tackle affordability and standards.

- 7.15 Several additional suggestions were made for the Council to consider as part of its Strategy, including:
- The Council could be more active in providing information and advice to PRS tenants
 - The Council could facilitate better relations between tenants and landlords/agents (generally participants wanted a less adversarial relationship)
 - Stating the Council does not support the Right to Buy, which results in badly managed private lettings on estates
 - Creating a Private Tenants' Charter
 - Planning for the increase in the number of older, single people in the Borough who will be renting privately
 - Putting a time limit on landlord responses to issues raised by tenants
 - Improve the rights of 'Property Guardians' living redundant commercial premises, and of 'live-in' lodgers
 - Hackney residents should be given priority access to the PRS in the Borough so that young people could stay and care for their relatives and to make it easier for locally employed people to live locally.

7. Housing Association views

Background

- 7.1 Engagement and consultation with Housing Associations (HAs) included contacting and seeking the views of all individual HAs working in the borough, as well as a specific workshop event for HA representatives. The views expressed by HAs are summarised below.

Please note that the views below have been suggested by HAs or their representatives, and may not necessarily be supported by the Council

Responses from individual housing associations

- 7.2 The Council contacted all Housing Associations working in the borough individually, to seek their views, and to ask that they communicate the details of the Housing Strategy Consultation to their residents.
- 7.3 Three responses were received from individual Housing Associations, two large HAs and one specialist provider, and the views expressed are summarised below.

General

- There was broad support for the Mayor's vision and Council's Housing Strategy proposals from all three HA respondents.

Supply of genuinely affordable new homes

- There is support for a commitment to increase the supply of genuinely affordable homes in the borough, and HAs said that they wanted to work with the Council to achieve this despite the housing challenges.
- HAs are committed to work in partnership with the Council to help deliver the aspiration to improve housing choice and affordability in the borough, across the full range of tenures and price points.
- HAs are keen to work in partnership with local authorities to deliver genuinely affordable housing on Council and other public sector owned land, while driving best value for local tax-payers.
- HAs generally support the proposal to give Hackney residents first priority for the purchase of local homes, though it was stressed that this needs to be developed by a range of partners including local authorities, HAs, private developers and the Mayor of London.
- One HA said that Councils need to be flexible on the tenure make-up of individual schemes, to help deliver attractive, viable schemes in challenging locations.
- The Council should partner with the GLA and TfL to help bring forward small sites for development, with a commitment to the provision of affordable housing.

Private rented sector (PRS)

- There was support for promoting Build to Rent schemes. It was pointed out that some HAs have wide experience of developing homes for private rent and that they can offer high standards of services and management.
- Providing housing for people who are ready to move-on from specialist housing is a real challenge in Hackney. There is very limited social housing available and Local Housing Allowance rates (Housing benefit) mean that there is little suitable affordable housing available in the private rented sector for this purpose.
- There is a high need for PRS accommodation at rents within the LHA caps, particularly for the under-35s without dependent children (who are only eligible for the 'shared accommodation rate'). The Council could consider a pilot project where sharers between 18-35 could use their skills and talents to help develop their own community.
- One HA supported rent caps in the PRS to help tackle affordability issues.
- The aspiration to address standards and affordability in the private rented sector could be expanded to look at the home ownership sector, though it was acknowledged that this would require significant investment and potentially new powers.

Housing-related health and support needs

- The HAs responding already provide welfare benefit and health related support to their residents, and are keen to partner with the Council to work together to help tackle housing-related health and support needs.
- HAs support the Council's aspirations regarding Supported Housing, but highlighted that the current uncertainty over revenue funding remains a significant barrier.
- One HA wanted to see greater resources to help prevent residents from needing to stay in hospital, as well as for mediating between young people and their families to enable them to stay longer if they are threatened with homelessness.
- The Council needs to maintain resources for the 'Homelessness Pathway', at a time when rough sleeping is increasing.

Employment initiatives and sustainability

- HAs also carry out initiatives to promote employment and would support working with the Council and other providers to help residents into employment.
- Greater emphasis is needed within the Housing Strategy, and related local strategies, on overall community infrastructure and amenity requirements such as schools, health centres, and open spaces.
- The Council should encourage and incentivise local businesses to invest further in employment for local people, particularly for people with disabilities.

- The Council should promote the need for investment in helping offer skills and employability training following the withdrawal of EU structural funds post-Brexit.
- One HA expressed support for the proposal to create affordable workspaces on estates.

Energy efficiency

- It was confirmed that ensuring efficient and economical heating, energy and water systems is a key objective for HAs, helping to combat fuel poverty, as well as benefits for the environment.
- One HA said that the 'Shine' service is helping residents to improve their fuel use, but that small HAs and other landlords would welcome advice or assistance from the Council regarding procurement as well as energy efficiency advice that could be passed on to residents.

Better Homes Partnership event

7.4 The Council's partnership with affordable housing providers working in the borough, the Better Homes Partnership (BHP), was relaunched in April 2017. For the first meeting, an event was held on 4 April 2017, to present the Housing Strategy proposals and seek the views, suggestions and ideas of Housing Association representatives attending.

7.5 Three breakout groups were arranged and a summary of the top 5-6 ideas put forward from each group is provided below.

Group 1: Building high quality, well-designed, and genuinely affordable new homes, and strategically responding to worsening housing affordability

7.6 The top five ideas from this discussion were:

- i. Further consideration should be given to options for partnerships with housing associations regarding the delivery of new affordable homes, for example based on discounted surplus Council or other public sector land, surplus council Right to Buy / forced sales receipts, or strategic partnership loans.
- ii. Intensification of empty and poorly-used land, with a greater focus on infill sites of varying sizes; enabling a portfolio approach to social housing schemes, to consider redevelopment as a package; and a greater focus on upward development through rooftop extensions.
- iii. Use of Compulsory Purchase Orders (CPOs) to assemble sites for Housing Associations. Wider use of Local Development Orders with affordable housing targets on strategic sites.
- iv. A continuous planning policy and site allocations process, with the Local Plan to be 'iterative' rather than fixed for a number of years. The aim would be to help ensure that flexible and responsive planning policy and site allocations – to ensure viability of sites between Plans, and greater certainty over requirements of each site.
- v. Construction technologies and skills/training – the need to further explore potential for off-site pre-fabricated and modular construction, and the need to use the apprenticeship levy on all construction sites. The aim would be to help tie contractors

into funding new skills, including the greater use of s106 agreements to lock down employment and training requirements.

Group 2: Making best use of new and existing homes

7.7 The top six ideas from this discussion were:

- i. Some Housing Associations would like all affordable housing providers working in Hackney to move to a 'common housing register' with the Council, to make best use of the lettings that become available in the borough.
- ii. It was felt by some that Fixed Term Tenancies could be helpful in making the best use of stock, if introduced and used sensitively.
- iii. The development of more Build to Rent was welcomed, as a means of raising funds for social housing, though it was felt that there should be a range of differentiated rents, including intermediate housing targeted at key workers.
- iv. Given the barriers to developing in Hackney (e.g. high land prices and financial viability pressures), there was broad support among Housing Associations for providing new homes outside Hackney, with nominations strictly reserved for the Council.
- v. Social housing providers should maximise the development potential of the existing stock, for example developing infill housing on estates. The group was also in favour of developing housing on underused, poor quality land designated as Green belt.

Group 3: Meeting people's housing needs and helping tackle housing-related health and support needs

7.8 The top five ideas from this discussion were:

- i. Mapping of community wellbeing resources and initiatives in the borough in order to ensure resources are used more effectively and to improve referrals and collaboration across HAs. Also, the potential to submit joint funding bids if working across a similar geography.
- ii. The need for Health, Housing and Adult Social Care to work more closely together. There is a need to step back and identify and analyse the lessons of the past and identify the ways in which joint working arrangements could work better in the future.
- iii. Preventative action – use of a model such as 'make every contact count' whereby staff across all departments and multiple external agencies (contractors, caretakers etc.) are trained to be confident to report potential safeguarding issues.
- iv. Improved processes for 'dual diagnoses' in the borough to better deal with complex needs.
- v. Explore further the opportunities for joint funding and partnership working across HAs and the Council.

8. Conclusion

- 8.1 The findings from the Consultation show that the Council's Housing Strategy proposals are, in most cases, supported by a large majority of respondents to the survey and other stakeholders.
- 8.2 In terms of the 12 individual proposals in the questionnaire survey, all but one of these were supported as important for the Strategy by more than 70% of respondents.
- 8.3 In the case of Q7, Promoting newly built homes for private rent, a majority of 63% supported the proposal, but this was a lower level of support than other proposals. From the additional comments received, there appear to be two concerns about this proposal. The main concern is that new private rented housing should not be provided at the expense of genuinely affordable social and intermediate housing, Some others expressed concern that newly built private rented homes would suffer some of the same problems found elsewhere in the sector, for example relating to quality and affordability.
- 8.5 Participants at the two focus groups for private tenants also broadly supported the Council's Housing Strategy proposals for the private rented sector. Participants were aware that the Council currently has limited powers in relation to affordability of rents in the sector or security of tenure, but strongly supported greater enforcement powers for the Council to help raise standards in the sector.
- 8.6 Housing Associations too, broadly supported the Council's Housing Strategy proposals, and expressed their willingness to work in partnership with the Council to help meet the housing challenges in Hackney over the next five years and beyond. They provided a wide range of helpful and constructive ideas and comments that will be taken into account in developing the Housing Strategy.
- 8.7 The Council will take into account the above concerns, and all the other comments received, in developing and finalising the Housing Strategy and action plan by autumn, 2017.
- 8.6 We thank all those who took the time to respond to the Council's Housing Strategy Consultation, or who participated in events and shared their ideas and suggestions.

Appendix 1

Housing Strategy Consultation – Survey Questionnaire

HACKNEY

A Place for everyone

Meeting the
challenges...together



Housing Strategy Questionnaire

Hackney Council would like to hear what you think our housing priorities should be so we can make sure that Hackney can be a place that works for everyone.

Please take the time to read the attached Housing Strategy proposals, which outlines the six key themes we will be working on over the next five years, before answering this survey.

The consultation closes on 22 May 2017; please return paper copies in the freepost envelope provided.

For more information about this consultation, or to respond online, please visit our website:

www.hackney.gov.uk/housing-strategy

Alternatively get in touch:



Tel: **Chris Smith** on **020 8356 7980**

Email: consultation@hackney.gov.uk

have  say

 **Hackney**

How important are the issues listed below to you?

Building high-quality, well-designed, and genuinely affordable new homes

The supply of housing in London has not kept pace with the number of homes needed. The shortage of homes has led to very high house prices and rents, unaffordable to those on low to medium incomes. The Council, with its partners, will continue to do everything it can to build the supply of new homes that are genuinely affordable, high-quality and well-designed. [For more information, please see page 6 in the Housing Strategy consultation summary document]

1. Building as many council and housing association homes as possible, with rents that people on low incomes can afford to pay.

- Important
- Somewhat important
- Neither important nor unimportant
- Somewhat unimportant
- Unimportant
- Don't know

Please use this box for further comment

2. With our partners, building new homes for shared ownership or for 'London Living Rent', affordable to those on middle incomes (for example households on incomes of between £25,000 and £45,000 per year).

- Important
- Somewhat important
- Neither important nor unimportant
- Somewhat unimportant
- Unimportant
- Don't know

Please use this box for further comments

3. Using Council land to build new homes, where there is support from the residents affected by the proposals

- Important
- Somewhat important
- Neither important nor unimportant
- Somewhat unimportant
- Unimportant
- Don't know

Please use this box for further comments

Making best use of new and existing homes

The majority of social rented homes let each year are from the existing housing stock. In addition to building new homes, it is essential that we make best use of the housing stock of all tenures in the borough to help meet the housing needs and aspirations of residents. It is equally important for our existing and future residents that we help ensure that homes are well-maintained, decent and energy efficient. [For more information, please see page 8 in the summary document]

4. Ensuring high standards of energy efficiency in new homes, as well as measures to improve the energy efficiency of existing homes, to help provide affordable warmth and reduce fuel poverty.

- Important
- Somewhat important
- Neither important nor unimportant
- Somewhat unimportant
- Unimportant
- Don't know

Please use this box for further comments

5. Helping people to voluntarily move to smaller, more suitable homes, freeing up larger homes for families.

- Important
- Somewhat important
- Neither important nor unimportant
- Somewhat unimportant
- Unimportant
- Don't know

Please use this box for further comments

6. Exploring ways of ensuring that Hackney residents are given first priority for the purchase of newly built homes in the borough.

- Important
- Somewhat important
- Neither important nor unimportant
- Somewhat unimportant
- Unimportant
- Don't know

Please use this box for further comments

Addressing standards and affordability in the private rented sector

While a majority of private tenants in Hackney are satisfied with their homes, there are sub-standard properties, suffering from poor conditions and management. Tenants also experience insecurity of tenure, often with six-month tenancies, and may be faced with high and unpredictable rent rises. The Council and its partners will use all available powers to bear down on rogue landlords and support tenants who are suffering poor conditions. We will also make the case to Government for new powers to help tackle poor conditions and high rent rises. [For more information, please see page 9 in the summary document]

7. Promoting the development of new homes specifically for private rent, including shared housing, where these are good-quality, well-managed, and affordable to those on low to middle incomes.

- Important
- Somewhat important
- Neither important nor unimportant
- Somewhat unimportant
- Unimportant
- Don't know

Please use this box for further comments

8. Working with landlords and tenants to improve conditions in the private rented sector, and using all the legal powers available to the Council to take action against bad landlords.

- Important
- Somewhat important
- Neither important nor unimportant
- Somewhat unimportant
- Unimportant
- Don't know

Please use this box for further comments

9. Making the case to central government for more powers to tackle poor conditions and rapidly increasing rent levels in some privately rented homes.

- Important
- Somewhat important
- Neither important nor unimportant
- Somewhat unimportant
- Unimportant
- Don't know

Please use this box for further comments

Meeting people's housing needs and helping tackle housing-related health and support needs

Housing has an important role in helping meet the health needs of residents, for example in improving poor housing conditions and helping tackle social isolation. The Council and partners also provide support to residents, by helping people to remain active, independent and healthy in their own homes, or by providing specialist supported housing. [For more information, please see page 10 in the summary document]

10. Working closely with housing and health providers to identify and provide better and earlier support to residents with health needs.

- Important
- Somewhat important
- Neither important nor unimportant
- Somewhat unimportant
- Unimportant
- Don't know

Please use this box for further comments

Promoting employment and sustainable communities

We know from a recent survey that most Hackney residents are positive about and satisfied with the borough as a place to live, but many also think that Hackney has become a more unequal borough. The housing strategy will focus on tackling the widening inequality that threatens Hackney's unique sense of diversity, cohesion, and community. The Council and housing providers have an important part to play in advising and supporting residents to find work and training, including promoting the initiatives that are available. [For more information, please see page 11 in the Summary document]

11. Expanding the ways that the Council and partners help local residents to get jobs so that they can directly benefit from Hackney's growing economy, including through apprenticeships and training.

- Important
- Somewhat important
- Neither important nor unimportant
- Somewhat unimportant
- Unimportant
- Don't know

Please use this box for further comments

12. Maintaining our diverse communities, for example through estate regeneration and new housing developments, where a mix of people live together in the same neighbourhood.

- Important
- Somewhat important
- Neither important nor unimportant
- Somewhat unimportant
- Unimportant
- Don't know

Please use this box for further comments

Other priorities

13. Are there any other priorities not mentioned above, or in the summary document, that you think should be addressed in the Council's Housing Strategy?

Please write in the box, and briefly say why you think these priorities are important:

About you

This information will help us understand our service users and residents. All information is used under the strict controls of the 1998 Data Protection Act.

14. Are you:

- A Council tenant
- A Housing Association tenant
- A private tenant
- In temporary (short-term) accommodation
- An owner occupier (including owning the freehold or leasehold or shared ownership)
- In temporary (short-term) accommodation
- Other (please give details)

15. Gender:

- Male
- Female

If you prefer to use your own term please provide this here: _____

Is your gender identity different to the sex you were assumed to be at birth?

- Yes it's different
- No it's the same
-

16. Age: What is your age group?

- Under 16
- 16 – 17
- 18 – 24
- 25 – 34
- 35 – 44
- 45 – 54
- 55 – 64
- 65 – 74
- 75 – 84
- 85+

17. Ethnicity: Are you

- Asian or Asian British
- Black or Black British
- White or White British
- Mixed background
- Other ethnic group
- Other, please tell us if you wish:

18. Religion or belief: are you or do you have?

- Atheist/ no religious belief
- Buddhist
- Charedi
- Christian
- Hindu
- Jewish
- Muslim
- Secular beliefs
- Sikh
- Other, please tell us if you wish:

19. Caring responsibilities: A carer is someone who spends a significant proportion of their time providing unpaid support to a family member, partner or friend who is ill, frail disabled or has mental health or substance misuse problems.

Do you regularly provide unpaid support caring for someone?

- Yes
- No

20. Disability

Do you consider yourself to be disabled?

- Yes
- No

13. Sexual orientation: Are you...

- | | | | |
|-----------------------------------|---|---|--|
| <input type="checkbox"/> Bisexual | <input type="checkbox"/> Lesbian or Gay woman | <input type="checkbox"/> Other (please state if you wish) | <input type="checkbox"/> Prefer not to say |
| <input type="checkbox"/> Gay man | <input type="checkbox"/> Heterosexual | | |
-

14. Housing tenure: which of these best describes the ownership of your home?

- | | | | |
|---|--|---|--|
| <input type="checkbox"/> Being bought on a mortgage | <input type="checkbox"/> Rented (Local Authority/ Council) | <input type="checkbox"/> Shared ownership (part rent/ part buy) | <input type="checkbox"/> Don't know |
| <input type="checkbox"/> Owned outright | <input type="checkbox"/> Rented (Housing Association/ Trust) | <input type="checkbox"/> Other (Please Write in) | <input type="checkbox"/> Prefer not to say |
| <input type="checkbox"/> Rented (private) | | | |

15. Work status: which of the following best applies to you?

- | | | | |
|---|---|--|---|
| <input type="checkbox"/> Working - Full-time (30+ hrs) | <input type="checkbox"/> Not working (i.e. under 8 hrs) | <input type="checkbox"/> Registered unemployed | <input type="checkbox"/> Other (please specify) |
| <input type="checkbox"/> Working - Part-time (9-29 hrs) | <input type="checkbox"/> Looking after family/ home | <input type="checkbox"/> Unemployed but not registered | |
| <input type="checkbox"/> Self-employed | <input type="checkbox"/> Retired | <input type="checkbox"/> Full-time education/ training | <input type="checkbox"/> Prefer not to say |
-

Contact details

The following details are optional, but please let us have your contact details if you would like to receive feedback on the outcome of consultation.

Are you willing to be contacted by the Council regarding any of the issues raised above?

- Yes
 No

Name:

Email:

Address (including postcode):

If you would like to find out what this document says please tick the appropriate box, put your name, address and phone number at the bottom of this page and return it to the address below.

এই দলিলে কি লেখা আছে সে সম্পর্কে যদি আপনি জানতে চান তাহলে অনুগ্রহ করে উপযুক্ত বাক্সে টিক দিন, এই পাতার নীচে আপনার নাম, ঠিকানা ও ফোন নম্বর লিখুন এবং এটি নীচের ঠিকানায় ফেরত পাঠান। (Bengali)

如果你想知道這分文件的詳細內容，請在方框內打鉤，在本頁下面寫下你的名字、地址和電話號碼並寄到下面的地址。 (Chinese)

Si vous désirez connaître le contenu de ce document, veuillez cocher la case appropriée et indiquer votre nom, adresse et numéro de téléphone au bas de cette page et la renvoyer à l'adresse indiquée ci-dessous. (French)

Ger hun dixwazin bizanibin ku ev dokument çî dibêje, ji kerema xwe qutîka minasib îşaret bikin, nav, navnîşan û hejmara telefona xwe li jêrê rûpel binivîsin û wê ji navnîşana jêrîn re bişînin. (Kurdish)

Jeśli chcesz dowiedzieć się, jaka jest treść tego dokumentu, zaznacz odpowiednie pole, wpisz swoje nazwisko, adres i nr telefonu w dolnej części niniejszej strony i przeslij na poniższy adres. (Polish)

Haddii aad jeclaan lahayd in aad ogaato waxa dokumeentigani sheegayo fadlan calaamadi godka ku haboon, ku qor magacaaga, cinwaanka iyo telefoon lambarkaaga boggan dhankiisa hoose ka dibna ku celi cinwaanka hoose. (Somali)

Si desea saber de lo que trata este documento, marque la casilla correspondiente, escriba su nombre, dirección y número de teléfono al final de esta página y envíela a la siguiente dirección. (Spanish)

Bu dökümanda ne anlatıldığını öğrenmek istiyorsanız, lütfen uygun kutuyu işaretleyerek, adınızı, adresinizi ve telefon numaranızı bu sayfanın alt kısmına yazıp, aşağıdaki adrese gönderin. (Turkish)

(Urdu) اگر آپ یہ جاننا چاہتے ہیں کہ دستاویز میں کیا لکھا ہے تو ازراہ کرم مناسب باکس میں صحیح کا نشان لگائے اور اپنا نام، پتہ اور فون نمبر اس صفحہ کے نیچے لکھئے اور اسے نیچے دیئے گئے پتہ پر واپس بھیج دیجئے۔
Nếu bạn muốn biết tài liệu này nói gì hãy đánh dấu vào hộp thích hợp, điền tên, địa chỉ và số điện thoại của bạn vào cuối trang này và gửi lại theo địa chỉ dưới đây. (Vietnamese)

If you would like this document in any of the following formats or in another language not listed above, please complete and send the form to the address below.

In large print

In Braille

On Disk

On audio tape

In another language, please state:

Name:	
Address	
Telephone:	

Appendix 2

Housing Strategy Consultation – summary document

HACKNEY
A Place for *everyone*

Meeting the
challenges...together

A new Housing Strategy for Hackney

Tell us your views on housing in Hackney, what you think Hackney Council should focus on and help shape the future of your community.

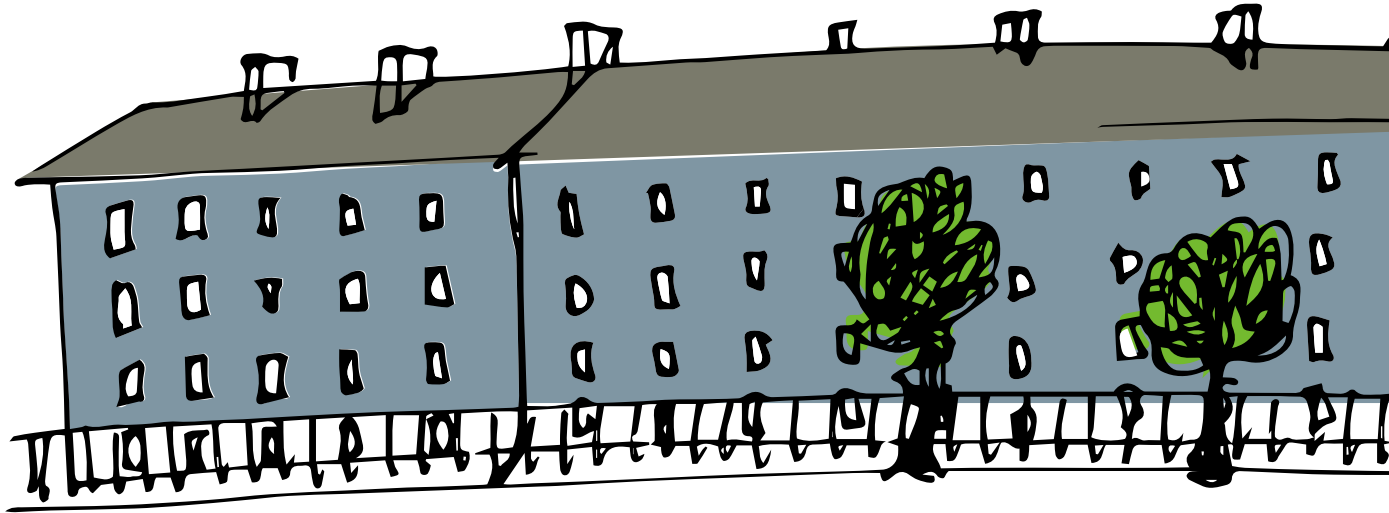




To respond to the consultation, please complete the questionnaire at:
www.consultation.hackney.gov.uk

If you wish to respond by post, please contact **Chris Smith** on **020 8356 7980**
to request a copy of the questionnaire.

Closing date: 22 May 2017



A Hackney that works for everyone

Hackney is experiencing an unprecedented housing crisis. Despite the Council's housebuilding programme and other action, we face a range of challenges as a result of national policy, market pressures and changing demand for housing.

In our borough and across our city, too many people cannot take advantage of the opportunities London offers because of the lack of genuinely affordable, high-quality and secure housing. We know you feel the same. Our year-long engagement with residents, 'Hackney: a place for everyone', showed that housing affordability is the top concern for you.

The cost of buying or privately renting a home in Hackney has risen even more sharply than in other boroughs, and over 12,000 people are on our waiting list for social housing. At the same time, Government welfare reforms mean those on families on lower incomes are struggling to make ends meet.

A national problem needs national solutions. But in Hackney, we are not prepared to stand by and do nothing. We want to build as many homes as we can, target our resources towards those that need them most and campaign for the changes that will help tackle the chronic shortage of affordable housing in London.

My vision is a Hackney that works for everyone. That's why we're developing a new housing strategy that helps more families have the home they deserve. It will set out the huge challenge before us, and the priorities and actions the Council and its partners can take over the next five years to help meet those challenges – such as building on our track record of delivering thousands of genuinely affordable homes, innovative ways to help residents priced out of the market onto the housing ladder, and improving our ability to tackle poor standards and practices by private landlords and letting agents.



But most importantly, we want to know what you think. This consultation gives you the chance to tell us what our priorities should be so we can make sure what we are doing reflects your views and that Hackney can be a place that works for everyone.

To respond to the consultation, please complete the questionnaire at: www.consultation.hackney.gov.uk

Philip Glanville
Mayor of Hackney

Our Approach

The Housing Strategy has a key role in helping meet the Mayor's vision that everyone in Hackney has a genuinely affordable, good quality, and stable home. It will build on what residents have told us already, and also recognise the wider contribution that the Council and other housing providers and partners can make towards building mixed and sustainable communities and improving the health and wellbeing of residents.

Actions and options for the Housing Strategy

The actions (things we have already begun doing) and options (things we propose to do) in this paper set out how the Council and its partners aim to meet the Mayor's housing-related ambitions over the next five years.

These are grouped into six key themes:

1. Building high quality, well-designed, and genuinely affordable new homes
2. Strategic response to worsening housing affordability
3. Making best use of new and existing homes
4. Addressing standards and affordability in the private rented sector
5. Meeting people's housing needs and helping tackle housing-related health and support needs
6. Promoting employment and sustainable communities

In delivering the strategy, the Council will work closely with partners such as housing associations, other London boroughs, and with the Mayor of London, who has ambitious aspirations for tackling the lack of genuinely affordable housing, well as the shortage of new homes more generally.



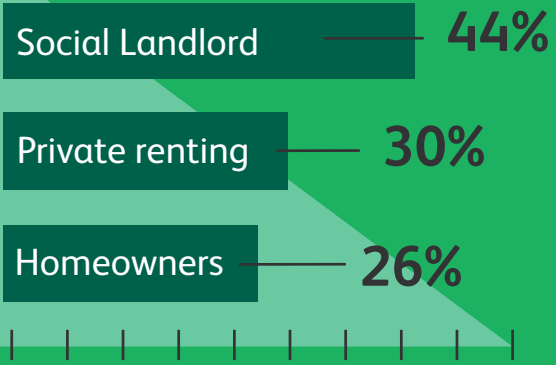
new affordable homes delivered by Hackney Council and it's partners in the past 5 years

55,000

more people living in Hackney since 2001



HACKNEY'S tenure



2800 HOMELESS

people living in temporary accommodation

12,000 PEOPLE WAITING

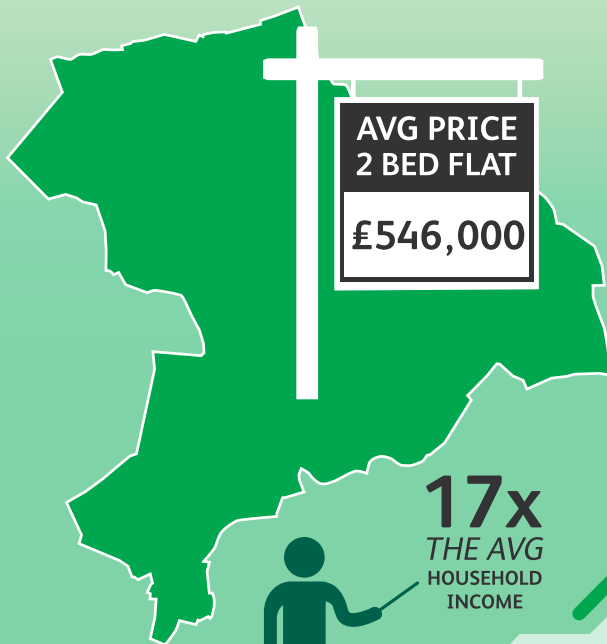
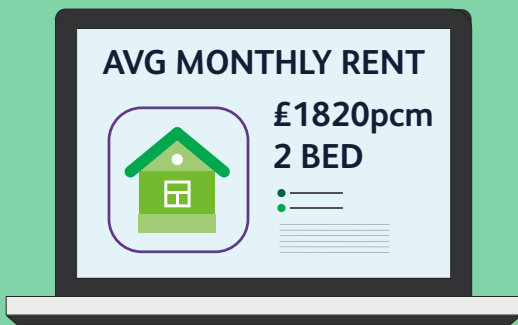
for a home on Hackney Council's housing register



IN HACKNEY...



Private rent levels have risen 36% since 2011



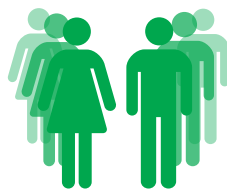
House prices have risen 71% in the past 5 years

17x THE AVG HOUSEHOLD INCOME



UP TO THE YEAR

2031



HACKNEY'S POPULATION will increase to

312,000

HACKNEY WILL NEED 1700 NEW HOMES EVERY YEAR

Hackney will deliver 3000+ new homes in the next 10 years



1

Building high quality, well-designed, and genuinely affordable new homes

We are doing everything we can to increase the supply of genuinely affordable housing in the borough, both by building our own new homes and by working with housing associations. Over the past five years, the supply of new social housing and shared ownership homes in Hackney was the third highest of all boroughs in London, and one of the top five highest in the country.

To meet demand, we estimate that 1,750 social and private homes need to be built each year between now and 2033. In 2015, 1,640 homes were built.

Despite our track record, we need to do more, with over 12,000 households waiting for a home on the Council's housing register, and over 2,800 homeless households living in temporary accommodation.

The Mayor's manifesto sets out commitments to increase the number of genuinely affordable homes being built in Hackney – including laying the groundwork to double the number of homes built by the Council from 2018 and starting work on a plan to build 500 affordable private rental homes.

The need for more new genuinely affordable housing in Hackney has never been higher, but new homes must also meet high design and quality standards. Standards, including those relating to density, environmental sustainability and health, will be reviewed and updated as part of the review of the Local Plan.

We want to address this by:

- Continuing to build our own genuinely affordable homes for rent and low cost home ownership
- Working more closely with housing associations, including considering funding housing association housebuilding using our Right to Buy receipts and money from the forced sale of council homes, as well as working together to manage the impact of the extension of Right to Buy to their tenants, who may understandably want to take up this offer
- Considering whether we should set up a local housing company to deliver new homes, with the advantage that the company would operate under different regulations and financial rules and could enable more homes to be built
- Given the changes in the housing market, have more flexible Council guidance regarding how we use developer money (commuted sums) for building new homes 'off-site', having regard to mixed and sustainable communities, which could enable more homes to be built
- With housing providers and other partners, delivering new Supported Housing in Hackney that meets the borough's highest unmet needs
- Campaigning for national policy changes that would help us fund new homes, including raising the Government's artificial cap on the Council's borrowing, and retaining full receipts from Right to Buy sales and the forced sale of council homes – and ensuring these homes are replaced like-for-like
- Ensure that design and quality standards help deliver new homes that meet the needs of people with disabilities, or can be easily adapted
- Achieve high quality and design standards in all the Council's own housebuilding programmes.

2

Strategic response to worsening housing affordability

Housing affordability is the top concern for residents, with much of the market unaffordable to residents on low and middle incomes.

The Mayor of London's Affordable Homes Programme will provide funding to help some housing schemes achieve 40% or more affordable housing, and his London Living Rent policy will set rents for some new homes at a third of average local incomes. The Mayor's London Living Rent homes are aimed at private or social renters earning less than £60,000 per year to help them save for a deposit to purchase the home on shared ownership terms.

Most new private housing is currently built for sale, even though it may be purchased by investors and let to private tenants. Private renting is often the only alternative available to those who are unable to take a first step on the housing ladder. Homes built specifically for rent (Build to Rent) could provide better quality, better managed, and potentially more affordable housing. Such schemes could include some homes let at below-market rents, affordable to those on middle incomes. In Hackney, where there is a shortage of privately rented housing for families, this new programme may be a first step in providing additional homes.

Government welfare reforms have introduced new caps and freezes to benefit levels, which have removed the link between benefits and market rents, including a further reduction in the overall Benefit Cap to £23,000, and a four-year freeze in the Local Housing Allowance rate. These changes will make it increasingly difficult for some Hackney residents receiving benefits to meet their housing costs.

Younger people under 35 face specific issues trying to access relatively affordable housing in London. Many younger singles and couples share housing in the private rented sector and, if in receipt of housing benefit, may only be eligible for the Shared Accommodation Rate.

We want to address this by:

- With partners, driving increases in the supply of new genuinely affordable homes, including social housing, London Living Rent and shared ownership
- Being the first borough to see 500 homes for 'London Living Rent' built, with rent levels set at one third of the local average incomes
- Reviewing the approach to assessing the financial viability of new housing developments, through the planning system, in order to maximise affordable housing, in line with the Mayor of London's proposals
- Considering whether good quality, well-managed shared housing can help address affordability, especially for younger single people and couples
- Considering how Build to Rent could improve affordability and options for Hackney residents, whether in developments by social housing associations and private developers or the Council's own housebuilding programmes – including some at London Living Rent.

3

Making best use of new and existing homes

Over 40% of Hackney's housing stock is social housing, either managed by the Council or by housing associations. The majority of social housing lettings each year are from the existing housing stock, rather than from newly built homes.

Government housing policies – such as the forced sale of Council homes to fund the extension of Right to Buy to housing association tenants – mean the stock of genuinely affordable social housing could be significantly reduced.

There are widespread concerns about the number of new private homes in central and inner London sold to investors, often from overseas, rather than sold to Londoners – with some left empty to make a profit rather than used as a place to live. The Mayor of London has announced a comprehensive inquiry into the impact of foreign investment on London's housing market, including how many homes are sold to buyers based overseas and how many are kept empty.

We want to address this by:

- Campaigning against Government measures to reduce the stock of social housing in the borough, such as the forced sale of council homes and extension of Right to Buy unless all these homes are replaced like-for-like, and taking all measures possible to lessen their impact
- If the policy is implemented, negotiating with the Government to maximise the money we keep from the forced sale of our homes to help fund the building of replacement homes within the borough
- Developing an agreement with housing associations to minimise the impact of Right to Buy sales and maximising like-for-like replacement, within the borough, of homes sold

- Working with the Mayor of London, considering how to give Hackney residents first priority for the purchase of newly built homes ahead of overseas and other investors – including through planning measures to deter homes being left empty
- Ensuring the mix of bedroom sizes in new developments meet existing and future housing needs
- Exploring how to improve energy efficiency in existing Council homes, to reduce fuel poverty
- Review the Council grant regime for offering incentives to owners of private sector empty properties, and the enforcement options for bringing homes back into use
- Making sure empty Council homes awaiting demolition on estates undergoing regeneration are used for temporary accommodation, unless they are unfit for occupation
- With partners, reviewing whether existing supported housing is meeting the needs of priority residents; offering help to older people who could benefit from moving into supported housing, and reviewing the type, bedroom size and affordability of 'move-on' properties from supported housing
- Preparing for Government requirements for most new Council tenants to have a fixed-term tenancy – including speaking to residents about alternative options.

4

Addressing standards and affordability in the private rented sector

Around one third of Hackney residents now live in the private sector – double that of ten years ago. While a majority of private renters in Hackney are satisfied with their homes, there are too many properties suffering from poor conditions and management. Renters also face insecurity, often with six-month tenancies and high or unpredictable rent rises.

We work with landlords to help raise standards and meet demand by providing training and forums, and we will increase our enforcement action to tackle the minority who break the law.

Government housing reform proposals include new measures that could help tackle the problem like a database of rogue landlords and agents, landlord banning orders, and a ban on letting agent fees being charged to tenants.

We want to address this by:

- Expanding our enforcement action and the way we approach it, to improve management and physical standards in the private rented sector
- Influencing Government housing reforms to ensure letting agent fees to tenants are banned in full, that new policies give us the powers we need to help private tenants and tackle rogue landlords, and making sure we make the most of those powers
- Lobbying the Government to introduce inflation-capped rent increases in the private rented sector as soon as possible, to avoid sudden massive rent hikes
- Increasing the supply of genuinely affordable privately rented homes by reviewing the work of our social lettings agency and working with the Mayor of London's proposed agency
- Ensuring that our discretionary grants to homeowners go to those most in need of help to improve the condition and warmth of their home.

5

Meeting people's housing needs and helping tackle housing-related health and support needs

Hackney faces severe and wide-ranging housing needs, as a result of a lack of genuinely affordable housing and the Government's welfare reforms. As the population of London increases, housing needs such as homelessness and overcrowding are also expected to intensify.

Our homelessness work already aims to improve prevention and provide solutions for those threatened with losing their home. We already have in place a Homelessness Strategy and specific strategies relating to temporary accommodation and rough sleepers.

You have told us that we should be honest with you about the likely availability of housing – including social housing – given significant funding cuts and reform by the Government. The amount of available social housing is, despite the Council's best efforts, unlikely to keep pace with demand over the coming years, and will become even more restricted in future. Unless the Government takes action, the Council and residents will therefore have to consider alternative options to meet need, including intermediate housing and greater use of the private rented sector.

Housing has an important role in helping to meet the health needs of residents – from poor physical conditions like damp, mould and cold affecting families' wellbeing, to social isolation or worries about paying rent causing stress and anxiety.

Some Hackney residents need differing levels of support to live in their homes or in specialist housing, for example some older people, people with mental health needs, and people with learning disabilities. The Council will always try help people to remain active, independent and healthy in their own homes but, where this is not possible, we provide a range of specialist housing with support through our partners.

We want to address this by:

- Offering a choice for those in under-occupied social housing to move to smaller, more suitable homes, freeing up larger family homes – as well as providing support and advice to residents affected by the benefit cap and the 'bedroom tax'
- Raising awareness of the housing options that are likely to be available to those seeking housing in the borough, including providing realistic advice to young people who will be seeking housing in future
- Building closer links between housing and health providers to improve services across the private and social housing sectors
- Promoting health initiatives with social housing providers, and wherever possible helping people remain active, independent and healthy in their homes with flexible and affordable services
- Promoting affordable warmth, and targeting older and other vulnerable residents for support in both the public and private sectors
- Reviewing Supported Living and prevention services to target resources at those in most need, including for older people, people with mental health needs, and people with learning disabilities, and developing an older people's housing strategy
- Reviewing refuge and move-on options for people at risk of domestic violence, as well as support options for those who do not enter a refuge.

6

Promoting employment and sustainable communities

Hackney residents are overwhelmingly positive about and satisfied with the borough as a place to live, with most thinking it is a cohesive and a neighbourly place where people have a strong sense of belonging, and that offers an excellent quality of life.

At the same time, housing affordability is the top concern for residents, many of whom do not see the market catering for anyone but the wealthiest. Almost half of all residents think that Hackney has become a more unequal borough – with some highlighting the loss of informal support networks as people are forced to leave the borough, and a lack of housing for young people, key workers and first time buyers. Some long-standing communities feel they can't access the new jobs and opportunities that come with Hackney's economic growth.

A stable, decent home is important to allow everyone – regardless of income or background – to access the opportunities that London brings. The Council and housing providers have an important part to play in advising and supporting residents to find work and training, including promoting the initiatives that are available.

Intermediate housing, such as shared ownership, plays a key role in providing the first step to home ownership for Hackney residents earning middle incomes. New London Living Rent homes will also begin to meet their needs.

As well as helping individual first-time buyers who are priced out of the open market, intermediate housing benefits the local economy by enabling some of those working locally to be able to live close to their place of work. Intermediate housing also provides housing opportunities to the groups of workers we all depend on, such as nurses and teachers, where we know that the cost of housing is causing recruitment problems.

We want to address this by:

- Expanding the Ways into Work programme with our partners, to ensure that more local people get jobs from Hackney's growing economy
- Maximising the opportunities created by the new Apprenticeship Levy for contractors working on housing estates or other new housing developments to provide new training opportunities
- Considering creating affordable workspaces on council estates, to help support new businesses
- Giving high priority to the provision of new intermediate housing, especially for priority groups where staff recruitment and retention is challenging.

Glossary

Affordable Homes Programme	The Mayor of London’s programme of funding to help housing providers (mainly housing associations and councils) to build new affordable homes. The new programme covers the funding period 2016-21.
Affordable Warmth	Affordable Warmth relates to help for owners and tenants to introduce energy-efficiency measures that will help make their homes warmer and cheaper to heat.
Apprenticeship Levy	A levy on UK employers to fund new apprenticeships, being introduced from April 2017.
Banning Orders	New regulations are being introduced by the Government in 2017 to ban landlords who have been convicted of certain criminal offences (or repeated civil offences) from letting out properties to tenants.
Benefit Cap	A limit on the total amount of benefit that most people aged 16 to 64 can receive. This is known as the benefit cap and there was a further reduction in the cap from £26,000 to £23,000 per annum in London, from November 2016. For further information please see the Hackney Council website: www.hackney.gov.uk/housing-benefit-changes
Bedroom Tax	The ‘bedroom tax’ is an informal name for a reduction in a household’s housing benefit if they live in a council or housing association home and are classified as having a ‘spare’ bedroom. An assessment is made of the number of bedrooms in the home and the size and type of the family living there. The bedroom tax is also known more formally as the under-occupancy charge.
Commuted sums	For all housing developments of more than 10 homes, a legal agreement is normally placed on a developer to provide an affordable housing contribution in return for the Council granting planning consent. These contributions must normally be in the form of funding towards the construction of new affordable housing on-site. In exceptional circumstances, the contributions can be in the form of money – commuted sums – to contribute towards building new affordable homes on another site within the borough.
Council house building	The Council has its own programmes for building new homes, that are forecast deliver more than 3,000 homes - with more than half for social rent and shared ownership.
Estate regeneration programme	Most of the new homes the Council is building will be part of the estate regeneration programme. The programme is replacing existing, poor-quality homes that are uneconomical to repair, one in five of which are bedsits, with new homes for social renting, shared ownership and private sale.
Council grants (private rented sector)	The Council makes a range of grants available to owners and tenants of private homes: www.hackney.gov.uk/improvements-and-repairs
Enforcement action	Action against owners and landlords of private homes, taken by the Council’s Private Sector Housing Service to support tenants and ensure good conditions.
Fixed-term tenancies	A type of tenancy issued by social housing landlords for a fixed period, at the end of which the tenancy is reviewed. Under new Government rules being introduced in 2017, fixed-term tenancies will be mandatory for most new council tenants, though no date has yet been confirmed for when the policy will be operational. Most tenancies will be for a fixed-term of between 2–10 years or, where there is a child under nine in the household, until that child reaches the age of 19.
Forced sale of Council homes	Through the Housing & Planning Act 2016, the Government introduced provisions for forcing councils to sell their ‘higher value’ council homes when they become vacant. The money from sales would be used to fund the extension of Right to Buy to housing association tenants. Introduction of the policy has been delayed at least until 2018/19.
Hackney: a place for everyone	The Council’s major, borough-wide resident engagement exercise in 2015-16, asking residents for their views about the huge changes that Hackney has experienced over the past decade. The Council wanted to get a clearer picture of how this change was affecting local people, their experience of living in the borough, and how people were feeling about Hackney.

Houses in Multiple Occupation	A house in multiple occupation (HMO) is a property which is let to three or more tenants, who form two or more households, and who share kitchen, bathroom or toilet. Some buildings converted into self-contained flats may also be included within the definition, where the conversion did not meet the standards of the 1991 Building Regulations. A full definition is available on the Council's website: www.hackney.gov.uk/hmo
Housing Benefit	A means-tested benefit payment to help those on low incomes to pay the housing costs for rented accommodation
Housing Associations (or Registered Providers)	Independent social landlord organisations that provide affordable housing, owning and managing existing homes and in many cases developing new homes. Housing Associations that are registered with the Homes and Communities Agency (HCA) are regulated by the Social Housing Regulator (currently part of the HCA, soon to be independent). If registered, Housing associations are often referred to as Registered Providers.
Intermediate Housing	Housing that is affordable to households on middle incomes, which includes a wide range of housing for rent, ownership, or part-buy, part-rent. It may include shared ownership, London Living Rent and other sub-market housing for rent or purchase.
Landlord Accreditation	A voluntary scheme for landlords that requires members to undergo training and recognises good practice in the private rented sector. Accredited landlords can use a logo to show that they are recognised as a responsible landlord. The Council promotes and offers training through the London Landlord Accreditation Scheme: www.londonlandlords.org.uk/landlords
Letting agent fees	Most letting agents charge tenants fees for their services in respect of letting out and managing properties in the private rented sector. The Government has announced that it intends to ban letting agent fees to tenants, although this will require consultation and new legislation.
Local Housing Allowance (LHA)	The housing benefit paid to private tenants is calculated under Local Housing Allowance rules. For more information please see the Council's website: www.hackney.gov.uk/local-housing-allowance
Local Plan	A local authority planning document that sets out an authority's planning and land allocation policies over a set period of time. Hackney Council is currently reviewing its Local Plan for the period up to 2033. The plan will help ensure that development serves the needs of the borough and will allow the Council and local people to influence development: www.hackney.gov.uk/local-plan
London Living Rent	A new housing product introduced by the Mayor of London, with rent levels set at one third of average local household earnings. Existing private or social renters with incomes of up to £60,000 p.a. will be able to apply. For homes that are built using subsidy from the Mayor London, tenants will be expected to purchase their homes on shared ownership terms within 10 years.
Mayoral manifesto commitments	The previous Mayor of Hackney set out the priorities for his term in office in the lead-up to the mayoral elections in May 2014. Mayor Glanville built on these commitments with an additional set of pledges when he was elected in the mayoral by-election in 2016.
'Move-on' housing	Longer-term housing that is available to help people living in supported housing to move to independent living when they no longer need support, or can be supported in their own home. Move-on housing can help free-up supported housing places for those who most need it.
Private sector licensing schemes	The Council currently runs a mandatory HMO licensing scheme to enforce standards in larger HMOs. The Government is currently consulting on whether this scheme should be extended to cover a wider range of HMOs. In some circumstances a local authority can also introduce discretionary licensing schemes covering a wider set of private rented sector homes within some or all of the borough. The Council is currently developing a comprehensive evidence base to help decide its future approach to private sector housing enforcement in the borough.

Registered Providers	See Housing Associations.
Right to Buy (and extension to Housing Association tenants)	Council tenants have the legal right to buy their home, with a current discount of over £100,000 in London. The Government has reached a voluntary agreement with Housing Associations in England to extend the Right to Buy to their tenants. The Government's intention is that this initiative is funded through the forced sale of 'higher value' council homes.
Right to Buy receipts	The payments the Council receives from council tenants when they buy their Council home using the Right to Buy scheme.
Rogue landlord	Describes a landlord who knowingly flouts their obligations by renting out unsafe and substandard accommodation to tenants. The Housing and Planning Act 2016 contains a number of measures to help local authorities crack down on rogue landlords and force them to either improve or leave the sector. These measures are expected to be introduced in 2017.
Shared Accommodation Rate	Households living in a room and sharing some facilities, and/or households who are under 35 and living alone, are only eligible to receive housing benefit at the much lower Local housing Allowance shared accommodation rate.
Shared Ownership	Intermediate housing available from the Council or housing associations for part-buy, part-rent. Applicants must normally purchase between 25-75 % of the value of the home, and pay rent on the remainder.
Starter Homes	A Government-sponsored housing product, where homes are offered for sale at 80 % of local market values, up to a maximum value of £450,000 in London. It was proposed in the Housing & Planning Act that a duty would be placed local authorities to require Starter Homes through the planning system.
Social Lettings Agency	'Social lettings agency' is a loosely defined term that covers a broad range of initiatives in the Private Rented Sector, which focus on enabling access to privately rented homes for lower income and vulnerable groups.
Supported Housing / Supported Living	The Council provides support for vulnerable people to maintain and improve their ability to live independently in their own homes, as well as providing a range of specialist supported housing. For more information, please see the Council's website: https://www.hackney.gov.uk/housing-support-and-residential-care
Temporary Accommodation	Where a local authority has a statutory duty to house homeless people, they are often placed in temporary accommodation while waiting to be allocated permanent housing. Councils can provide temporary accommodation in a range of different types of housing, such as a bedsit, a flat, a house, a place in a hostel or in a bed and breakfast.
'10 Steps'	The Council's campaign for better private renting for tenants and landlords, which ran from 2015-6. Details are available on the Council's website: www.hackney.gov.uk/10-steps
Tenure	The conditions under which land or buildings are held or occupied. In terms of housing, for example, homes may be social or private rented or owner-occupied.
Tenancy Strategy	A statutory strategy that sets out the Council's policy on the types of affordable rented tenancies it wishes to see offered by social housing landlords in the local area, and the criteria considered for renewing tenancies. The Strategy will have to be reviewed to take account of the Housing & Planning Act requirements for mandatory fixed-term tenancies for most new council tenants.
Ways into Work	For Hackney residents looking for a job or an apprenticeship, Ways into Work is a free recruitment service run by the Council. The scheme can help residents find most suitable training and help them apply for jobs. (www.hackney.gov.uk/wiw)
Welfare reforms	The Government has introduced a range of changes to the eligibility and levels of welfare benefits. Means-tested benefits, such as income-based Jobseeker's Allowance, Working Tax Credit and Housing Benefit, will eventually be replaced by one benefit, called Universal Credit. Amongst the changes to date are a series of reduction and freezes to benefits, such as a reduction in the overall household benefit cap to £23,000 in London and a 4-year freeze in Local housing Allowance levels. Further information is available on the Council's website: www.hackney.gov.uk/benefit-changes

