

# Public Document Pack

## Housing Select Committee Agenda

Tuesday, 27 October 2015

**7.30 pm,**

Committee Room 1

Civic Suite

Lewisham Town Hall

London SE6 4RU

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# Housing Select Committee Members

Members of the committee, listed below, are summoned to attend the meeting to be held on Tuesday, 27 October 2015.

Barry Quirk, Chief Executive  
Thursday, 15 October 2015

Councillor Carl Handley (Chair) Councillor Peter Bernards (Vice-Chair) Councillor John Coughlin Councillor Amanda De Ryk Councillor Liz Johnston-Franklin Councillor Maja Hilton Councillor Simon Hooks Councillor Olurotimi Ogunbadewa Councillor Jonathan Slater Councillor Susan Wise Councillor Alan Hall (ex-Officio) Councillor Gareth Siddorn (ex-Officio)	
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## **MINUTES OF THE HOUSING SELECT COMMITTEE Wednesday, 16 September 2015 at 7.30pm**

Present: Councillors Carl Handley (Chair), Peter Bernards (Vice-Chair), Amanda De Ryk, Maja Hilton, Simon Hooks, Liz Johnston-Franklin, and Jonathan Slater.

Apologies: Councillors Olurotimi Ogunbadewa and Susan Wise.

Also present: Cllr. Alan Hall (Chair of Overview and Scrutiny), Kevin Sheehan (Executive Director, Customer Services), Jeff Endean (Housing Programmes and Strategy Team Manager), Mark Humphreys (Group Finance Manager, Customer Services), Michael Westbrook (Housing Policy & Partnerships Manager), Adam Barrett (Director of Resources, Lewisham Homes) and Roger Raymond (Scrutiny Manager).

### **1. Minutes of the meeting held on 8 July 2015**

- 1.1 RESOLVED: That the minutes of the meeting held on 8 July 2015 be signed as an accurate record of the meeting.

### **2. Declarations of Interest**

- 2.1 There were no declarations of interest.

### **3. Lewisham Future Programme - Savings Report**

- 3.1 Mark Humphreys (Group Finance Manager, Customer Services) and Jeff Endean (Housing Programmes and Strategy Team Manager) presented the report to the meeting. The key points to note were:

- In July 2015 Lewisham's Medium Term Financial Strategy (MTFS) to 2019/20 was presented to Mayor & Cabinet. Uncertainties in the strategy were recognised in the range of the possible outcomes considered – best, base and worst case scenarios. After allowing for the £11m of savings previously agreed for 2016/17 and 2017/18, the MTFS savings estimates to 2019/20 ranges from £57m to £105m.
- Given the headline of austerity in non-protected areas of public spending is to continue and the uncertainty in potential impacts for local government to 2019/20, the report presented to the Committee updates on the savings proposals prepared against the current target of £45m for 2016/17 and 2017/18.
- The first set of budget savings proposals, after scrutiny by the various Select Committees, will be presented to Mayor and Cabinet on 30 September 2015. The final set of proposals will go to Mayor and Cabinet in 10 February 2016.

- 3.2 In response to questions from the Committee, the following was noted:

**M2a and M2b: Review of funding streams across housing strategy, development and partnership functions; and reduction in premises costs**

- This proposal envisages about £140,000 of savings. There should be no staffing reduction, the saving would be achieved by initiatives such as the relocation of the reorganised Single Homeless Intervention and Prevention Team (SHIP) team to a new building.
- Some of Housing staff funding can come from the General Fund, or other avenues such as the Capital Programme.
- Officers have to look at the structure of the Housing Team to best manage the temporary accommodation/homelessness in the borough and deliver the New Build Programme.
- Officers will monitor the implications of legislative changes and housing trends when devising the new structure, but allowing flexibility to deal with unexpected changes that may come out of court judgements etc.
- Officers will write to the Committee on the issue of how many of the 29 families affected by the Benefits Cap started in temporary accommodation.

### **B2: Supporting People – Reduction in budget across all client groups**

- This proposal has been brought about by the budgetary pressures the Council is facing.
- The Council has a number of contracts with providers, and will look to reduce costs in this area.
- Officers will monitor the changes, if implemented, to see if there is a knock-on effect on housing and other services.

### **N3: Review of Lewisham’s Waste Services (Doorstep collection & disposal) Transfer of estates Bulky Waste disposal costs to Lewisham Homes**

- The Council will look to re-charge bulky waste disposal costs to Lewisham Homes. Although the majority of collection costs are re-charged to Lewisham Homes, disposal costs are currently paid for by the Council. This arrangement does not incentivise housing managers to reduce the amount of waste being generated.
- Officers will inform the Committee about how many ‘flats above shops’ are Council properties.
- With the private sector licensing scheme, there will be conditions for the management of waste in the new conditions, to improve landlord behaviour in this area.

3.3 **RESOLVED:** That the Committee refer the following to Public Accounts Select Committee:

### **B2: Supporting People – Reduction in budget across all client groups**

The Committee notes with great concern the potential impact of removing services for some of the most vulnerable residents in the borough, as these services often function as a last resort. The Committee is also concerned about the risk of this proposal leading to cost shunts to other services. The Committee also noted its concern that a reduction in individual available places may result in lack of places for clients, and it also could lead to more work for partners such as the police, probation, mental health SLAM and the hospital if incidents escalate.



It could also lead to people becoming homeless, have an impact on statutory services/temporary accommodation/residential care, increased use of existing hostels by high needs out of borough clients and a rise in rough sleeping. The Committee rejects the proposal to reduce the provision of the accommodation and floating support services for these vulnerable residents, in line with the Healthier Communities Select Committee's comments.

### **M2a and M2b: Review of funding streams across housing strategy, development and partnership functions; and reduction in premises costs**

The Committee referred no comment on these saving proposals.

Therefore, the Select Committee recommends that Public Accounts advise the Mayor of its view that:

- He should accept saving proposals: M2a and M2b
- He should reject the savings proposal B2

## **4. Lewisham Homes Management Agreement**

4.1 Jeff Endean (Housing Programmes and Strategy Team Manager) presented the report to the meeting. The key points to note were:

- A new Management Agreement is an opportunity for the Council to shape the future of Lewisham Homes, empower it to deliver more services on behalf of the Council, and to assume a more prominent role in the Council's delivery of new affordable homes.
- It is common for the negotiation of contracts of this type to commence up to 18 months in advance of the expiration of the contract, to allow for full consideration of the options available and to ensure that decisions fit in with wider strategies.
- Lewisham Homes is a strongly performing Arm's-length management organisation (ALMO) which as well as delivering on Decent Homes works and providing high quality housing management services to residents, is also now delivering the Council's house-building programme and its temporary accommodation acquisition programme. Furthermore, processes are already underway for the potential transfer of both the estate-based grounds maintenance service, and for an enhanced housing management service in Sheltered Housing, to Lewisham Homes.
- As part of the management agreement negotiation process, it will also be possible to explore the potential that Lewisham Homes might further evolve the role it plays on behalf of the Council and its tenants, by registering with the Homes and Communities Agency (HCA) as a Registered Provider of affordable housing in its own right.
- Initial legal advice received by the Council and Lewisham Homes as part of the management agreement review process has also indicated that Lewisham Homes could establish a subsidiary as a non-registered charity. This could perform a similar role to the Registered Provider model described above, but may provide a key risk management benefit in separating the day to day

activities for existing tenants from the new activities and risks associated with the new build developments.

4.2 In response to questions from the Committee, the following was noted:

- The Council's objectives in the negotiation process for the new agreement is to ensure that Lewisham Homes can better assist in delivering the Housing Programme.
- The Council is still looking at options to lead the Self-Build project.
- The implications of the proposed Government Housing Bill that will include an extension of the Right-To-Buy to Housing Associations properties, and the Budget announcement of a 1% year-on-year reduction in social rent will have an impact on housing providers. In these circumstances, it could be sensible to have some flexibility in the new contract.
- The Council will be looking at the legal implications of creating an 'arms-length' organisation in the new Lewisham Homes contract.
- The Committee would like an update on the impact of the Government Housing Bill on Registered Housing Providers and Lewisham Homes at the October meeting.

4.3 **RESOLVED:** That the Committee agree all the recommendations in the report; and also added an additional recommendation:

- "With the level of uncertainty and associated risks at the present time, a 'break clause' should be considered so both parties can review the agreement at a later date."

## 5. New Homes Programmes

5.1 Jeff Endean (Housing Programmes and Strategy Team Manager) presented the report to the meeting.

- In total the programme currently contains 763 homes, of which 621 are Council homes with a tenure split of precisely 80/20. Officers will continue to progress the scheme as quickly as reasonably possible to meet the Council's objectives for new house building.
- A report is scheduled to go to Mayor and Cabinet in October 2015. That report will set out the same programme as presented to this Committee, and will also present for final approval individual schemes within the programme where possible, subject to those schemes being sufficiently developed in conjunction with residents, ward councillors and the Council's Planning Service in the intervening period.

5.2 In response to questions from the Committee, the following was noted:

- The Mercator Road and Rawlinson House developments are in the Lewisham Central ward, not the Ladywell ward.
- The report to Mayor and Cabinet will now note that the re-deployable housing development being constructed on the site of the former Ladywell Leisure Centre are designated as 'temporary homes'.

- The modelling on pricing for new builds that are scheduled to be sold is on constant review.
- Work will be carried out to modernise existing estates so new properties will blend into the current infrastructure.
- The additional income (if the sale price of homes is higher than initially proposed) would be used to build more homes, but that would depend on additional labour costs.
- The Embleton Road site, in the Ladywell Ward, is for 12 homes, some of which are currently proposed for sale in order to cross-subsidise the affordable housing programme. The scheme is in the early stages of development.
- There are a number of factors that come into play when choosing which properties to sell. For example whether they are flats or housing, or whether the Council will be creating freeholders or leaseholders with the sales, as well as location of new builds.

5.3 **RESOLVED:** That the Committee note the report.

## 6. Key Housing Issues

6.1 Jeff Endean (Housing Programmes and Strategy Team Manager) presented the report to the meeting. The key points to note were:

- The budget of 8 July 2015 introduced a number of changes to housing, specifically around rents in social housing and welfare reform.
- Officers are currently reviewing the full financial and policy impacts of the Budget changes and proposals, and further updates will follow in due course, including – where relevant – the specific implications for Lewisham.

6.2 In response to questions from the Committee, the following was noted:

- Officers will supply Committee members with the information on what other benefits under 21 year olds are now no longer entitled to, in light of the Budget proposal to remove their eligibility for Housing Benefit.
- The Government's proposal to reduce social rents by 1% year-on-year from April 2016 could be problematic for housing associations and could have a significant impact on the capacity of all housing associations and developing local authorities to build new social housing.
- The year-on-year 1% reduction in social rents has the potential to reduce the income of the Council by £300m over 30 years.
- Lewisham does receive some of the proceeds from its 'Right-To-Buy' properties. However, some goes to central government and the rest in the discount to the resident. All the proposed changes in relation to 'Right-To-Buy' will have an impact on the financing of the Council's housing programme.
- The Council will need to monitor the changes on mortgage interest tax relief for landlords to see if will have an impact on the amount of private rented properties in the borough.

6.3 **RESOLVED:** That the Committee note the report.

## 7. **Affordability Across All Housing Tenures Review: Scoping Paper**

7.1 Roger Raymond (Scrutiny Manager) presented the report to the Committee. The key points to note were:

- The Committee looked at this at the last meeting, but decided to refer any decisions to this meeting.
- The Committee had to decide whether it wanted the review to look at all four categories of housing tenure, or focus the review to 1-2 areas of housing tenure (if more than 2 then it will require more than 2 sessions); and
- The Committee had to decide if they are happy with the key lines of enquiry/terms of reference or would like to amend them.

7.2 In response to questions from the Committee, the following was noted:

- The Committee would like to concentrate on the social housing and private rented sectors as they are areas the committee could have most influence on with its recommendations.

7.3 **RESOLVED:** That the Committee agreed the following:

- a) To concentrate the review in the following areas:
  - Social Housing
  - Private Rented Sector
- b) Have the first evidence session at its October meeting.

## 8. **Select Committee work programme**

8.1 Roger Raymond (Scrutiny Manager) introduced the report. The key points to note were:

- The items scheduled for the October meeting are as follows:
  - Communal Heating Systems Review - Report and Recommendations; Response from Mayor and Cabinet
  - Monitoring Homeless Discharge - Update
  - Community Centres on Estates
  - Locational Priority Policy - temporary accommodation
  - Housing-Led Regeneration Opportunities
  - Affordability Across All Housing Tenures – Review – Evidence Session 1

8.2 In response to questions from the Committee, the following was noted:

- That an invitation would be sent to a representative of Red Door Ventures (London Borough of Newham) to talk about their initiative to deliver a large programme of private rented homes for residents (as part of the 'Housing-Led Regeneration Opportunities' item).
- An item would be added to the agenda for a short report on the implications of Lewisham Homes in light of the upcoming Government Housing Bill.

- The Chair would discuss with Committee members about whether the 'Community Centres on Estates' item should remain on the agenda for the October meeting. If so, it would be an Information Item.

8.3 **RESOLVED:** That the Committee agree the work programme for 2015-16.

**9. Items to be referred to Mayor and Cabinet**

9.1 There were no items to refer to Mayor and Cabinet; however the Committee referred items to Public Accounts Select Committee at 3.3.

The meeting ended at 9.15pm

Chair:

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Date:

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# Agenda Item 2

<b>Committee</b>	Housing Select Committee	<b>Item No.</b>	2
<b>Title</b>	Declarations of Interest		
<b>Wards</b>			
<b>Contributors</b>	Chief Executive		
<b>Class</b>	Part 1	<b>Date</b>	27 October 2015

## Declaration of interests

Members are asked to declare any personal interest they have in any item on the agenda.

### 1 Personal interests

There are three types of personal interest referred to in the Council's Member Code of Conduct:-

- (1) Disclosable pecuniary interests
- (2) Other registerable interests
- (3) Non-registerable interests

### 2 Disclosable pecuniary interests are defined by regulation as:-

- (a) Employment, trade, profession or vocation of a relevant person\* for profit or gain
- (b) Sponsorship –payment or provision of any other financial benefit (other than by the Council) within the 12 months prior to giving notice for inclusion in the register in respect of expenses incurred by you in carrying out duties as a member or towards your election expenses (including payment or financial benefit from a Trade Union).
- (c) Undischarged contracts between a relevant person\* (or a firm in which they are a partner or a body corporate in which they are a director, or in the securities of which they have a beneficial interest) and the Council for goods, services or works.
- (d) Beneficial interests in land in the borough.
- (e) Licence to occupy land in the borough for one month or more.
- (f) Corporate tenancies – any tenancy, where to the member's knowledge, the Council is landlord and the tenant is a firm in which the relevant person\* is a partner, a body corporate in which they are a director, or in the securities of which they have a beneficial interest.
- (g) Beneficial interest in securities of a body where:-
  - (a) that body to the member's knowledge has a place of business or land in the borough; and
  - (b) either
    - (i) the total nominal value of the securities exceeds £25,000 or 1/100 of the total issued share capital of that body; or
    - (ii) if the share capital of that body is of more than one class, the total nominal value of the shares of any one class in which the relevant person\* has a beneficial interest exceeds 1/100 of the total issued share capital of that class.

\*A relevant person is the member, their spouse or civil partner, or a person with whom they live as spouse or civil partner.

### (3) Other registerable interests

The Lewisham Member Code of Conduct requires members also to register the following interests:-

- (a) Membership or position of control or management in a body to which you were appointed or nominated by the Council
- (b) Any body exercising functions of a public nature or directed to charitable purposes, or whose principal purposes include the influence of public opinion or policy, including any political party
- (c) Any person from whom you have received a gift or hospitality with an estimated value of at least £25

### (4) Non registerable interests

Occasions may arise when a matter under consideration would or would be likely to affect the wellbeing of a member, their family, friend or close associate more than it would affect the wellbeing of those in the local area generally, but which is not required to be registered in the Register of Members' Interests (for example a matter concerning the closure of a school at which a Member's child attends).

### (5) Declaration and Impact of interest on members' participation

- (a) Where a member has any registerable interest in a matter and they are present at a meeting at which that matter is to be discussed, they must declare the nature of the interest at the earliest opportunity and in any event before the matter is considered. The declaration will be recorded in the minutes of the meeting. If the matter is a disclosable pecuniary interest the member must take no part in consideration of the matter and withdraw from the room before it is considered. They must not seek improperly to influence the decision in any way. **Failure to declare such an interest which has not already been entered in the Register of Members' Interests, or participation where such an interest exists, is liable to prosecution and on conviction carries a fine of up to £5000**
- (b) Where a member has a registerable interest which falls short of a disclosable pecuniary interest they must still declare the nature of the interest to the meeting at the earliest opportunity and in any event before the matter is considered, but they may stay in the room, participate in consideration of the matter and vote on it unless paragraph (c) below applies.
- (c) Where a member has a registerable interest which falls short of a disclosable pecuniary interest, the member must consider whether a reasonable member of the public in possession of the facts would think that their interest is so significant that it would be likely to impair the member's judgement of the public interest. If so, the member must withdraw and take no part in consideration of the matter nor seek to influence the outcome improperly.
- (d) If a non-registerable interest arises which affects the wellbeing of a member, their family, friend or close associate more than it would affect those in the local area



generally, then the provisions relating to the declarations of interest and withdrawal apply as if it were a registerable interest.

- (e) Decisions relating to declarations of interests are for the member's personal judgement, though in cases of doubt they may wish to seek the advice of the Monitoring Officer.

**(6) Sensitive information**

There are special provisions relating to sensitive interests. These are interests the disclosure of which would be likely to expose the member to risk of violence or intimidation where the Monitoring Officer has agreed that such interest need not be registered. Members with such an interest are referred to the Code and advised to seek advice from the Monitoring Officer in advance.

**(7) Exempt categories**

There are exemptions to these provisions allowing members to participate in decisions notwithstanding interests that would otherwise prevent them doing so. These include:-

- (a) Housing – holding a tenancy or lease with the Council unless the matter relates to your particular tenancy or lease; (subject to arrears exception)
- (b) School meals, school transport and travelling expenses; if you are a parent or guardian of a child in full time education, or a school governor unless the matter relates particularly to the school your child attends or of which you are a governor;
- (c) Statutory sick pay; if you are in receipt
- (d) Allowances, payment or indemnity for members
- (e) Ceremonial honours for members
- (f) Setting Council Tax or precept (subject to arrears exception)

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# Agenda Item 3

Housing Select Committee		
<b>Report Title</b>	Response from Mayor and Cabinet to matters referred by the Housing Select Committee – Response to the recommendations of the Housing Select Committee Scrutiny Review into Communal Heating	
<b>Key Decision</b>	No	<b>Item No</b> 3
<b>Ward</b>	All	
<b>Contributors</b>	Executive Director for Resources (Head of Business & Committee)	
<b>Class</b>	Part 1	<b>Date:</b> 27 October 2015

## 1. Summary

- 1.1 This report informs members of the response given at Mayor and Cabinet to a referral in respect of the Housing Select Committee's Review into Communal Heating.

## 2. Purpose of the Report

- 2.1 To report to members the response given at Mayor and Cabinet to recommendations made by the Select Committee on 15 July 2015.

## 3. Recommendation

- 3.1 The Select Committee is recommended to receive the Mayoral response to their consideration of the Housing Select Committee's Review into Communal Heating.

## 4. Background

- 4.1 The Mayor considered the attached report entitled 'Response to the recommendations of the Housing Select Committee Scrutiny Review into Communal Heating at the Mayor & Cabinet meeting held on 30 September 2015.

## 5. Mayoral Response

- 5.1 The Mayor received an officer report and a presentation from a representative of the Executive Director for Resources and Regeneration.
- 5.2 The Mayor resolved that the attached response be submitted to the Select Committee.

## **BACKGROUND PAPERS**

Mayor & Cabinet minutes 30 September 2015

If you have any queries on this report, please contact Kevin Flaherty, Head of Business & Committee, 0208 314 9327

<b>Mayor &amp; Cabinet</b>		
<b>Report Title</b>	Response to the recommendations of the Housing Select Committee scrutiny review into communal heating	
<b>Key Decision</b>	No	<b>Item No.</b>
<b>Ward</b>	All	
<b>Contributors</b>	Executive Director for Customer Services; Head of Planning; Head of Law;	
<b>Class</b>	Part 1	<b>Date:</b> 30 September 2015

## 1. Purpose

- 1.1 This report sets out a response to the recommendations of the Housing Select Committee scrutiny review into communal heating.

## 2 Recommendation

The Mayor is recommended to:

- 2.1 Approve the responses from the Executive Director for Customer Services.
- 2.2 Agree that this report should be forwarded to the Housing Select Committee.

## 3. Policy Context

- 3.1 The Climate Change Act (2008) commits the UK to establishing a low carbon economy, with a target of reducing carbon dioxide emissions by at least 80% on 1990 levels by the year 2050. Energy use in housing accounts for a quarter of carbon dioxide emissions in the UK and more than half the emissions for Lewisham.
- 3.2 Government guidance on improving energy efficiency in new build homes is set out in the Code for Sustainable Homes. Developments aiming for certification under the Code are required to achieve standards, for which they are able to gain credits, in the following areas:
  - energy/carbon
  - water
  - waste
  - materials
  - surface water run-off
  - health and well being
  - pollution

- ecology
  - management
- 3.3 Building regulations require all new homes to be built to the level three standard of the Code for Sustainable Homes. Homes built with government funding are required to achieve level four. The Council requires all new developments to achieve level four of the Code.
- 3.4 London's strategic plans set out a hierarchy for achieving reduced carbon emissions in all new developments. The GLA's target is to reduce London's carbon dioxide emissions by 60% on 1990 levels by 2025. Through the London Plan, the Mayor expects all new developments to:
- Be lean: use less energy
  - Be clean: supply energy efficiently
  - Be green: use renewable energy
- 3.5 Proposals for major developments are required to include detailed energy assessments as part of their submission for planning permission to demonstrate how they intend to meet the London Plan target for carbon dioxide emissions within the framework of this energy hierarchy.
- 3.6 Major developments are also required to assess the feasibility of joining existing heat networks by linking to existing infrastructure. The viability of site-wide combined heat and power systems and communal heating are included in this assessment.
- 3.7 Lewisham's sustainable communities strategy sets out the ambition for Lewisham to be 'clean green and liveable'. The strategy highlights the importance of ensuring Lewisham's contribution to a sustainable future by tackling waste and making effective use of resources.
- 3.8 Lewisham's Carbon Reduction and Climate Change Strategy was published in 2008. In 2013 the Council set a new target of a 44% reduction in the borough's carbon emissions by 2020 from a 2005 baseline.
- 3.9 Lewisham's Core Strategy, which directs the borough's planning framework, includes the objective that:  
'All new residential development (including mixed use) will be required to achieve a minimum of Level 4 standards in the Code for Sustainable Homes from 1 April 2011 and Level 6 from 1 April 2016, or any future national equivalent.' (Lewisham Core Strategy, p97)

#### **4. Background**

- 4.1 As part of the work programme for 2014/15 the Housing Select Committee carried out a review of communal heating systems in Lewisham. The review

was scoped in October 2014, with evidence sessions in November 2014, December 2014 and January 2015. The final report was discussed in May 2015 and referred to the 15 July 2015 Mayor and Cabinet meeting.

- 4.2 Communal heating via a centralised heat production and distribution to a number of properties can be set up in a number of different ways. A communal heating system might incorporate a single building, a number of buildings (community heating) or a wider larger area, incorporating a number of buildings including homes, schools and businesses (district heating). There are thought to be between 10 and 15 thousand communal heating systems in operation in the UK.
- 4.3 A number of benefits are claimed for communal heating systems. In theory, efficiencies should be achieved through the scale of heat production. The use of communal heating systems also allows for the deployment of low carbon technologies that might not be feasible on a home by home basis. Communal heating systems might also reduce the requirement to carry out unit by unit maintenance and checks, in contrast to individual boiler systems.
- 4.4 The Housing Select Committee agreed the following review question: “How can the Council help to ensure the effective deployment of communal heating systems in the borough, where appropriate?”
- 4.5 In order to answer this question the Committee heard evidence in relation to:
  - The issues influencing the development and deployment of heating systems in Lewisham;
  - The benefits and drawbacks of existing communal heating systems in the borough;
  - The factors influencing the effective design and operation of heating systems.

## **5. Housing Select Committee Recommendations and Officers’ Responses**

- 5.1 The recommendations from the Housing Select Committee scrutiny review are set out below with a commentary for each. The scrutiny review raised a number of important questions particularly in relation to the gap between predicted and actual performance of communal heating systems and heard evidence of problems associated with this in some systems within the borough in relation to overheating, reliability and the cost to residents.
- 5.2 The scrutiny review was also an opportunity to bring together a range of external industry and housing practitioners working in this area including from the GLA, the Association of Decentralised Energy, social housing providers, housing developers and architects. The themes of the review were widely acknowledged by those participating and reflected experience elsewhere, particularly in relation to the need to ensure systems are specified properly and

with a clear understanding of the whole life cost of design, construction and management.

- 5.3 The review aligned with work going on elsewhere, most notably the Association for Decentralised Energy's Code of Practice for heat networks, published after the conclusion of the scrutiny review in July 2015. The new Code of Practice has received broad support and seeks to focus attention on the key issues the industry needs to address as well as providing the technical underpinning to raise standards in the specification, delivery and running of communal heating systems. The new Code represents a steep learning curve for much of the industry involved in communal heating and the Council should use as many opportunities as it can to press developers and social housing providers to adopt the Code. The Council should also encourage moves in central and regional Government to improve the understanding of how communal heating systems perform in practice and to reflect this understanding in policy and funding decisions.
- 5.4 The scrutiny review also raised important questions about the Council's capacity to influence the implementation of communal heating systems, particularly in relation knowledge and capacity given the increasing resource constraints on officers across environmental health, planning and building control. Pressures on public finances mean there are limited solutions to these issues but there remain practical things the Council can do.

#### **RECOMMENDATION 1**

*The Council should explore the gap between the projected 'potential' performance of communal heating systems (manufacturer's estimations) and their 'as built' performance (actual performing rates). This could be done by engaging independent engineers, paid for by the developer, to assess the performance of the installed systems at a number of practical intervals as the scheme is built out. This would enable the Council to produce a revised assessment of schemes once built, which would also incorporate any changes made during the building process.*

#### **RECOMMENDATION 2**

- (i) The 'as built' assessment figures (see recommendation 1) should be compared with the Standard Assessment Procedure (SAP) calculator figures to determine if schemes are performing as expected and delivering the carbon savings they are intended to deliver.*
- (ii) The Council should lobby other local authorities and housing associations to collect 'as built' performance data.*
- (iii) This data should be shared with the GLA and DECC to allow a thorough evaluation of installed communal heating schemes to take place in the hope that a thorough evidential foundation can be established for communal heating schemes.*
- (iv) The Council should put pressure on the GLA and DECC to undertake this evaluation and develop a systematic approach to reviewing successful and less successful communal heating schemes. This would enable, for example, the GLA to better understand the impact of their decentralised energy policies, to verify their carbon saving calculations and help establish an evidence base which might encourage better practice across the industry.*



- 5.5 As the Committee identified these are issues that go beyond the borough's boundaries. They also extend wider than communal heating, and in June 2015 the Zero Carbon Hub published 'Overheating in Homes, the Big Picture' identifying wider issues including communal heating affecting energy performance in new build developments. Officers support the recommendation that the Council should be reinforcing these issues with central and regional Government. This is particularly true in relation to the future changes of the Standard Assessment Procedure (SAP) by the Department of Energy and Climate Change and in encouraging support for voluntary entry of heat network performance information in the Product Characteristics Database.
- 5.6 Monitoring the implementation of communal heating schemes is of particular importance as all new systems require fine tuning to optimise their performance. This is often a lengthy process and something that can suffer where there is a disconnect between construction and management of a new system. Monitoring actual performance and sharing this information in a consistent way is therefore an essential part of running an efficient system and will help improve the overall understanding of performance to inform policy and standard setting.
- 5.7 The suggestion that contributions from developers could pay for monitoring of performance in Lewisham is likely to be difficult to enforce in relation to the requirements for setting planning conditions or obligations set out in a Section 106 agreement. It also has the potential to increase the cost of such developments potentially affecting overall viability.
- 5.8 It is suggested therefore that a national or regional approach to assessing the performance of communal heating systems is the most effective way to produce the evidence-base needed and that the Council should support the approach set out in the Association of Decentralised Energy's new Code of Practice.
- 5.9 Given many of the issues relate to delivery by Registered Providers it is suggested that officers could work with the Association for Decentralised Energy to run a training session for local Registered Providers to go through the new Code of Practice – using this as an opportunity to disseminate information on best practice. Such training would also be potentially valuable to planning officers and others within the Council.

### **RECOMMENDATION 3**

*The Council should consider setting minimum design efficiency/loss requirements at the planning stage for communal heating schemes.*

- 5.10 The Planning Department already use planning conditions to require developments to meet target carbon savings, as set in approved energy statements. However these targets are not then tested, it is a compliance condition.

5.11 The introduction of any additional local standards for communal heating systems would require a specific evidence base on design efficiency and identified standards for what is considered to be the standard to be adopted. In the absence of this Planning can only advocate for high quality systems but not require a specific standard.

5.12 Officers will review whether the Council's Residential Standards document can be updated to advise developers to use systems with the highest efficiency possible and to follow guidance in the new Code of Practice.

#### **RECOMMENDATION 4**

*The Council should consider undertaking a piece of work to compare costs, heat loss, carbon savings etc. for residents in new builds with communal heating systems and those with individual boilers, and then project these forward to assess if the benefits/losses even out in the future. In this way the Council can create a realistic heat comparator for residents.*

5.13 The Heat Trust is working on a Heat Cost Comparator which will provide a like-for-like comparison of the cost of heat in different systems. The comparator, which was reviewed by an independent committee of consumer groups, industry participants and government officials, will look at not just the unit price of fuel but also other variables such as boiler maintenance and replacement. The Comparator is due to launch alongside the Scheme later this year and will be available on the Heat Trust Website ([www.heattrust.org.co.uk](http://www.heattrust.org.co.uk)).

5.14 It is hoped that this resource will provide the information suggested without requiring a separate Lewisham-specific exercise.

#### **RECOMMENDATION 5**

*The Council should look very critically at attempts to down-grade or mitigate planning conditions that are made after planning permission has been granted.*

5.15 The Planning Department already resists measures to down-grade energy savings within approved schemes. However with regards communal heating systems the Council does not specify the technical requirements of such systems and so cannot make these subject to conditions. In the absence of an evidence-base that can be used to underpin conditions on standards the Council can only condition the installation of system but not the specific type or any standards the system should achieve.

#### **RECOMMENDATION 6**

*As a local authority, Lewisham should 'slow down' the pace of adopting communal heating systems and make sure that we critically engage with other options available to deliver carbon savings, moving our emphasis from simple compliance to actual performance.*

- 5.16 Existing Planning policy is technology neutral – the Lewisham and London Plan policies require a total overall reduction in carbon dioxide emissions arising from the development, there isn't any requirement upon developers to meet it in a specific way, for instance by requiring the adoption of communal heating systems. Instead the policy requires developers to demonstrate they have considered each stage of the Mayor's energy hierarchy to meet the overall carbon reduction levels but doesn't require them to use elements from each stage to do so.
- 5.17 The only area that Lewisham has a specific focus on the use of decentralised energy is in Lewisham Town Centre and this policy is outlined in the Lewisham Town Centre Local Plan:

**Policy LTC24**

**Carbon dioxide emission reduction**

1. All 'major development' will be required to incorporate communal heating and cooling which future-proofs the development and allows for larger scale decentralised energy clusters to be developed in the medium to long term, in some cases beyond the plan period. Where it has been demonstrated that a communal heating and cooling system would not be the most suitable option in the short to medium term, the development should ensure a connection can still be facilitated in the medium to long term. In doing so developments should:

- (a) incorporate energy centres that are appropriately sized not only to accommodate the interim requirements of CHP and other centralised plants, but to accommodate a 'consumer substation unit' – to provide all the necessary equipment for a connection to a heating and cooling network and for domestic hot water preparation,
- (b) where a communal heating system is not installed, incorporate pipework to the edge of the site which is compatible with any other existing networks or sections and ensure the likely shortest distance to future networks,
- (c) locate energy centres close to a street frontage (but without creating 'dead frontage' to a street), ensuring the likely shortest distance to future networks,
- (d) safeguard routes from site boundaries to energy centres to enable a connection to be made to a network in the future.

2. The LBL Energy Strategy recommends that there is potential for at least three Policy Areas which could support a cluster of decentralised energy in Lewisham town centre in the future, as follows:

- (a) Loampit Vale Policy Area,
- (b) Lewisham Gateway Policy Area,
- (c) Ladywell Road Policy Area.

- 5.18 The three areas were identified on the basis of work done to understand the heat loads currently in place and the high quantum of development likely to be supported by development sites in those areas which creates a relatively large heat load in a small area.

- 5.19 The National Planning Policy Framework (NPPF) has a presumption in favour of sustainable development. In relation to decentralised energy, Section 97 of the NPPF states that 'In determining planning applications, local planning authorities should expect new development to: comply with adopted Local Plan policies on local requirements for decentralised energy supply unless it can be demonstrated by the applicant, having regard to the type of development involved and its design, that this is not feasible or viable'.
- 5.20 Lewisham Council has to be in conformity with the NPPF and, given there is no specific policy relating to the adoption of decentralised energy systems, the onus is upon developer to demonstrate the deployment of a decentralised energy system isn't appropriate, rather than giving local authorities the ability to challenge their usage. In assessing the applicability of decentralised energy officers will encourage developers to adopt the approach set out in the Association of Decentralised Energy's new Code of Practice.
- 5.21 On Lewisham Council developments, officers take the same approach to identifying the most technically appropriate way to deliver overall carbon reductions. This should include the use of the new Code of Practice to ensure any systems are suitable for domestic or non-domestic occupants to use, with regards to functionality and cost, as well as having consideration to whole-life costings for the system.
- 5.22 The installation of communal heating systems is compliant with Regional (London Plan) planning policy and Local (Core Strategy/Development Management Local Plan) policy. A specific presumption against communal heating systems would therefore require a change in policy.
- 5.23 It is recognised that poorly planned or executed schemes may not represent the best use of investment and the individuals or organisations involved in specifying schemes or in considering proposals that involve communal heating systems should look critically at the alternatives, including passive-house solutions and investment in the fabric of the building to achieve long-lasting and potentially more readily achievable outcomes.

#### **RECOMMENDATION 7**

*The Council should insist on the installation of ultra-low NOx boilers in medium and poor air quality zones.*

- 5.23 The Council's Core Strategy already provides for this through policy DM 23 Air Quality, and use conditions that require approval of abatement technology utilised to minimise emissions to air from the boiler/CHP installed.
- 5.24 Local authorities in England and Wales are required to review and assess air quality across their areas every three years:
- to assess the current air quality against the Air Quality Strategy objectives
  - to predict the future air quality against the Air Quality Strategy objectives

- to designate Air Quality Management Areas where Air Quality Strategy objectives are unlikely to be met and prepare a written action plan for such areas.'

5.25 Based on this Lewisham have declared 6 Air Quality Management Areas (AQMAs).

#### **RECOMMENDATION 8**

*Based on the evidence the Committee heard, the definition of what constitutes a major development (10 units+) falls below the threshold of a viable communal heating system. Planning decisions need to properly take into account the viability of such schemes, particularly given the air-tightness of new dwellings.*

5.26 The designation of what constitutes a major development is a national policy definition that the Council has no discretion over. There is scope in current policy to consider whether installation of such a system is feasible and there are times when it is not feasible for a smaller development to accommodate communal heating and therefore alternative measures are needed in order for a development to comply with planning policy.

#### **RECOMMENDATION 9**

*The Council should consider insisting that all developers using district heating sign up to and comply with the Heat Network Code of Practice, prioritise cases of overheating and follow good practice established elsewhere. This should include existing social housing developments where communal heating systems have been installed and where poor performance has been reported.*

5.27 The new Code of Practice aligns with the issues identified by the Committee and the Council should seek to promote the Code and encourage developers and those managing communal systems to adopt it. Whilst planning can attach an informative to a consent advising that the developer comply with the new Code of Practice, this is not within planning policy and therefore is not enforceable and can only be encouraged.

#### **RECOMMENDATION 10**

*The Council's Head of Law should be asked to comment on the equalities and other legal implications of communal heating schemes, in particular that high charges mean that some of the borough's poorest residents are paying to deliver wider carbon savings; and that, where there is no opportunity to opt out of the communal system residents are, in effect, being denied a choice of heating and hot water supplier.*

5.28 The Head of Law has asked the Equalities team to look at this who will report back separately to the committee.

## **RECOMMENDATION 11**

*South East London Combined Heat and Power (SELCHP) is a good example of a large scale, viable district heating scheme. The Council should work hard to bring forward proposals to connect Lewisham housing estates to the network.*

- 5.29 Lewisham Council has received funding from the Heat Networks Development Unit in the Department of Energy & Climate Change to conduct a feasibility study in 2015/16 for a network from SELCHP to Goldsmiths College in New Cross. This study assesses the technical feasibility of a network, including a route proving exercise which will establish the initial part of a route that can also be used to go towards strategic development sites including Convoys Wharf. The route also looks at the scope to connect in existing housing estates.
- 5.30 Developments surrounding SELCHP have been future-proofed to facilitate a connection to a district heating system should one come forward in the future.

## **6 Legal implications**

- 6.1 There are no specific financial implications arising from this report.

## **7. Financial Implications**

- 7.1 There are no specific financial implications arising from this report.

## **8 Crime and disorder implications**

- 8.1 There are no specific crime and disorder implications arising from this report.

## **9 Equalities implications**

- 9.1 Lewisham's Comprehensive Equalities Scheme (CES) 2012-16 describes the Council's commitment to equality for citizens, service users and employees. The CES is underpinned by a set of high level strategic objectives which incorporate the requirements of the Equality Act 2010 and the Public Sector Equality Duty:
- to tackle victimisation, harassment and discrimination
  - to improve access to services
  - to close the gap in outcomes for citizens
  - to increase understanding and mutual respect between communities
  - to increase participation and engagement
- 9.2 The central concern from an equalities perspective in relation to communal heating systems regards the cost of systems and how these compare to the equivalent cost of individual boilers. If communal systems were more expensive this could raise equalities issues in relation to the impact on low income families living in properties served by communal heating. Recommendation 4 on cost comparators is relevant to this issue and the planned Heat Cost Comparator being developed by the Heat Trust should

inform future thinking about the policy considerations relating to communal heating systems.

## **10 Environmental implications**

- 10.1 There are no specific environmental implications arising from this report however national, regional and local targets for carbon reduction depend in part on the implementation of improved design for new buildings and given the overall contribution of space and water heating to current carbon emissions decentralised energy is an important part of the mix of relevant solutions.

## **11 Conclusion**

- 11.1 The Housing Select Committee scrutiny review on communal heating has addressed a challenging and timely subject in a way that has engaged with and received support from a number of external organisations locally, regionally and nationally.
- 11.2 In the right circumstances, with the right design, construction and management and an understanding of the whole-life costs and benefits communal heating can deliver heating and hot water in an efficient and cost effective way. But the supply chain involved in delivering and running systems is often disjointed and there are considerable skills gaps across the industry. The consequence of this has been schemes that are not appropriate or that have not been specified, built or maintained correctly. This is not simply a problem of engineering: it is often a social problem with significant consequences for residents living in properties that are overheated and expensive. It is also potentially an environmental problem if assumed carbon emissions are not delivered in practice.
- 11.3 The Committee's assessment of communal heating systems is echoed in the new Code of Practice published by the Association of Decentralised Energy in July 2015. The Code should be supported as an important step to addressing the issues that have been raised. There is more that central and regional government should be doing to understand and respond to the gap between theory and reality on communal heating systems and the Housing Select Committee's review is a useful opportunity to reinforce this message.
- 11.4 The Mayor is recommended to agree the recommendations set out above to:
- Approve the responses from the Executive Director for Customer Services.
  - Agree that this report should be forwarded to the Housing Select Committee.

## **12. Background documents and report author**

Scope of the Housing Select Committee review into communal heating  
<http://councilmeetings.lewisham.gov.uk/documents/s31297/Appendix%20D%20-%20Communal%20heating%20review%20scope%20011014.pdf>

Final report from the Housing Select Committee review into communal heating  
[http://councilmeetings.lewisham.gov.uk/documents/s36591/05AppendixACHSRevisedReportv2\\_190515.pdf](http://councilmeetings.lewisham.gov.uk/documents/s36591/05AppendixACHSRevisedReportv2_190515.pdf)

12.1 If you would like any further information regarding this report please contact Martin O'Brien on 0208 314 6605.



Housing Select Committee			
Title	Affordability Review – Evidence session 1	Item No.	4
Wards	All		
Contributors	Scrutiny Manager		
Class	Part 1	27 October 2015	

## 1. Purpose of paper

- 1.1. The Housing Select Committee has agreed to undertake a review looking at the topic of Affordability of Social Housing and the Private Rented Sector as part of its work programme for 2015/16. This report and appendix A, coupled with evidence provided at the meeting, will provide information for the Committee to discuss as part of its review.

## 2. Recommendations

- 2.1. The Select Committee is asked to:

- note the content of the report and appendix and consider the information presented at Committee.

## 3. Background

- 3.1. At the meeting of the Housing Select Committee on 15 April 2015, the Committee decided as part of its work programme to undertake an in-depth review entitled Affordability.
- 3.2. The Committee considered and agreed a scoping report at its meeting on 16 September 2016 that set out the keys lines of enquiry for the review as well as the timetable. The Committee also agreed that the focus would be around the affordability of Social Housing and the Private Rented Sector. The key lines of enquiry for the Review are as follows:
  - How can we define what ‘affordability’ means at a local level?
  - What are the factors that are causing affordability issues across all housing tenures in the borough?
  - What are the Council and its key housing partners doing to alleviate the issue of affordability of housing in the borough?
  - What is the Council doing in terms of working with developers to ensure affordability issues in developments are appropriately addressed in the borough?

- Are the Council's affordable housing objectives (as in the Sustainable Communities Strategy, the Core Strategy, the new Housing Strategy etc.) being met?
- What are the policy options that could help deliver more affordable housing across all tenures in Lewisham?
- Are there any current initiatives or research being conducted that could make housing more affordable in Lewisham?

3.2 This meeting will be the first evidence session of the Review.

#### **4. Witnesses for the First Evidence Session**

4.1. Witnesses for the first evidence session for the Affordability Review have been invited from the following organisations:

- Affinity Sutton
- London and Quadrant Housing Trust (L&Q)

#### **5. Affinity Sutton**

5.1. Please see attached at Appendix A, a report from Affinity Sutton entitled 'Affordability: A Step Forward': Establishing principles for rent setting', published in May 2015.

5.2. Affinity Sutton is a national housing association, with 57,000 properties across over 120 local authorities across the country. In Lewisham, Affinity Sutton has 593 properties, which are in the Orchard Gardens and Leybridge & Newstead estates, which were both stock transfers from the Council.

5.3. Affinity Sutton were mentioned in the Scoping Paper for the Affordability Review as they have recently adopted a new rent model, which is lower than the Affordable Rent of 80% and 65% of market rate. This was after they had conducted research in conjunction with the Cambridge Centre for Housing and Planning Research to consider what the principles of setting a rent policy should be and what their new Affordable Rent policy might look like.

5.4. Affinity Sutton will be represented at the meeting by Neil McCall, Group Operations Director.

#### **6. L&Q**

6.1. L&Q manages over 70,000 homes in London and South-East England. As well as building homes, they also help manage the homes after completion and are involved in community regeneration projects. Their 'L&Q Foundation' also invests £4 million each year in opportunities for local communities, including employment training, activities for young and older residents, financial advice and community building. L&Q are partnered with local authorities, voluntary organisations, faith groups, social enterprises and business networks.

- 6.2. L&Q manages over 7,000 properties in Lewisham. Their property portfolio in the borough mainly consists of properties the Council has transferred to them in the Grove Park, Catford, Rushey Green, Forest Hill and Sydenham areas. The first stock transfer from the Council to L&Q was Lewisham Park which took place in 2007.
- 6.3. L&Q will be represented at the meeting by Steve Moseley, Assistant Director, Strategy & Operations

## **7. Further implications**

- 7.1. At this stage there are no specific financial, legal, environmental or equalities implications to consider. However, each will be addressed as part of the review.

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# **AFFORDABILITY: A STEP FORWARD**

## **Establishing principles for rent setting**

by Kathy Ellis and Christine Whitehead

May 2015





# EXECUTIVE SUMMARY

Affinity Sutton is a national Housing Association and as a business for social purpose it wants to ensure that Affordable Rents are set in a way that is genuinely affordable to low income households whilst continuing to build new and maintain existing homes. This research was set up to consider what the principles of setting a rent policy should be and what their new Affordable Rent policy might look like. The lessons learned here and the principles of rent setting identified will be equally relevant to other developing Housing Associations although not all will be able to maintain development capacity at the same time as reducing rents to affordable levels.

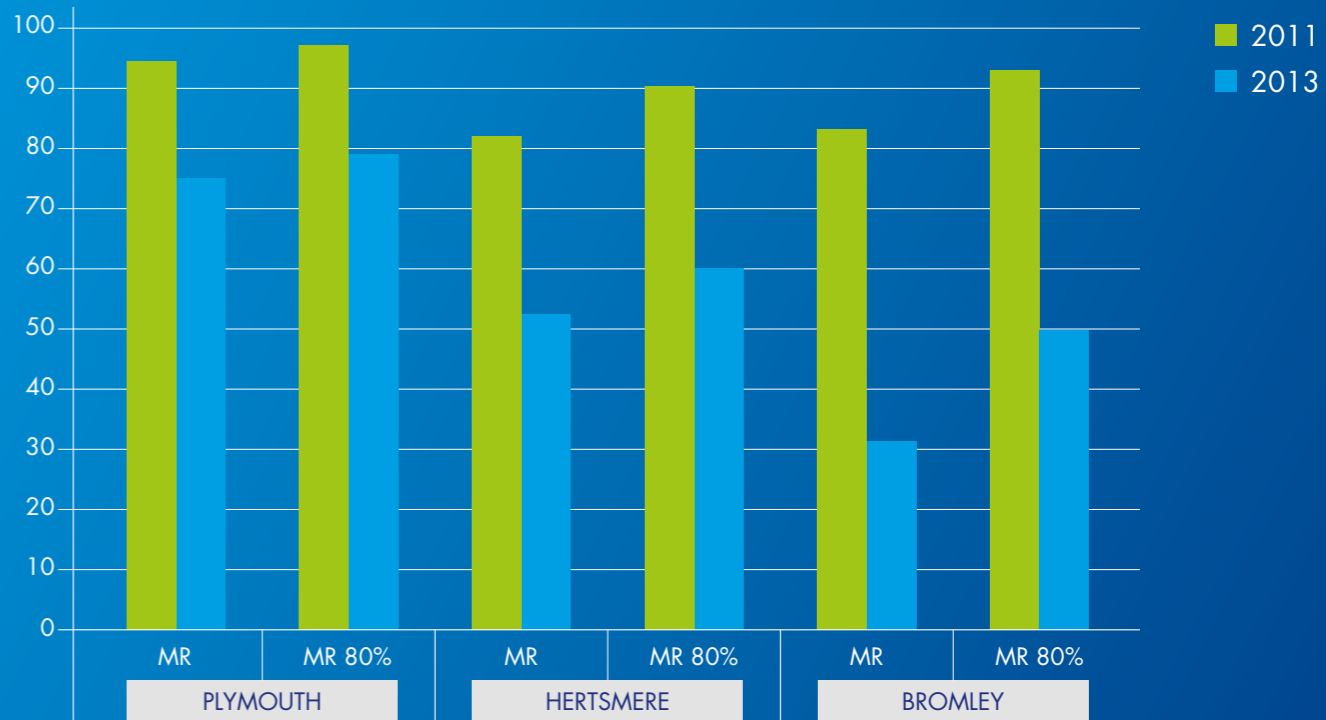
We know that affordability is complex – it depends on incomes, rents, household composition, geography and benefits – as well as on how we define it. As Figure 1 shows, housing affordability has worsened for renters since we last looked at it in 2011 and more working households are dependent on housing benefits to pay their housing costs.

Rents have risen faster than incomes so the affordability of any given proportion of market rent has fallen; but Affordable Rents set as a proportion of these higher market rents also raise more revenue. For Housing Associations there is a tension between putting resources towards housebuilding and holding down rents, as shown in Figure 2. The challenge of this trade off will need to be addressed by different organisations in the context of their charitable mission, vision and values.

This paper follows the 2014 research paper *Housing Costs, Affordability and Rent Setting*, produced by the Cambridge Centre for Housing and Planning Research (CCHPR), and commissioned by Affinity Sutton.

It is produced by Professor Emeritus Christine Whitehead, London School of Economics, and Kathy Ellis, Affinity Sutton, with thanks to Chihiro Udagawa, CCHPR.

**Figure 1**  
Percentage of local working population able to afford rents 2011 and 2013



MR = private market rents  
MR80% = 80% of private market rents (the maximum rent permitted under the government Affordable Rent programme)



Figure 2



We have identified a number of key principles for setting an affordable rent:

- 1 Affordability is complex and options for rent setting can become complicated and tangled when investigated. It was agreed early in the process that a rent policy must be simple to understand and implement.
- 2 If priority is given to making rents affordable to low income households there is a case for lowering rents to help the significant minority of tenants paying their own rent without Housing Benefit.
- 3 Because they have a lower minimum residual income requirement it is easier to help single people off benefit by reducing rents than larger households. Therefore it makes sense to move away from current policies where rents are proportionately higher for smaller units. This would improve affordability for couples in one bed homes who are most likely to be paying all of their rent without Housing Benefit.
- 4 The research has found that rents in low demand areas are often higher proportions of local wages than in higher demand areas – suggesting that rents should not be set nearer to market levels as is generally the case at the present time. It is not always the case that higher wages are paid in higher rent areas. The analysis therefore suggests moving to a simpler flatter approach across different areas.
- 5 Universal Credit will push income thresholds to escape benefits higher so helping people off benefits by reducing rents will become even harder in the longer term – suggesting that a further rethink on rent levels will be required once it is established.

As clarified in the previous research<sup>1</sup> there are benefits to increasing the provision of intermediate products for those in stable employment. But these must not be used to replace housing that is genuinely affordable without benefits for lower income households. Local Authorities have, in the main, continued to nominate applicants for Affordable Rent vacancies, using it to house those who might otherwise have been accommodated in social rented homes.

For all developing Housing Associations there is a trade-off to be made between:

- higher rents resulting in more capacity to build homes but reduced affordability for those paying rent and greater long-term risk to rental income from downward pressure on welfare costs; and
- lower rents resulting in improved affordability for the significant minority of tenants who pay their own rent and for those able to escape Housing Benefit (largely single person households) as a result of these lower rents but it also means less capacity to build homes and ultimately fewer affordable homes.

Affinity Sutton was able to demonstrate that by using its own funds it could maintain its existing development capacity whilst reducing rents even though grant rates would not be increased in order to make good any shortfall. It is acknowledged that not all developing Housing Associations will be in a position to do this.

This paper does not offer a silver bullet to answer the question of how to set an Affordable Rent policy but we hope that it adds something to the debate and helps others who are looking at the topic.

## INTRODUCTION

**For many years Housing Associations have had little choice over setting their rent policy because they were required to set rents in relation to target rents and to increase them annually only up to RPI plus 0.5%. This left little scope for a proactive approach to rent setting. The introduction of the Affordable Rents regime in 2011 changed this position as government encouraged Housing Associations wanting to develop new homes to increase rents to up to 80% of market rents to counter reduced rates of grant funding, thus enabling some choices to be made by the association regarding where rents should be pitched for new homes and a portion of re-lets.**

At that point Affinity Sutton set its Affordable Rents in London and the South East at 80% of market rents on smaller properties in line with GLA and HCA guidance. In light of the research into affordability undertaken in 2011<sup>2</sup> Affinity Sutton chose to limit the rent charged on larger units to 65% as these were judged to be unaffordable at 80% to larger households with higher outgoings. At the time there was an expectation that allocations to Affordable Rent properties would be to working households. Nominations have however been almost identical to those for social rent vacancies.

As the impact of Affordable Rents and other changes - notably those to the welfare regime - have become more obvious it is now an appropriate time to assess what has happened since the policy was introduced; to review the principles and evidence on the impact of different rent structures; and set out possible future approaches to rent determination.

Affinity Sutton is one of the largest providers of affordable housing in England with over 57,000 homes across 121 Local Authority areas. In 2011, Affinity Sutton initially saw the government's proposed Affordable Rents at 80% of market rents as an opportunity to provide an affordable alternative to private sector rents. It was viewed as an intermediate rent offer for those who would struggle to afford increasing private rents but who would not

ordinarily have access to social housing - a core group of lower income working households. To test this approach Affinity Sutton commissioned a team from the Cambridge Centre for Housing and Policy Research (CCHPR) led by Christine Whitehead to look at whether there would be demand for such a product and, if so, which households would be able to afford to pay affordable rents.

The resulting paper, *Market pegged social rents & local income distributions* (2011)<sup>3</sup> confirmed that there were a significant number of households who would benefit from an intermediate rent such as this. It highlighted that, although London stood out with the highest rent to income ratios, affordability issues in the private rented sector were by no means limited to the capital.

Affinity Sutton's subsequent research paper, *Bridging the Affordability Gap* (2011)<sup>4</sup>, built on the findings of the CCHPR report to conclude that making properties available to working households at rents set at 80% of market rents would provide an opportunity to increase affordability for small households. However, it found that larger households requiring three or more bedrooms would generally find 80% of market rents unaffordable on median incomes. This affordability gap would be faced by both those dependent on benefits and those in work. The then imminent introduction of the £26,000 benefit cap would mean that for families with three or more children dependent on benefits the cap would 'kick in' before covering the rent on 3 and 4 bedroom homes and even for those in full time work, gross household earnings had to be substantially higher than local averages to avoid some dependence on Housing Benefit.

Having learnt that rents pegged at 80% of market rents could help smaller households but were not affordable for larger working households, Affinity Sutton responded by setting a rent policy with 80% of market rents for one and two bedroom properties, and reduced rents to 65% of market rents for larger homes. To let these intermediate rent homes Affinity Sutton created a brand "Rent4Less", to market these Affordable Homes directly to working households who would not normally be eligible for social housing or Housing Benefit.

<sup>1</sup> Whitehead, C. et al *Market pegged social rents & local income distributions* CCHPR (2011) and Ellis, K. *Bridging The Affordability Gap* Affinity Sutton (2011)

<sup>2</sup> Ellis, K. *Bridging The Affordability Gap* Affinity Sutton (2011)

<sup>3</sup> Whitehead, C. et al. *Market pegged social rents & local income distribution* CCHPR (2011)

<sup>4</sup> Ellis, K. *Ibid*

## WHY REVISIT OUR AFFORDABLE RENT POLICY NOW?

There are a range of reasons why Affinity Sutton wished to revisit affordability and the association's policy for setting Affordable Rents:

### Affordable Rent properties are not being let to the households anticipated in Bridging the Affordability Gap

Whereas Affordable Rent was initially viewed by Affinity Sutton and was thought to be promoted by government as an additional intermediate tenure offer, with the removal of the higher grant subsidy to support traditional lower rents it soon became clear that this was not going to complement new social housing but largely replace it. Rather than being seen as a means of providing a cheaper alternative to private rents, Affordable Rents are increasingly taking the place of traditional social rents as residents are housed predominantly from Local Authority housing registers. From December 2012 to November 2013 just 175 of Affinity Sutton's 2,624 Affordable Rent lets (7%) were made outside of Local Authority nominations. This means that the household demographics of Affordable Rent are very similar to those for social rents rather than those modelled in the earlier research.

### The proportion of households in work who require Housing Benefit to meet the increasing cost of private rents is large - and increasing

The 2011 research focused on those in work who could afford to pay 80% market rents themselves and the subsequent analysis in Bridging the Affordability Gap looked specifically at benefit dependent households. Now a third group is increasing in size and significance – those who are in paid work but still require Housing Benefit to afford their rent. In 2012 the Building and Social Housing Foundation published analysis of DWP statistics highlighting that 93% of new housing benefit claims made between January 2010 and December 2011 were made by households containing at least one employed adult<sup>5</sup>. It is essential that any new affordable rent policy takes this group into account – particularly when considering how rent policies might enable some of these households to avoid Housing Benefit.

### Feeling that the existing rent policy (65%/80%) might not be helping low income smaller households

The increase in market rents in many parts of the country means that 80% of private rents may be becoming increasingly out of reach for households. One issue that the Affinity Sutton rent policy of 80% and 65% of market rent did not take into account was the fact that market rents already adjust for affordability differences between different sized households – for example, the rent on a one bed flat is a lot more than a third of the rent on a three bed flat. So although by reducing the percentage of market rents on larger properties the policy was assisting some larger families, by retaining 80% rents on smaller units the policy was adding to the disproportionate expense of living in a smaller home. It also resulted in the perverse scenario that in some areas the rent on a 3 bedroom house was less than a 2 bedroom property. In this research Affinity Sutton wanted to consider whether reducing some rents might enable residents to escape Housing Benefit and therefore retain more of their earned income, improving their standard of living.

### National considerations

Our earlier research was limited to considering five areas in London and the South, in four of which market rents were high so affordability of 80% of private rents could be problematic even for those in full time work. As this piece of research looks to inform rent policy more generally it is necessary to consider a broader range of areas where Affinity Sutton has a significant interest. While Affinity Sutton works in over 120 Local Authorities, this piece of research focusses on the 27 areas where the association has 80% of its housing stock.

### Who benefits from different rent levels?

Most importantly the original work concentrated on identifying groups of potential tenants that could benefit from Affordable Rents. This round of analysis aims to address whether the rents as set are helping the types of tenants who Affinity Sutton is actually housing – a very different group from that identified in the original research who could afford Affordable Rents without benefits but not market rents.

## WHAT DOES A RENT POLICY NEED TO DO?

When looking to optimise an Affordable Rent policy at a Housing Association we walk a tightrope. It must ideally:

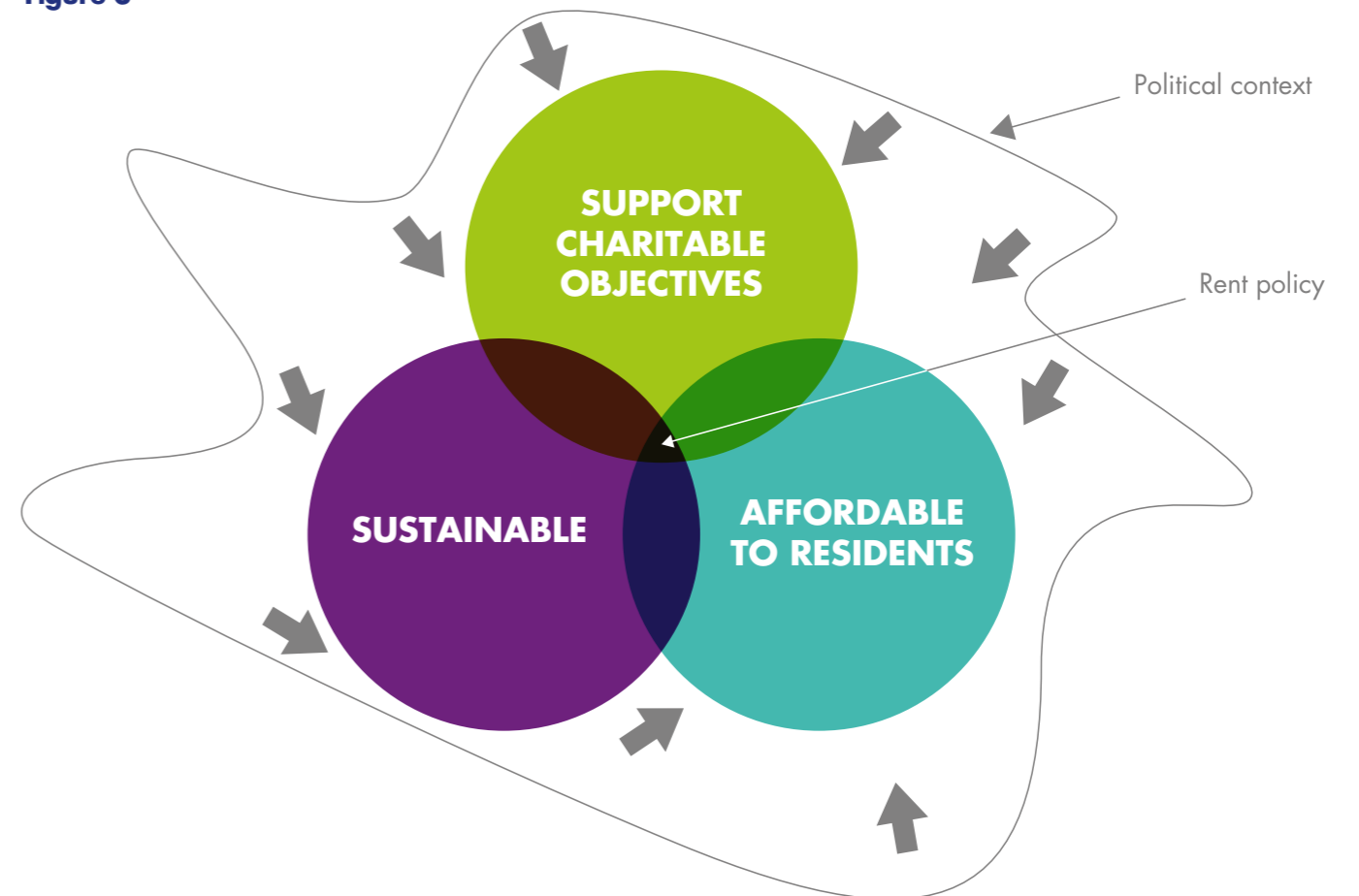
- be affordable to residents (meeting the needs of all three groups – fully benefit dependent/working and paying all rent/working but in receipt of Housing Benefit);
- be sustainable (must cover costs of debt funding, property maintenance and investment); and
- support charitable objectives (build more homes, invest in communities).

Figure 3 demonstrates the complex balance that needs to be struck in a shifting political context.

Decisions then need to be made by Housing Associations over where these areas overlap, which circles can/should be larger/smaller and indeed at what point the model stops working. The challenge of this trade off will be different in each organisation and fundamentally, any policy must be politically aware both in terms of national policy and Local Authority requirements.

Many large developing Housing Associations will conduct their own affordability research and all will find their own delicate balance between what people can afford to pay and what they need to receive in rent to keep building and to sustain existing stock. Other associations may not have the resources to undertake extensive research of this kind so it is hoped that by sharing our experience and the learning we have gained, others can benefit.

Figure 3





# STAGE 1: THE STARTING POINT

CCHPR were asked to examine Local Authority by Local Authority the proportions of different household types that could afford three different rent levels – the average social rent; Affinity Sutton’s average Affordable Rent or 80% of market where Affinity Sutton does not have such properties; and market rent. Local income distributions by different household types of working age were estimated<sup>6</sup> and the household types were allocated to the most usual size of dwelling and its associated rent.

There are a number of ways to measure affordability such as requiring a maximum percentage of household income spent on rent (commonly 35%) or a minimum residual income after rent<sup>7</sup>. The definition used for this study is that a rent will be considered affordable where the household income remaining after rent is at least 20% more than a household’s minimum residual income requirement (120% of a household’s Income Support amount).

### The findings were fairly clear-cut:

In the 27 authority areas examined, the largest proportions of working households unable to afford market rents without Housing Benefit support were usually among lone parent households. However the largest numbers were generally among couples and single person households. Table 1 below provides an example with the high numbers of working singles and couples unable to afford market rents highlighted in yellow and the high proportions of working lone parents unable to afford these rents highlighted in orange.

Working couples without children generally find market rents more affordable than other types of working household. This is in part because they are here assumed to need only one bedroom. However even on this basis, in London (Islington, Kensington and Chelsea, Lewisham, Croydon and Southwark) over 25% of all working couples without children could still not afford market rents.

Across the country, the picture of unaffordability for couples with one child (who are allocated a two bed property) is less geographically concentrated - with over 20% unable to afford market rents in Kensington and Chelsea, Islington and Croydon in London but also in Kingston upon Hull, Brighton and Hove and Middlesbrough – so including both higher income/higher rent and lower income/lower rent areas.

Even among those working, lone parents can rarely afford the rent, with proportions unable to afford market rents rising to 78% in Lewisham for those with one child and 75% plus for those with two children in Dacorum and Croydon.

Single person households in full time employment face particular difficulties in paying market rents in the North East and Yorkshire and Humberside as shown in Table 2. For instance over a third of such households are unable to pay in Middlesbrough even though rents are low by national standards. This reflects the low wages available in this area.

The proportion of households in each Local Authority area able to afford Affinity Sutton’s affordable rents (or 80% market where this is not available) but who could not afford market rents is generally estimated as

considerably smaller than in the earlier research. This is in part because we included part time workers for households with more than one person. But importantly, we looked at areas outside of those very high rent areas in London and the South East where a 20% reduction against market rent is more significant.

Among couples and single people it normally makes the rents affordable for around 2–3% more households – sometimes even less. This is enough to support investment in an intermediate tenure product in higher rent areas but not enough to support the use of 80% rents more generally.

Because wages are so low in some areas, even the impact of reducing rents to social rents is often not large. Among single people working full time (the largest group of working households accommodated), over 30% cannot afford social rents in the North East. The figure is still 20% plus in much of the East and Yorkshire and Humberside.

The impact on couples with children and especially 2 or 3 children was a little more for affordable rents and considerably larger for social rents. The benefits of social rents were far greater for working lone parent households.

Most importantly from the point of view of rent policy, if a household is in receipt of full Housing Benefit it does not matter what the rent is. Wherever they are in the country their income after rent is the same – and any rent increase or decrease will be fully offset by Housing Benefit up to the Local Housing Allowance ceiling. The same applies to any household on partial benefit – any increase or decrease in rent will be fully offset. The

only difference is that if they are on partial Housing Benefit, a low enough rent will enable the household to come off Housing Benefit at a lower income.

### The three most important findings from the point of view of setting a general rent policy are:

- 1 The rent set does not make any difference to households who are dependent on full benefits or those working and on partial Housing Benefit. Holding rents down in this context simply reduces the Housing Benefit bill. A small number can be assisted by holding rents down low enough for them to escape Housing Benefit altogether if they are working and receiving partial Housing Benefit.
- 2 Affordability problems are by no means always concentrated in the highest rent areas. This is because the spatial distribution of affordability reflects both the levels of incomes and the levels of rents – so low rent/low income areas such as Middleborough can be just as unaffordable as higher rent areas. However it is in these areas that reducing rents especially for those in one bed units has the best chance of helping those on low wages to escape Housing Benefit.
- 3 Those in larger units are much more likely to be in receipt of Housing Benefit – and it is almost impossible to help low income households in these larger dwellings – couples and lone parents with more than one child – to escape Housing Benefit by reducing rent. So holding rents down on larger units can only help the minority paying all their own rent.

**Table 1**

Working households who cannot afford market rents in Hertsmere (120% of IS, Summer 2013)

LA	Household type	% of households	Number of households
Hertsmere	<b>Couple</b>	22.1	<b>1,093</b>
Hertsmere	Couple + 1 child	16.2	506
Hertsmere	Couple + 2 children	23.6	791
Hertsmere	Couple + 3 children	35.6	549
Hertsmere	<b>Lone Parent + 1 child</b>	<b>69.8</b>	631
Hertsmere	<b>Lone Parent + 2 children</b>	<b>72.7</b>	452
Hertsmere	<b>Single person household</b>	30.2	<b>1,082</b>

**Table 2**

Proportion of single person working households unable to afford market, affordable and social rents (Full time working singles, 120% of IS, Summer 2013)

Region	LA	Market Rent	80% Market Rent	Social Rent
London	Bromley	8.6	6.0	3.7
London	Islington	25.6	19.3	8.0
NE	Middlesbrough	35.9	32.8	32.1
SE	Basingstoke and Deane	13.5	9.9	7.2
SW	Plymouth	22.6	18.9	15.7
WM	Stoke-on-Trent	20.1	17.0	15.9
YH	Leeds	23.3	20.0	16.8

% of working households for whom the rent is unaffordable

<sup>6</sup> For details of how household incomes by type were modelled see Whitehead, C. et al *Housing Costs, Affordability and Rent Setting* CCHPR (2014)  
<sup>7</sup> For a discussion of different measures of affordability see Whitehead, C. et al, *Market pegged social rents and local income distributions* CCHPR (2011)

## STAGE 2: WHO IS BEING HOUSED AND WHAT CAN THEY AFFORD?

As Affordable Rents have now been in place for some time Affinity Sutton can now consider whether rents set at 80% (1 and 2 beds) and 65% (3 and 4 beds) of market are affordable for those actually being housed as opposed to those modelled in the 2011 research – or whether there are better options available. The proportionately lower Affordable Rents at 65% of market for larger homes followed the earlier research findings that families paying their own rent would struggle to afford the maximum 80% of market. However, one year on, fewer families are being housed in Affinity Sutton's Affordable Rent properties than anticipated and the two largest groups housed in 2013 were those entitled to one and two bedroom properties: singles and lone parents. It is therefore essential that the rent policy works for these groups and that the affordability of smaller properties is fully considered.

Single person households comprised 31% of Local Authority nominated Affinity Sutton Affordable Rent lettings in 2013 (where household composition is known) and 66% of these pay their rent themselves without recourse to Housing Benefit. Those paying their rent themselves would benefit from a lower rent and any increase in rent would have a direct negative impact on their household finances.

The remaining 34% of singles in receipt of Housing Benefit are the group most able to be helped by a reduction in rent because their comparatively lower residual income requirement means that they are likely to be able to escape Housing Benefit altogether and therefore keep more of any increase in earnings they gain.

Lone parents with one child accounted for 22% of Affinity Sutton Affordable Rents via Local Authority nominations in 2013 and 76% of these rely on Housing Benefit for at least some of their rent as Table 3 shows.

To test whether a rent policy could be achieved that assisted these large groups we looked at where rents would need to be set for a single person household and a lone parent with one child to afford rents without needing Housing Benefit assuming they work a 37 hour week and earn the living wage.

*Note on Figures 4 and 5:*

*Using London Living Wage (LLW) and National Living Wage (NLW) provide a very flat income proxy as they are based on two different hourly wages across all regions.*

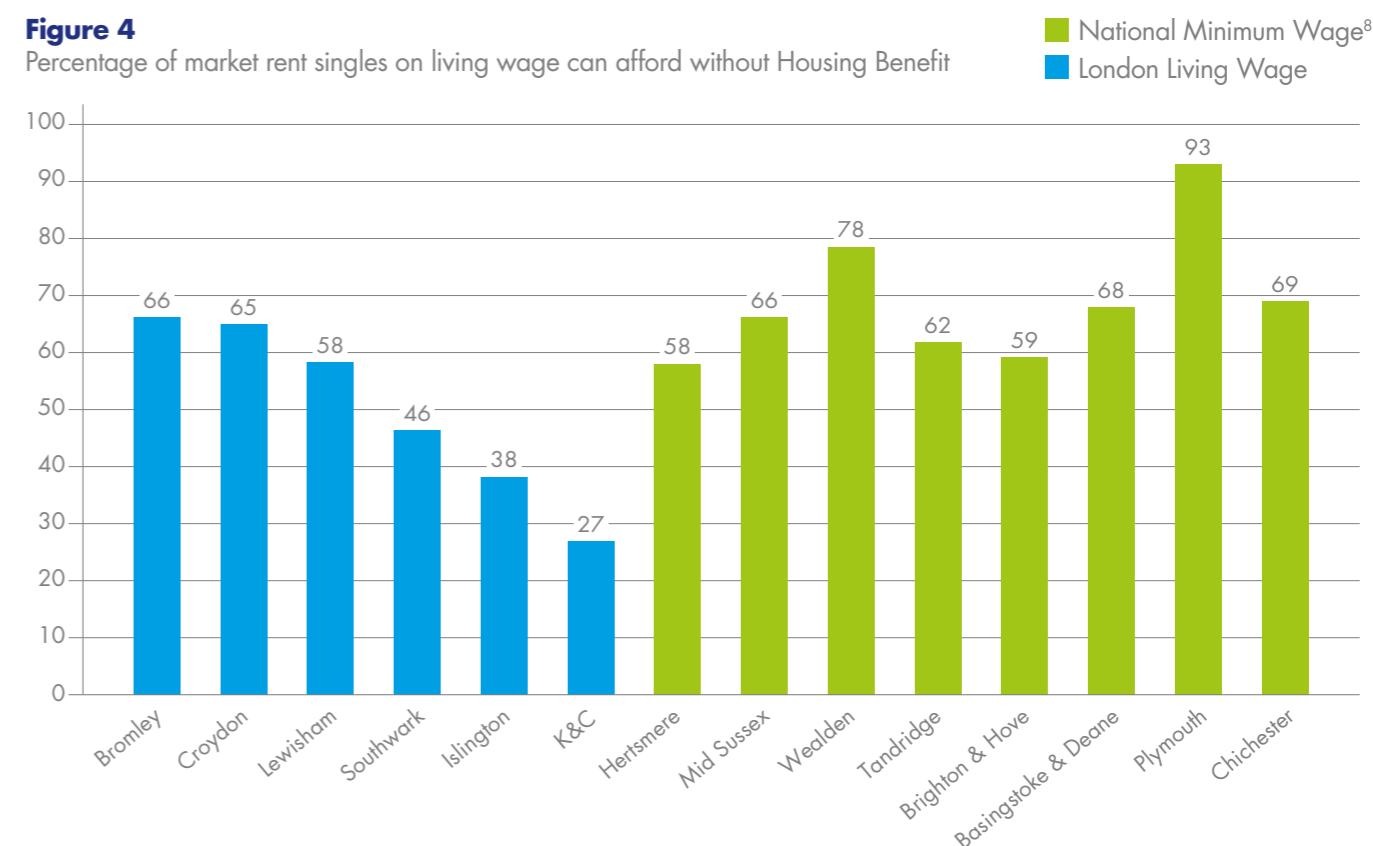
**Table 3**

Affinity Sutton Affordable Renters via Local Authority nominations 2013 (known as the waiting list/Choice Based Lettings)

Family Comp	No of Tenancies	In receipt of Housing Benefit
Single person	681	447
Single parent + one child	494	376
Single parent + two children	240	165
Couple + one child	211	84
Couple + two children	157	61
Couple + three children	124	59
Single parent + three children	112	87
Couple	69	32
Couple + four/more children	45	29
Single parent + four/more children	29	23
Older couple	25	20
Older single	21	15

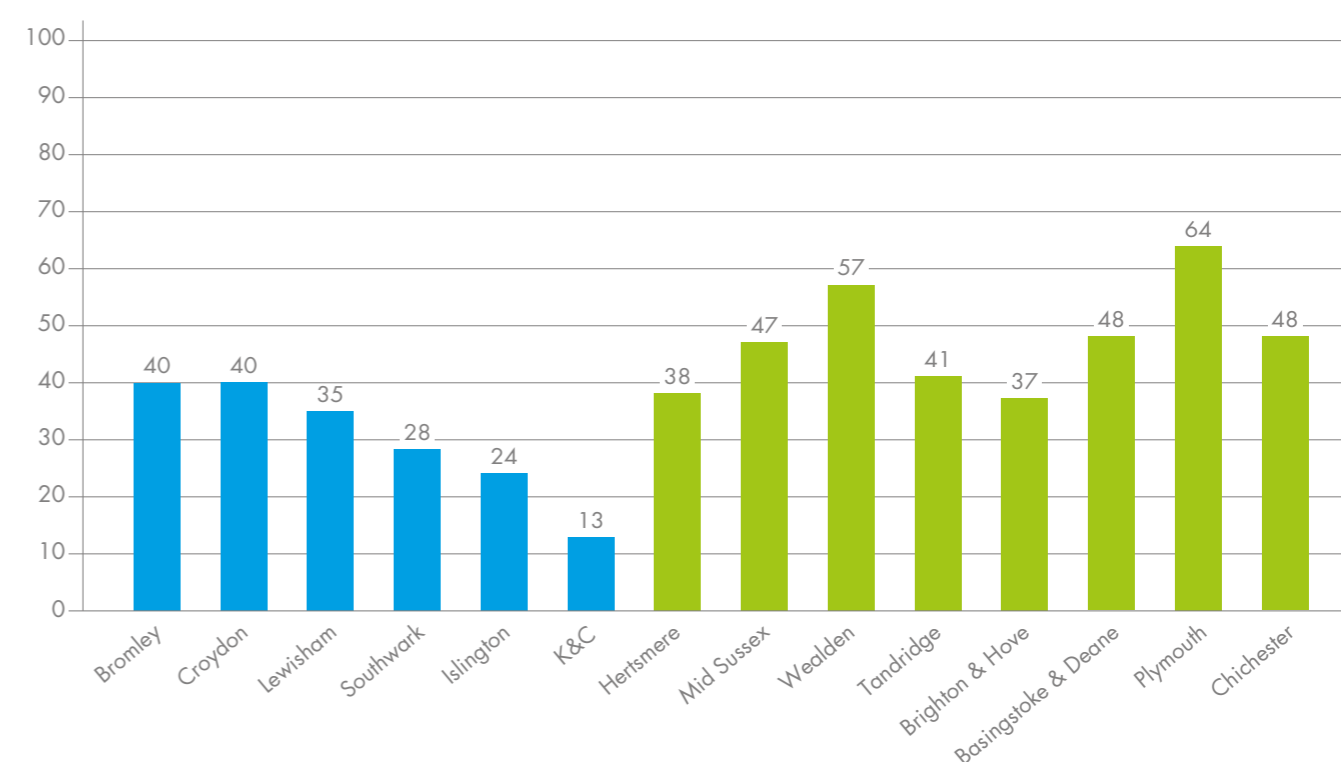
**Figure 4**

Percentage of market rent singles on living wage can afford without Housing Benefit



**Figure 5**

Percentage of market rent a lone parent on living wage can afford without Housing Benefit





**These examples show that rent policy is a poor mechanism to compensate for low pay. A small increase in earnings per hour can have a far greater impact on household income than reducing rent which simply reduces the amount of Housing Benefit being paid.**

WORKED EXAMPLE 1

**SUNITA,  
A FICTIONAL  
CASE STUDY**

**Sunita, 35, is single and works locally earning £325 per week (42.5hrs a week at national living wage).**

On her 1 bedroom privately rented flat in Hertsmere she requires over £50 a week from Housing Benefit to pay her rent. If she were in an Affordable Rent property let at 80% of market rent she would still require Housing Benefit as her rent would need to be at 58% of market to be affordable to her. However, if Sunita had a pay rise of 90p per hour she could afford an Affordable Rent at 80% of market locally without relying on Housing Benefit.

WORKED EXAMPLE 2

**MARIE,  
A FICTIONAL  
CASE STUDY**

**Marie, 32, is single and has two boys aged 9 and 12. She works 37 hours across 4 days a week and earns £325.**

The boys are settled in at their school and Marie's mum picks them up in the afternoons except on Fridays when Marie collects them. The family live in a 2 bedroom Affordable Rent flat and although Marie considers herself lucky to have the support of her mum and a steady job paying the London Living Wage, Housing Benefit currently still has to cover most of the rent. To afford her rent without Housing Benefit, Marie's rent would need to be set at just 40% of market rent.

If Marie were to rent privately her rent would be significantly higher but it would make no difference to the amount of money she has after paying rent as Housing Benefit would increase to cover this additional cost (up to Local Housing Allowance).

**PRINCIPLES FOR SETTING A RENT STRUCTURE**

As we have noted above, the current approach to setting rents has been to keep rents low in higher rent areas and on larger properties with the aim of helping those in the greater need. However the principles behind this approach – that of trying to ensure people have adequate incomes after rent - only hold if households are paying their own rents and rent to income ratios and incomes after rent payments are lower for larger households in higher rent areas. Under the current welfare regime - and indeed current market conditions across the country - these principles often do not hold. A different approach to rent setting may be a better way both to improve affordability and ensure appropriate revenue levels to maintain the Association's development programme.

**Rents and Housing Benefit**

The fundamental principle of Housing Benefit (subject to some issues around service charges) is that every social tenant household in receipt of Housing Benefit and living in an appropriately sized unit receives at least the relevant Income Support Applicable Amount as 'residual' income as long as the rent remains below the Local Housing Allowance (LHA). Thus if the rent is increased, as long as the new rent is below the relevant LHA, 100% of the increase will be covered by Housing Benefit regardless whether the household is in receipt of full or partial benefit. The same applies to any reduction in rent – Housing Benefit entitlement simply reduces by exactly same amount to leave the household with the same residual income.

- Some two thirds of social tenants receive Housing Benefit either full or partial and are therefore unaffected by the rent set as long as it is below the LHA. This could apply to a much larger proportion of tenants under Universal Credit (UC) (although there are additional complications).
- The proportion of those living in larger homes who are in receipt of Housing Benefit is also much higher than average.
- The logic is therefore to set rents in such a way as to help the minority of tenants who are paying their own rent and those who, as a result of lower rents, could escape Housing Benefit.

- For those paying their own rents, lower rents give them more income to spend on other essentials. So reducing rents where rents are high appears to make the most sense. But, as we saw above, very few family households in larger units are able to afford their rent without the help of at least partial Housing Benefit. Proportions paying their own rent are highest in smaller units – especially among couples without children and to a lesser extent in proportionate terms (but more in absolute terms) single people in full time work.
- Looking at whether it is possible to reduce rents to levels where higher proportions of tenants are able to pay their own rents depends on the relationship between rents and incomes – with each additional £1 of income reducing the Housing Benefit the tenant receives by 65 pence. So rents in high rent areas would have to be reduced by much greater proportions to enable a tenant on a given income to avoid Housing Benefit as a result of the reduction. It is much more likely to be a successful strategy in low rent areas. This is particularly true if it is assumed that tenants in work earn the minimum wage which is invariant across the country or the living wage which varies only between London and elsewhere so low rents increase the chances of avoidance.
- The welfare system therefore generates a number of counter intuitive implications: there is little benefit to tenants in keeping rents down for larger units and there is more to be gained from lowering rents for small units; equally it may be more effective to reduce rents in lower rent areas unless in high rent areas residents can earn disproportionately higher incomes – which tends not to be the case for those currently entering social housing.

One way by which Associations can avoid some of these issues is to house higher proportions of households able to afford to pay their own rents, even in larger units. This provides a rationale for providing an intermediate tenure (of the sort under discussion when the first research was done) but does not meet the core mission of providing good quality housing for lower income vulnerable households.



## IMPLICATIONS FOR SETTING A RENT POLICY

Rents for new lettings in the marketplace have risen faster than incomes in many parts of the country, so any given proportion of market rent raises more revenue. It is therefore possible to lower the overall proportion of market rent to help affordability, while still maintaining adequate income for the organisation.

More difficult is the decision as to whether to maintain current rent structures which favour larger units and higher rent areas. One possible way forward might be to devise a complex rent structure policy which takes account at local level of exactly who is being housed and their likely rent to income ratios. However, rents and affordability vary so greatly over even small areas it is not possible for a rent structure effectively to take account of such differences. Even if it managed to do so at a given point in time, some local conditions would change and the rationale would disappear.

The general principle is therefore to keep it simple – while seeking to remove those aspects of current rent policy that are reducing revenues without helping tenants. A simple approach is particularly appropriate at the present time because the introduction of Universal Credit will almost certainly change the parameters and require a further rethink about how best to help current tenants.

- To help those paying their own rent and to help tenants avoid Housing Benefit it is desirable to move away from current policies with respect to property size perhaps towards an approach which reflects relative market values more closely. This will help those in smaller units while very few tenants in larger units are likely to be affected.
- Equally it would be better to move towards a more proportionate approach to rents by area as at the present time many working households, especially single people in full time employment in lower rent areas remain on Housing Benefit because rents are set much closer to market levels than in high rent areas.
- The analysis at this point therefore suggests moving to a simpler rent setting approach based on a single, lower proportion of market rents across all areas.
- Finally there remains a strong case for increasing provision of intermediate products for those in stable employment who can pay 80% of market rents from their own pocket but who find market rents unaffordable.

## STAGE 3: PRINCIPLES INTO POLICY

Having established some guiding principles for a rent policy, Housing Associations need to go through a number of additional steps in order to generate a structure that can be put into practice and works for them.

There are many different ways that organisations can use research to inform or shape policy and this section explains some of the steps Affinity Sutton took in its bid to move from research principles towards an operational policy<sup>9</sup>. It is not a blueprint or an advocated approach; it is simply a record of avenues explored and further lessons learned. It is hoped that others in the sector will benefit from this account.

In an ideal world the route from principles to a coherent rent policy would be clear, direct and uninterrupted. In reality we found it to be rather like a game of Snakes and Ladders: we experienced ‘light-bulb’ moments that appeared to shoot us up a long ladder toward our goal, only to be faced with a new discovery or question that slid us down the cruel snake of alternate enquiry or worse, distraction.

### Updating Target Rent

With the view to creating a simple policy that would be easy to communicate there was some appetite to consider what an updated target rent might look like – would it provide an off-the-shelf rent policy if we updated the data behind the 2002 formula? Proxy data would have to be used for some figures because some data sets that existed when the target rent approach was originally conceived are no longer available but these updated figures were fed into the target rent formula to see what the outcome was:

**Target Rent formula:  $r*x*(e/E*w) + (1-x)p/P$**

<b>r</b>	national average net rent for RSL sector
<b>e</b>	average earnings in the county
<b>E</b>	national average FT manual earnings
<b>w</b>	property size weight
<b>p</b>	property value
<b>P</b>	national average property value for RSL sector
<b>x</b>	weight allocation multiplier

## WORKED EXAMPLE

**We took a two bedroom house in Hertsmere with a current Target rent (excluding service charge) of £105.23 per week**

Updated figures were used and for the same property. Using recent data a recalculated Target Rent for this property would be £98.24 per week.

In this example, an updated Target Rent is lower than existing Target Rent since RPI+0.5% increases have outstripped increases in the data items used to calculate the formula. Although this may be interesting to consider, it does not present a ready-made solution to the question “how to set an affordable rent”. It is perhaps something that could be revisited at some point in the future with a view to identifying what the starting point ‘r’ should be, and what weights should be applied to bedrooms to ensure that 1 bedroom homes command rents affordable to working single person households on living wage without requiring Housing Benefit. What this experiment highlighted is that because of the way rent increases have been linked to the Retail Price Index, Target Rent no longer reflects the local labour and property markets in the way that was originally intended. In fact, the geographically flat RPI increase has so broken this link that in some areas of the country Target Rents are as high as local market rents; and in some they are unaffordable to households in full time work earning the living wage<sup>10</sup>.

<sup>9</sup> For a discussion of research into policy and practise see Boaz, A., Ashby, D., and Young, K. Systematic Reviews University of London (2002) and Wells, P. New Labour and evidence based policy making:1997-2007 People, Place and Policy online 1(1) 22-9 (2007)

<sup>10</sup> In Kingston upon Hull the Target Rent on a 1 bed flat is 90% of the median rent in the Local Authority; in Islington an income of £32,224p.a. is required to pay Target Rent (Hometrack analysis)



### The granular approach

The income and property data used in the CCHPR analysis already discussed was at Local Authority level. Having presented this to the Project Board there was considerable appetite to look at these areas at a more granular level since we know that market rents can vary dramatically within Local Authorities and even within post-code districts. It was agreed to analyse the market rent value of each existing Affinity Sutton property to bring it closer to the actual values required for the business plan. We engaged property market analysis experts Hometrack to provide us with the data and analysis we needed.

#### Focus on market rents

The initial analysis that Hometrack provided on each Affinity Sutton home highlighted some key issues we had not considered before. For example, in many cases the Affinity Sutton properties with rents set at 80% of the individual property's market rent would be more affordable than if the rent was set at 80% of the average market rent. This is because Affinity Sutton properties do not tend to be in the areas where these higher rental values are achieved. This was particularly the case in London Boroughs where high specification riverside apartments skew average rents for some boroughs whereas Affinity Sutton homes are in more family-oriented areas with lower rents.

#### Focus on incomes

Having sourced more granular rental data by property, PayCheck<sup>11</sup> modelled household incomes were analysed by post code to see if incomes varied as significantly as rents between post codes. Echoing the finding of the Local Authority level analysis by CCHPR this showed that incomes and rents did not necessarily correspond with one another. However we noted that there tends to be much less variance in incomes than the sometimes wild ranges seen in market rents. Of course, there is no such thing as robust or correct income data at a granular level; it is always modelled, moving and often misleading. However, this is not to say it cannot be useful - it can give us an idea of relative incomes between areas and is far better than having no data at all.

CCHPR earnings data used previously was at Local Authority level, not post code level, but it had been adjusted to take account of household composition. We had some concerns that the PayCheck data which take no account of household type and size could overstate the income of single person households. This could mean that setting rents based solely on PayCheck data would lead to higher rents for the very group identified by the research as benefiting from holding rents down.

### Rents and Incomes analysis

Using granular data for incomes and rents Hometrack were tasked with clustering different areas with similar affordability profiles together. Segmenting the market by post code district and individual property level were considered and whilst some clear steps between selected areas were visible, no logical clusters that would be simple enough to implement as a rent policy were apparent. Some clusters could be seen when data was rolled up to Local Authority level but these lost the nuances between individual rents and incomes that were visible at a granular level.

#### Taking a step back from the detail

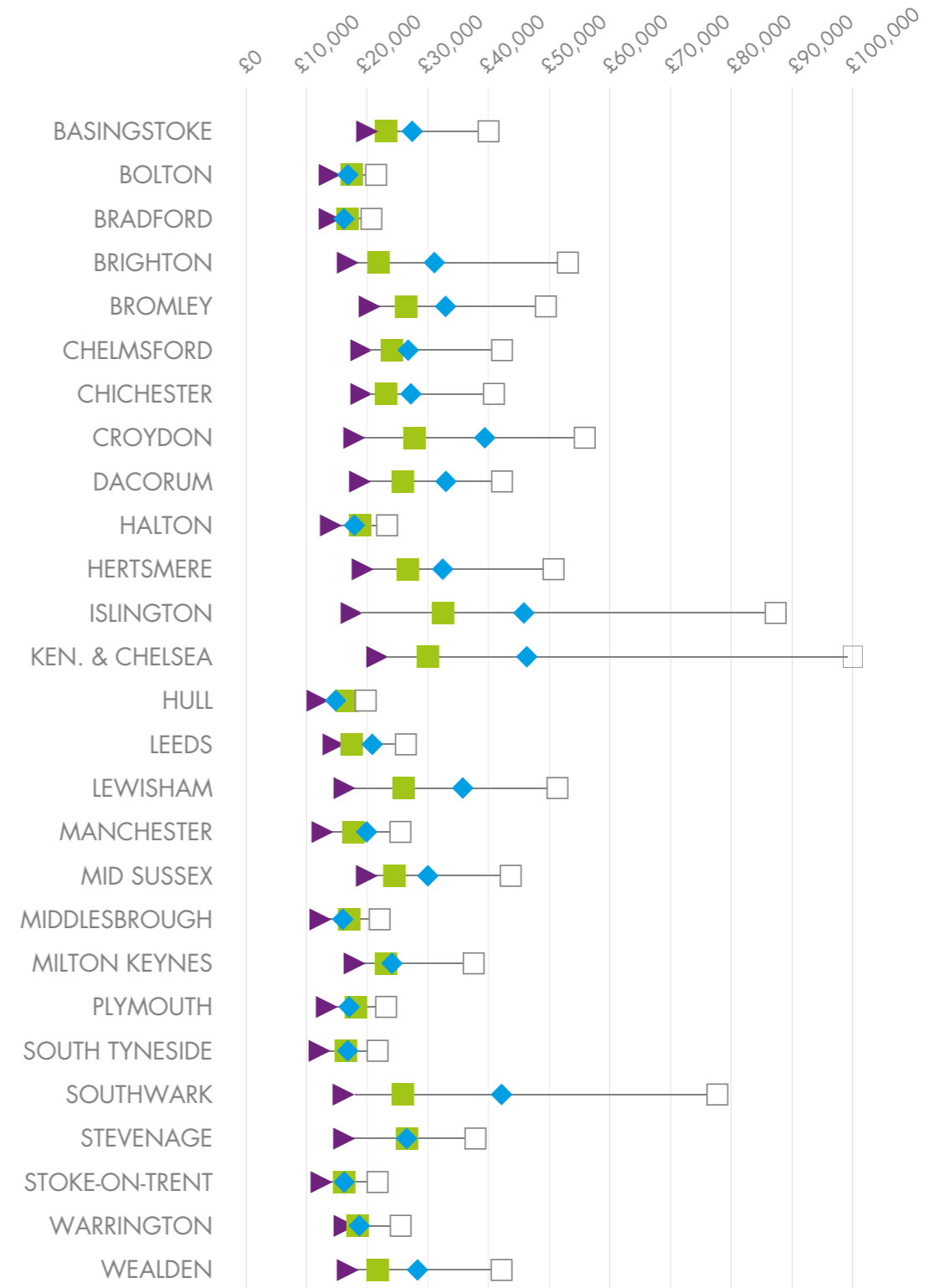
We had seen that market rents vary dramatically. We found that lower quartile incomes vary much less and income wholly from benefits is completely static nationally.

Figure 6 demonstrates that lower quartile incomes (represented by the triangles) are relatively flat across all Local Authority areas whereas the clear boxes representing the income required to rent at market rates vary wildly between areas.

We re-established that the priority was to hold down rents on one bedroom homes and to keep the policy simple as recommended in the early research principles. Rather than continuing to grapple with what will always be imperfect and moving income data we started to consider what rent a single person working 37 hours a week on the living wage could afford without Housing Benefit.

**Figure 6**

Shows the household income required to pay target rent, market rent or rent set at Local Housing Allowance (LHA) by Local Authority with local lower quartile incomes shown for comparison (PayCheck).



Hometrack Analysis

□ Income required for market rent      ◆ Income required for rent at LHA  
 ■ Income required for target rent      ▲ Paycheck lower quartile data

## STAGE 4: A NEW AFFORDABLE RENT POLICY

Having explored numerous different rent setting options the early recommendation of the CCHPR research (to keep a rent policy simple) provided a welcome sense-check and one we returned to frequently. Affinity Sutton now plans to introduce a new simple rent policy for its Affordable Rent properties, which will reduce rents charged on many newly built and newly vacant 1 and 2 bedroom homes and over time will bring these rents within the reach of many of those earning a living wage, without requiring housing benefit.

Rents for larger properties will reflect the size of home (higher rents for more bedrooms), this will over time increase the differentials between smaller and larger properties, reflecting the value and desirability of larger homes. As highlighted by the first stage of our research, reducing the rent can rarely be sufficient to impact the net income of larger, low income families, given the structure of the current benefits system. The amount of income required to take people out of Housing Benefit is usually quite out of reach so reducing rents does not help these families.

Affinity Sutton is therefore to some extent moving away from the link between rent and the market since rents must have a stronger link to incomes to be genuinely affordable. This is particularly pertinent for Housing Associations that, in the main, let their homes to low wage households. Whereas market rents

fluctuate wildly across the country, the income levels of those in the lowest quartile of earners do not vary greatly across the country and in our opinion are a better proxy for what such households can afford.

The new rents are fixed for each property size in London and each property size outside of London.

Rents for a 1 bedroom home will be set at the rent that a single person earning the current living wage could afford to pay without Housing Benefit. This is why there are two sets of flat rents – the London Living Wage is slightly higher than the National Living Wage so the London rent is slightly higher than non-London. Rents for 2, 3 and 4 bedroom homes increase from the 1 bedroom starting point in a way that reflects the market – the larger the home, the higher the rent. This corrects some of the perverse outcomes of the previous Affordable Rents where 80% of market rent was charged for smaller homes and 65% of market rent was charged for 3 and 4 bedroom homes – meaning that a 3 bedroom property could be cheaper to rent than a 2 bed one.

The overall impact of this policy will be to reduce Affinity Sutton's rental income, but they believe that it is important to set rents that work for tenants in the longer term by helping those that can to avoid benefit dependency.

Table 4

	Affordable Rent (80% market) Average (May 2015)	Proposed Rent Model for all properties	Target rent +SC Average (May 2015)
<b>1 bed</b>			
London LA	£152.33	£118.00	£107.11
Non London LA	£124.54	£99.00	£101.68
<b>2 bed</b>			
London LA	£192.82	£167.00	£125.66
Non London LA	£150.36	£148.00	£111.85
	Affordable Rent (65% market) Average (May 2015)	Proposed Rent Model for all properties	Target rent +SC Average (May 2015)
<b>3 bed</b>			
London LA	£191.10	£204.00	£136.38
Non London LA	£161.47	£185.00	£130.65
<b>4 bed</b>			
London LA	£236.51	£229.00	£153.83
Non London LA	£191.64	£210.00	£153.10

## STAGE 5: NEXT STEPS

We hope that this narrative of our journey is helpful to others who are thinking about rents and will encourage the further sharing of these studies so that the sector can increase its collective understanding of these issues. As mentioned earlier in the discussion, all of this will need

to be looked again in light of the benefit changes being brought about by the introduction of Universal Credit. Everyone across the sector will have concerns about this and we would be very keen to engage in collaborative working where others share these interests.

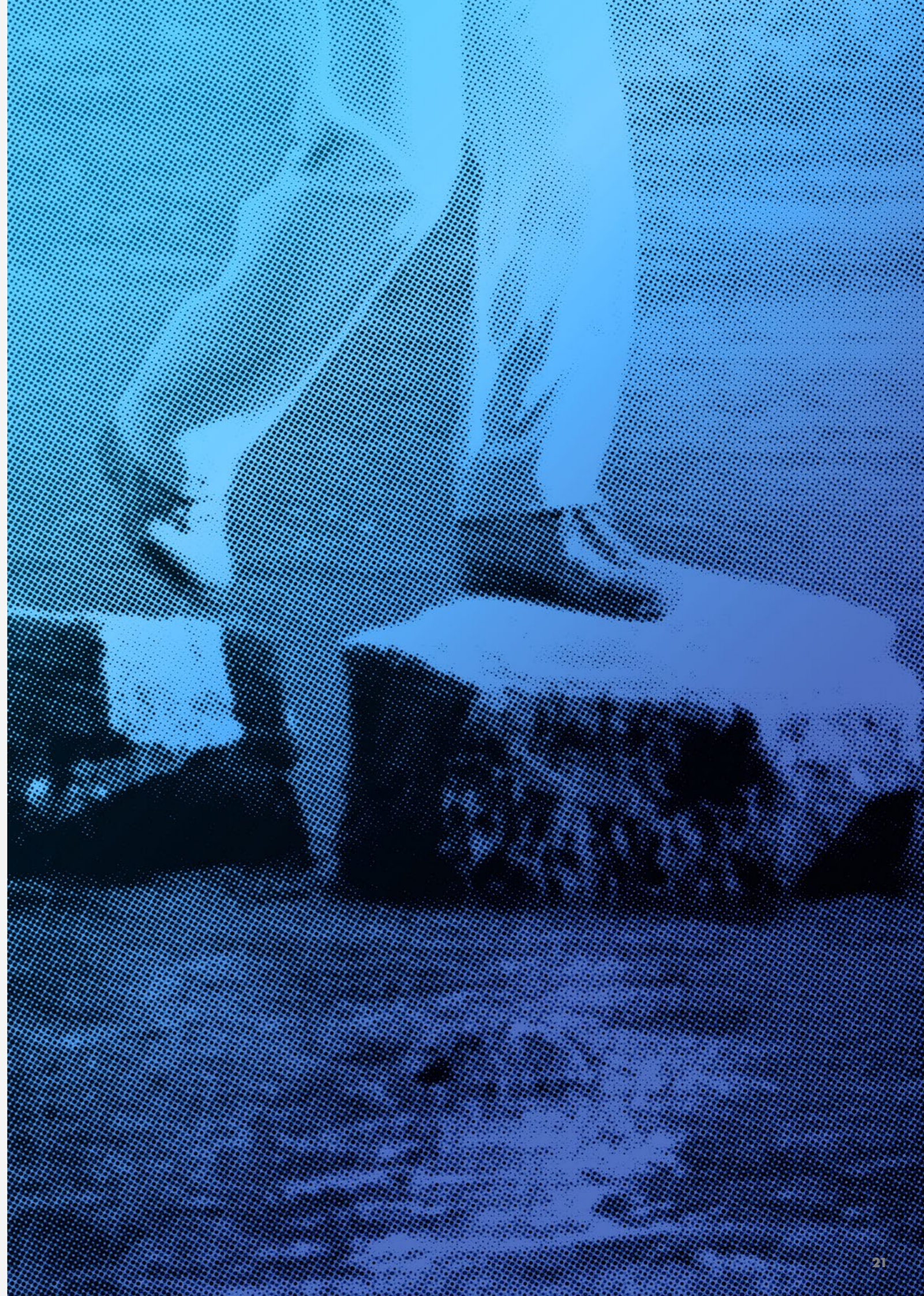
### RENT POLICY CHECKLIST:

Is it legal?	✓
Does it discriminate against households with any protected characteristics?	✓
Is the rent determined by the property type, size and location (legal) as opposed to the resident (illegal)?	✓
Does it fit with our charitable objectives? Can we prove it?	✓
Is it affordable to those we want to be able to house? Can we prove it?	✓
Does it support our business plan?	✓
Does it look sensible (i.e. a 1 bed is not more expensive to rent than a 2 bed in the same area)?	✓
Are we sufficiently limiting our exposure to future welfare changes?	✓
Is the data adequate?	✓
Can it be easily understood by residents and other stakeholders?	✓
Is it operationally simple to implement?	✓

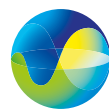
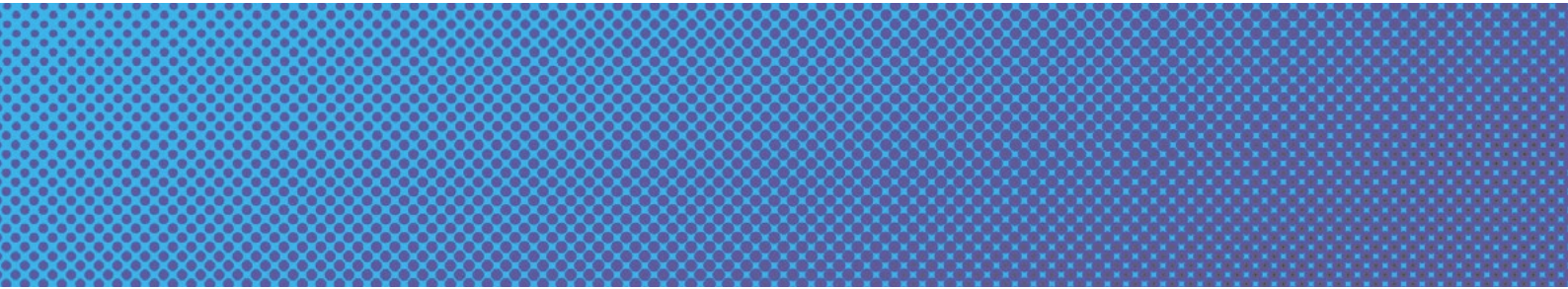


## LOCAL AUTHORITIES USED FOR THIS RESEARCH

Region	LA
East of England	Chelmsford
	Dacorum
	Hertsmere
	Stevenage
London	Bromley
	Croydon
	Islington
	Kensington and Chelsea
	Lewisham
	Southwark
North East	Middlesbrough
	South Tyneside
North West	Bolton
	Halton
	Manchester
	Warrington
South East	Basingstoke and Deane
	Brighton and Hove
	Chichester
	Mid Sussex
	Milton Keynes
	Wealden
South West	Plymouth
West Midlands	Stoke-on-Trent
Yorkshire & The Humber	Bradford
	Kingston upon Hull
	Leeds







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<b>Housing Select Committee</b>		
<b>Report Title</b>	Location Priority Policy and Temporary Accommodation Procurement Strategy	
<b>Key Decision</b>	Yes	Item No. 5
<b>Ward</b>	All	
<b>Contributors</b>	Executive Director for Customer Services	
<b>Class</b>	Part 1	Date: 27 <sup>th</sup> October 2015

## 1 Summary

- 1.1. The Supreme Court judgment in the case of *Nzolameso v Westminster City Council* required local authorities to have ‘a policy for procuring sufficient units of temporary accommodation secondly, each local authority should have and keep up to date, [and] a policy for allocating those units to individual homeless households.
- 1.2. This report accompanies both the final Location Priority Policy and the Temporary Accommodation Strategy which have been developed to satisfy this requirement.
- 1.3. An Interim Homeless Allocations (Locational Priority) Policy was presented to Mayor and Cabinet on 15<sup>th</sup> July 2015, subsequently, officers have conducted consultation and finalised a Location Priority Policy which provides a framework for the fair allocation of temporary accommodation within and close to the London Borough of Lewisham.
- 1.4. The Procurement Strategy has been developed to meet the needs of homeless households and households being assisted by social care to address the shortage in supply the Council is currently facing. This Procurement Strategy aims to meet the needs of Lewisham’s residents in conjunction with Lewisham Council’s Location Priority Policy and overall Housing Strategy.
- 1.5. This paper outlines the policy context and background and summarises the key elements of the Location Policy and Procurement Strategy, and how they have been adapted to reflect feedback from consultation.

## **2 Purpose of Report**

- 2.1. The purpose of this report is to enable Committee to pre-scrutinise the report to Mayor and Cabinet for the implementation of a Location Priority Policy and a Temporary Accommodation Strategy which will support officers to make decisions in relation to the allocation of temporary accommodation.

## **3 Policy Context**

- 3.1. On 2<sup>nd</sup> April 2015, the Supreme Court gave its judgment in the case of *Nzolameso v Westminster City Council* and required local authorities to have 'a policy for procuring sufficient units of temporary accommodation to meet the anticipated demand during the coming year... secondly, each local authority should have and keep up to date, a policy for allocating those units to individual homeless households. Where there was an anticipated shortfall of 'in borough' units, that policy would explain the factors which would be taken into account in offering units close to home, and if there was a shortage of such units the factors which would make it suitable to accommodate a household further away'.
- 3.2. The implications of the judgment for local authorities are hugely significant as demand rises rapidly and the supply of affordable accommodation to meet this demand reduces. It is estimated that at a national level there are currently 16,000 households in temporary accommodation outside of their local authority area. This has almost tripled since 2010 when the figure was 5,880.
- 3.3. A briefing by Shelter following *Nzolameso* outlined that a procurement policy and a policy for the allocation of temporary accommodation would have the advantage of:
  - Guiding temporary accommodation letting teams in their daily business, and helping ensure that the right accommodation is procured for a household.
  - Informing homeless households, and their supporting agencies of local housing pressures and what to expect from an offer of temporary accommodation.
  - Assisting reviewing officers in ensuring that policies were applied correctly to an individual case.
  - Assist both homeless households and local authorities in disputes around the offer of temporary accommodation.

## **4 Background**

- 4.1. At the Mayor and Cabinet meeting on 15<sup>th</sup> July 2015, it was resolved that:
- the new legal responsibilities for the Council in relation to the development of a locational priority placement policy be noted;
  - the rationale for the development of an interim policy be noted;
  - the interim locational priority placement policy be approved; and
  - officers be authorised to proceed with consultation to develop a full locational priority placement policy to be presented to Mayor and Cabinet in November 2015.
- 4.2. The report presented on 15<sup>th</sup> July 2015 outlined that the following next steps would take place:
- Engagement with London Councils and other London boroughs to gather insights into the approaches being undertaken by other boroughs.
  - Consultation with advocates and homeless households likely to be affected by this policy.
  - Detailed supply and demand analysis and comparison to other boroughs.
  - Analysis of impacts of interim arrangements for homeless households and service delivery.
  - A full financial impact assessment.
  - A full Equalities Analysis Assessment.

## **5 Lewisham and London Profile**

- 5.1. The London Borough of Lewisham has observed a 77% increase in the number of households in temporary accommodation over the previous five years - there are currently 1,800 homeless households in temporary accommodation; the number of affordable properties to let has decreased by 44% in this time. The Council has just over 9,000 individuals and families on the Housing Register and the average wait for a four bedroom property is 4 years.
- 5.2. In the 2014/15 financial year, the Local Authority spent £12.6m on Bed and Breakfast type accommodation before income; with rental charges to clients, the net spend was £3.5m (an increase from £1.5m in 2013/14 and £0.6m in 2012/13). Additionally, in the 2014/15 financial year, there was a net income of £450k generated from Private Sector Leasing and a net income of £92k from hostels.
- 5.3. The Council currently spends in excess of £5m per annum on the provision of accommodation and other services for homeless families under s17 Children Act 1989 who are excluded from support under Housing Act 1996, for

example because they have no recourse to public funds or have made themselves intentionally homeless.

- 5.4. In September 2015, the Council provided temporary accommodation to 103 families and single adults (approximately 80% under Housing Act 1996 and 20% under Children Act 1989 and Care Act 2014).
- 5.5. It is expected that demand for services will increase in line with welfare reform, for example the reduction of the benefit cap from £26,000 to £23,000.

Supply: in-borough temporary accommodation

- 5.6. Procuring properties within LHA rates locally has become increasingly difficult. The Council's in-borough temporary accommodation consists of a combination of hostels, which are owned and managed by the Local Authority, and Private Sector Leased (PSL) properties which are procured on long leases and managed by the authority.
- 5.7. The Council purchases nightly-paid (Bed and Breakfast type) accommodation for those it is not able to accommodate in hostels or PSL properties. Lewisham Council is part of the Inter Borough Accommodation Agreement which sets the maximum rates which local authorities should pay for nightly-paid. This agreement is designed to mitigate the competition between London Boroughs on the London property market so as to ensure a reasonable supply of available affordable accommodation for all councils.
- 5.8. In June 2015, there were 83 families in private sector nightly-paid accommodation placed by the London Borough of Lewisham. 34% of these families were placed within the London Borough of Lewisham (4% fewer than the South East London average and 5% fewer than the London average).
- 5.9. Based on current London-wide agreements, the London Borough of Lewisham expects to be able to sustain its current levels of in-borough nightly-paid placements. However, the Local Authority has received notice that landlords wish to withdraw from current arrangements for 93 PSL properties which are currently managed.
- 5.10. The following table provides a snapshot of the number of units available in borough (June 2015):

Number of hostel units	330
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Number of PSL properties	621
Number of B&B units in Lewisham	154
Total in borough units	1105

5.11. The following table provides a snapshot of the types of properties on the market within the London Borough of Lewisham through major agencies (June 2015):

Property type	Total available	Total within LHA rates
1 bed PRS	265	13 (5%)
2 bed PRS	563	19 (3%)
3 bed PRS	197	9 (5%)
Total affordable PRS in borough		41

Supply: close to borough temporary accommodation

5.12. In addition to the properties procured in borough, the Council procures nightly-paid accommodation and PSL properties in the Greater London area, the following table provides a snapshot from June 2015:

Number of B&B units in London	402
Number of PSL properties	2
Total number of units	404

5.13. The following table provides a snapshot of properties within 90 minutes commuting distance of the London Borough of Lewisham on the market with major agencies (June 2015):

Property type	Total available	Total within LHA rates
1 bed PRS	52819	1087 (2%)
2 bed PRS	38572	754 (2%)

3 bed PRS	15625	883 (6%)
Total affordable PRS in London		1850

### Key Pressures

5.14. The following factors contribute to the limited supply of suitable properties within and close to the London Borough of Lewisham:

- Landlords' discretion whether or not to rent their properties to households on benefits. Five agencies advertising properties within LHA rates in the London Borough of Lewisham were contacted, three indicated that they did not rent properties to people on benefits; one said they would only do so with a guarantor and the fifth said it would be at the discretion of individual landlords.
- LHA rates are set at the 30th percentile meaning that 30% of the total number of PRS properties in Lewisham should be within LHA rates. However, analysis suggests that in fact, this is closer to 5% of available properties.
- All local authorities are in competition to secure PRS properties across London. There was an increase from circa 44,000 to 49,000 households in placed temporary accommodation by London councils between June 2014 and June 2015. The London Borough of Lewisham observed an increase of 276, the highest increase in South East London (170 in the London Borough of Bromley (2<sup>nd</sup>) and 131 in Southwark (3<sup>rd</sup>).
- Local authorities are in competition for PRS on the open market.

5.15. The Housing Procurement Team expects to be able to house 70% of homeless households in temporary accommodation within or close to the London Borough of Lewisham.

## **6 Categories of Location Priority**

6.1. In *Nzolameso v Westminster City Council*, Lady Hale outlined three categories of property location. Where there is a shortfall of in-borough units, a policy should explain the factors to be taken into account in offering households those units, also the factors taken account of in offering units close to home and the factors which would make it suitable to place people further afield.

6.2. This Location Priority Policy requires that if the local authority has a duty to secure accommodation, an assessment will be carried out to determine the

location priority of the applicant. The assessment will determine whether the applicant has:

- Priority to be located in the London Borough of Lewisham.
- Priority to be located close to the London Borough of Lewisham.
- No priority as to the location of a property.

6.3. Regardless of the location priority, the Council will have regard to the principal needs of any children in the household, and the need to safeguard and promote the children's welfare. In particular, regard will be had to any disruption to schools, medical care, social work, other key services and other support.

6.4. Under the Equality Act 2010, the Council will have due regard to the protected characteristics in determining whether there are exceptional and compelling circumstances which would require an applicant to be placed in a particular location.

## **7 Categories of Location Priority: 'In-Borough'**

7.1. Applicants and their household members to be housed with them who satisfy one or more of the following criteria will qualify for 'in-borough' priority:

- They are receiving treatment for a physical or mental health condition from a specialist hospital unit which cannot be transferred to another NHS service or they are at a critical point in their treatment.
- Children subject to a Child Protection Plan in the London Borough of Lewisham which cannot be transferred to another local authority without causing serious detriment to a child's welfare.
- Children subject to an Education Health and Care Plan (EHCP) or a Statement of Special Educational Needs in the London Borough of Lewisham which cannot be transferred to another local authority without causing serious detriment to the child's welfare.
- They have a longstanding arrangement to provide essential care to another family member in the London Borough of Lewisham who is not part of the household. Carers must be in receipt of Carer's Allowance.
- Other circumstances which demonstrate an exceptional and compelling need which cannot be met outside of the London Borough of Lewisham.

7.2. Since the development of the interim policy, the following additional factors are to be considered for an 'in-borough' priority:

- Following advice from the Housing Department's medical advisor, the threshold for in-borough priority relating to carers has been clarified. Carers must be in receipt of Carer's Allowance.
- Clarity has been provided in relation to children and young people with an Education Health and Care Plan (EHCP) or Statement of Special Educational Needs and the need to consider the impact of transferring their EHCP or Statement to another local authority.
- Officers are to have regard to the exceptional impact of housing sixteen and seventeen year old applicants outside of the London Borough of Lewisham within the assessment process.

## **8 Categories of Location Priority: 'Close to Borough'**

8.1. The Location Priority Policy defines 'close to borough' as located within 90 minutes travelling distance of the London Borough of Lewisham by public transport. 90 minutes was considered as a 'reasonable' commuting time in-line with the 90 minutes jobseekers could be required to travel to work.

8.2. Applicants or their household members to be housed with them who satisfy one or more of the following criteria will qualify for 'Close to Borough' priority:

- They have been continuously employed close to the London Borough of Lewisham for 16 hours or more per week in a role which cannot be transferred to another area. Applicants must have been employed in this role for six months prior to the date of application and remain so employed. Wherever practicable, the Local Authority will seek to place such households within 90 minutes travelling distance, by public transport, from the place of employment at the time of application.
- Women who are on maternity leave from employment and meet the above criteria will also be prioritised for placements close to the London Borough of Lewisham. Wherever practicable the Local Authority will seek to place such households within 90 minutes travelling distance by public transport from their place of employment.
- Children who are enrolled in GCSE, AS, or A level courses in the London Borough of Lewisham, with public exams to be taken within the current or



next academic year. Wherever practicable the Local Authority will seek to place such households within 90 minutes travelling distance by public transport of their school or college.

- Other exceptional circumstances, where applicants demonstrate an exceptional and compelling need to be housed close to the London Borough of Lewisham.

8.3. The award of an 'In-borough' or 'Close to Borough' location priority does not guarantee the provision of temporary accommodation within those areas, rather priority for such accommodation should it be available and suitable.

## **9 Categories of Location Priority: 'No Location Priority'**

9.1. Applicants who meet none of the 'In-borough' or 'Close to Borough' criteria will be offered properties further afield than 90 minutes travelling distance of the London Borough of Lewisham by public transport, when no suitable property is available within these areas.

9.2. Regardless of the location priority category, the Council will have regard to the principal needs of any children in the household, and the need to safeguard and promote the children's welfare. In particular, regard will be had to any disruption to schools, medical care, social work, other key services and other support. Additionally, in determining the suitability of a property. The Council will have due regard to the protected characteristics under the Equality Act 2010 when determining the suitability of a property (an Equalities Analysis Assessment is attached at Appendix E).

## **10 Procedure**

10.1. The assessment will take the form of a universal checklist which will be completed by the referring team – Housing, Children's Social Care or No Recourse to Public Funds. The checklist - attached at Appendix B - will highlight the key policy criteria, permit evidence to be submitted in relation to the categories of need and give officers the opportunity to provide details of any specific circumstances which should be considered in determining suitable temporary accommodation.

10.2. Completed assessments will be referred to the Procurement Team or the Finance & Admin Team who will match the applicant to a suitable property within or as near to the London Borough of Lewisham as possible, prioritising the applicant according to their assessed priority. The Council will house the

applicant within their priority area provided that there is a suitable and affordable property available within the area.

- 10.3. Advice and information will be provided to applicants, particularly in relation to key services in areas outside of the London Borough of Lewisham.

## **11 Procurement Strategy**

- 11.1. To be adequately prepared for the impact of the Government's welfare reform on the PRS and homelessness, Lewisham Council created a Private Sector Housing Agency (PSHA). The PSHA functions as the procurement hub across housing and social care.

- 11.2. This approach ensures that the Council:

- Achieves value for money through its collective buying power and by eliminating internal competition for PRS accommodation.
- Delivers accommodation which is fit for purpose.
- Delivers an enhanced customer-focussed service.
- Identifies and swiftly deals with rogue landlords operating within Lewisham Council's private rented sector.
- Increases joint-working between different teams and departments across the Council, minimising duplication and contributing to the Council's Futures programme by delivering its vital services efficiently and effectively.

- 11.3. A new Temporary Accommodation (TA) Procurement Strategy is attached as Appendix C. The Procurement Strategy has been developed to meet the needs of homeless households and households being assisted by social care to address the shortage in supply the Council is currently facing. This Procurement Strategy aims to meet the needs of Lewisham's residents in conjunction with Lewisham Council's Location Priority Policy and overall Housing Strategy.

- 11.4. The Procurement Strategy takes into consideration the local and national shifts in the PRS landscape driven by the buoyant property sales and lettings market, legislative changes and recent legal judgements.

- 11.5. The Local Authority will continue to procure suitable properties to meet the needs of applicants. The Procurement Team will procure accommodation in the London Borough of Lewisham, close to Lewisham and also further afield

in circumstances where there are no suitable and affordable properties available in-borough.

- 11.6. An estimated 600 units of nightly paid accommodation that are accessible to households on benefits will be needed during 2015/16. A temporary accommodation portfolio of around 1800 units will be needed until 2020.

## **12 Consultation**

- 12.1. A consultation event was held on 25 September as a means of providing information to stakeholders on the proposed policy and an opportunity for them to communicate their views and raise any concerns. Officers attended the Homelessness Forum in order to give a verbal invitation to the event and stakeholders were contacted. Invitations were sent to a range of support services including Housing, Health and preventative services. A total of 18 people attended the event.
- 12.2. A detailed breakdown of issues and questions raised is provided at Appendix D but can broadly be summarised along with responses on the day under the following headings.

### General questions and comments

- 12.3. Questions largely related to the details of the policy and its implementation, clarification was provided on the day.

### Financial impact on service users

- 12.4. Concern was raised about the impact on people who might want to travel back to Lewisham for work, study or to access services. Concern was noted but it was pointed out that accommodation outside of the borough would be more affordable and therefore sustainable because it would put less of a financial burden on service users.

### Equalities impact

- 12.5. Concern was raised about the possibility that people from black and minority ethnic communities or with particular religious beliefs might be placed in parts of the country where they would feel isolated or potentially ostracised. Participants were assured that officers would have due regard to the protected characteristics under the Equality Act 2010 when determining the suitability of a property and be sensitive to the concerns of applicants.

## Health and wellbeing impact

- 12.6. Concern centred on taking people away from specialist support services that they were accessing in the London Borough of Lewisham, such as for substance misuse or domestic violence. Participants were assured that these issues would be taken into account when considering housing options.

## **13 Financial Implications**

- 13.1 The Council spent in excess of £28m on temporary accommodation in 2014-15. Whilst the majority of that was recovered through housing benefits and rental income, the net expenditure was over £8m in excess of the budget provision. Current budget projections are indicating that similar levels of expenditure will be incurred in this financial year.
- 13.2 The overspend is as a result of increased demand for the services and rising accommodation costs. The Procurement Strategy sets out how the council decides how to procure property to meet that demand and, as such, is not expected to increase the overspend in itself.
- 13.3 When acquiring the various types of accommodation set out in the strategy, officers will follow the procedure appropriate for that type of acquisition, ensuring financial viability and that costs to the council are kept to a minimum.

## **14 Legal Implications**

The implications of the decision of the Supreme Court in *Nzolameso v Westminster City Council* have been set out in this report. There are two main groups of applicants to whom the Council owes a duty to source accommodation on a temporary basis- those to whom a Children Act 1989 duty is owed, following assessment, and those to whom a homelessness duty is owed, pursuant to the 1996 Act and Guidance.

Sections 206 and 208 of the Housing Act 1996 [“the 1996 Act”] impose distinct but related requirements upon the local authority.

Section 206(1) provides that the authority may discharge their housing functions only by securing “suitable” accommodation, albeit by a variety of routes.

Section 208(1) provides that: “So far as reasonably practicable a local housing authority shall in discharging their housing functions under this Part secure that accommodation is available for the occupation of the applicant in their district”.

By virtue of section 205(1) of the 1996 Act, their “housing functions” refers to their functions under Part 7 to secure that accommodation is available for a person’s occupation. It is clear, therefore, that these are duties owed to the individual person to whom the main homelessness duty is owed. The accommodation offered has to be suitable to the needs of the particular homeless person and each member of her household and the location of that accommodation can be relevant to its suitability:

This has since been fleshed out in statutory guidance.

Under section 182(1) of the 1996 Act, local housing authorities are required to have regard to such guidance as may from time to time be given by the Secretary of State. The current general guidance is contained in the Homelessness Code of Guidance for Local Authorities (Department for Communities and Local Government, 2006). As to the duty in section 208(1), this provides: “16.7. Section 208(1) requires housing authorities to secure accommodation within their district, in so far as is reasonably practicable. Housing authorities should, therefore, aim to secure accommodation within their own district wherever possible, except where there are clear benefits for the applicant of being accommodated outside of the district. This could occur, for example, where the applicant, and/or a member of his or her household, would be at risk of domestic or other violence in the district and need to be accommodated elsewhere to reduce the risk of further contact with the perpetrator(s) or where ex-offenders or drug/alcohol users would benefit from being accommodated outside the district to help break links with previous contacts which could exert a negative influence.”

As to suitability, the Code says this about the location of the accommodation: “17.41. The location of the accommodation will be relevant to suitability and the suitability of the location for all the members of the household will have to be considered. Where, for example, applicants are in paid employment account will need to be taken of their need to reach their normal workplace from the accommodation secured. The Secretary of State recommends that local authorities take into account the need to minimise disruption to the education of young people, particularly at critical points in time such as close to taking GCSE examinations. Housing authorities should avoid placing applicants in isolated accommodation away from public transport, shops and other facilities, and, wherever possible, secure accommodation that is as close as possible to where they were previously living, so they can retain established links with schools, doctors, social workers and other key services and support essential to the well-being of the household.”

This has since been expanded upon. Under section 210(2), the Secretary of State may by order specify (a) the circumstances in which accommodation is or is not to be regarded as suitable, and (b) the matters to be taken into account or disregarded in determining whether accommodation is suitable for a person. During the passage of the Localism Act 2011, the Government undertook “to remain vigilant to any issues that arose around suitability of location”. It had come to light that some local authorities were seeking accommodation for households owed the main homelessness duty “far

outside their own district". The Government was therefore "willing to explore whether protections around location of accommodation need to be strengthened and how this might be done" (Department for Communities and Local Government, Homelessness (Suitability of Accommodation) (England) Order 2012 – Consultation, May 2012, para 38). A full consultation exercise showed widespread support for strengthening that protection (Department for Communities and Local Government, Homelessness (Suitability of Accommodation)(England) Order 2012 – Government's Response to Consultation, November 2012): "Government has made it clear that it is neither acceptable nor fair for local authorities to place households many miles away from their previous home where it is avoidable. Given the vulnerability of this group it is essential that local authorities take into account the potential disruption such a move could have on the household."

The method chosen was to make it a matter of statutory obligation to take the location of the accommodation into account when determining whether accommodation is suitable. Hence, in October 2012, shortly before the decisions were taken in this case, the Secretary of State made the Homelessness (Suitability of Accommodation) (England) Order 2012 (SI 2012/2601).

Article 2 provides: "In determining whether accommodation is suitable for a person, the local housing authority must take into account the location of the accommodation, including - (a) where the accommodation is situated outside the district of the local housing authority, the distance of the accommodation from the district of the authority; (b) the significance of any disruption which would be caused by the location of the accommodation to the employment, caring responsibilities or education of the person or members of the person's household; (c) the proximity and accessibility of the accommodation to medical facilities and other support which - (i) are currently used by or provided to the person or members of the person's household; and (ii) are essential to the wellbeing of the person or members of the person's household; and (d) the proximity and accessibility of the accommodation to local services, amenities and transport."

The Government's response to consultation had emphasised that the Order "does not prevent or prohibit out of borough placements where they are unavoidable nor where they are the choice of the applicant". However, the Department also issued Supplementary Guidance on the homelessness changes in the Localism Act 2011 and on the Homelessness (Suitability of Accommodation) (England) Order 2012 (November 2012), which strengthened the obligation to secure accommodation as close as possible to where the household had previously been living:-

"48. Where it is not possible to secure accommodation within district and an authority has secured accommodation outside their district, the authority is required to take into account the Page 9 distance of that accommodation from the district of the authority. Where accommodation which is otherwise suitable and affordable is available nearer to the authority's district than the

accommodation which it has secured, the accommodation which it has secured is not likely to be suitable unless the authority has a justifiable reason or the applicant has specified a preference.

Generally, where possible, authorities should try to secure accommodation that is as close as possible to where an applicant was previously living. Securing accommodation for an applicant in a different location can cause difficulties for some applicants. Local authorities are required to take into account the significance of any disruption with specific regard to employment, caring responsibilities or education of the applicant or members of their household. Where possible the authority should seek to retain established links with schools, doctors, social workers and other key services and support.” (Emphasis supplied).

The guidance goes on to deal with employment, caring responsibilities, education, medical facilities and other support, and also with cases where there may be advantages in the household being accommodated somewhere outside the local authority’s district, including employment opportunities there.

The effect, therefore, is that local authorities have a statutory duty to accommodate within their area so far as this is reasonably practicable. “Reasonable practicability” imports a stronger duty than simply being reasonable. But if it is not reasonably practicable to accommodate “in borough”, they must generally, and where possible, try to place the household as close as possible to where they were previously living. There will be some cases where this does not apply, for example where there are clear benefits in placing the applicant outside the district, because of domestic violence or to break links with negative influences within the district, and others where the applicant does not mind where she goes or actively wants to move out of the area. The combined effect of the 2012 Order and the Supplementary Guidance changes, and was meant to change, the legal landscape as it was when previous cases dealing with an “out of borough” placement policy, such as *R (Yumsak) v Enfield London Borough Council* [2002] EWHC 280 (Admin), [2003] HLR 1, and *R (Calgin) v Enfield London Borough Council* [2005] EWHC 1716 (Admin), [2006] HLR 58, were decided.

An applicant who is dissatisfied with any of the local authority’s decisions listed in section 202(1) of the Act can request a review of that decision. The decisions listed do not in terms include a decision to place “out of borough” despite section 208(1). But they do include, at (f), any decision of a local housing authority as to the suitability of accommodation offered in discharge of their duty under, inter alia, section 193(2). They also include, at (b), any decision as to what duty (if any) is owed, inter alia, under section 193(2). It is common ground that (b) includes a decision that the duty is no longer owed because it has been discharged.

Under section 204, an applicant who has requested a review under section 202 and is dissatisfied with the decision may appeal to a county court “on any

point of law arising from the decision” (alternatively, if the review decision has not been notified within the prescribed time, arising from the original decision).

The position with respect to the Councils duties pursuant to ss17 and 20 of the Children Act 1989 are that:-

(s17) It is a general duty of every local authority

(a) to safeguard and promote the welfare of children within their area who are in need; and (b) so far as is consistent with that duty, to promote the upbringing of such children by their families, by providing a range and level of services appropriate to those children’s needs. These services can include accommodation.

Before giving any assistance or imposing any conditions, a local authority shall have regard to the means of the child concerned and of each of his parents.

Children in need are those who are unlikely to achieve or maintain, or to have the opportunity of achieving or maintaining, a reasonable standard of health or development without the provision of services by a local authority ;whose health or development is likely to be significantly impaired, or further impaired, without the provision of such services; or who are disabled.

(s20) Every local authority shall provide accommodation for any child in need within their area who appears to them to require accommodation as a result of (inter alia)— the person who has been caring for him being prevented (whether or not permanently, and for whatever reason) from providing him with suitable accommodation or care.

It is of note that the facts of the Westminster case are significantly stark: the parent had health issues, and it may seem to observers that the decision to refuse accommodation pending appeal, under their housing duties, and then to refuse accommodation to the family pursuant to s 17 Children Act 1989, restricting their support to the children alone under s20, then to split the sibling group and commence care proceedings, should have prompted a review of the family’s situation as a whole focussing upon the children’s welfare. However, that is not the course that Westminster pursued, with good cause or not. The Supreme Court did not comment upon the child protection issues, if any. They did however consider the issues relating to the children’s welfare very strongly in the light of the overall duties owed to the children flowing from s11(2) Children Act 2004, which states that the Local Authority, in the discharge of their functions,( in this case their housing function under the 1996 Act) must make arrangements for ensuring that they have regard to the need to safeguard and promote the welfare of children, including in their arrangements with other agencies..



Thus s11 imposes a similar duty upon a local authority to carry out their functions in a way which takes into account the need to safeguard and promote the welfare of children.

The Supreme Court in *Westminster* laid emphasis upon that need to promote as well as safeguard the welfare of children flowing from s11.

It is also the case that there will almost always be children affected by decisions about where to accommodate households to which the main homelessness duty is owed. Such households must, by definition, be in priority need, and most households are in priority need because they include minor children. The local authority may have the invidious task of choosing which household with children is to be offered a particular unit of accommodation. *This does not absolve the authority from having regard to the need to safeguard and promote the welfare of each individual child in each individual household, but it does point towards the need to explain the choices made, preferably by reference to published policies setting out how this will be done*“(my emphasis)

Such a duty under s11 is therefore a “have regard” duty. It is arguable ( and will no doubt be subject to further litigation) the extent to which such a duty is owed to any individual child.

However, as things stand, any policy in relation to the procurement, allocation and eligibility of temporary or more settled housing for families, should have due regard to the general duties imposed under s11, as well as the assessed individual needs of each child under s17 Children Act 1989.

## **15 Equalities Implications**

15.1. The Equality Act 2010 introduced a new public sector equality duty. It covers the following nine protected characteristics: age, disability, gender reassignment, marriage and civil partnership, pregnancy and maternity, race, religion or belief, sex and sexual orientation.

15.2. In summary, the Council must, in the exercise of its functions, have due regard to the need to:

- Eliminate unlawful discrimination, harassment and victimisation and other conduct prohibited by the Act.
- Advance equality of opportunity between people who share a protected characteristic and those who do not.
- Foster good relations between people who share a protected characteristic and those who do not.

- 15.3. The council's P1E homelessness return collects demographic information on the people approaching the council's homelessness service. Based on the data available from the last return:
- Ethnicity: 55% of applicants are black, 25% are white, 5% are Asian, 5% are mixed. In total 10% of applicants said their ethnicity was 'other' or did not state an ethnicity.
  - Gender: 87% of applicants are female, 13% are male. 62% of applications are from lone parent households where the applicant is female
  - Age: 69% of applicants are aged between 25 and 44, 16% are aged between 16 and 24 and 15% are aged between 45 and 59.
  - Disability: Data on the most recent P1E return shows that 1% of applicants reported that they had a mental health or physical disability.
- 15.4. A full Equalities Analysis Assessment has been undertaken and is attached at Appendix E.

## **16 Environmental Implications**

- 16.1. No specific environmental implications have been identified as arising from this report.

## **17 Crime and Disorder Implications**

- 17.1. No specific crime and disorder implications have been identified as arising from this report.

## **18 Background Documents and Report Author**

- 18.1. Appendix A: Location Priority Policy.
- 18.2. Appendix B: Location Priority Checklist.
- 18.3. Appendix C: Temporary Accommodation Procurement Strategy.
- 18.4. Appendix D: Consultation Analysis.
- 18.5. Appendix E: Equalities Analysis Assessment.
- 18.6. If you require further information about this report please contact Genevieve Macklin on 020 8314 6057.



## **LONDON BOROUGH OF LEWISHAM**

### **LOCATION PRIORITY POLICY**

#### **General**

- 1.1. This Location Priority Policy will provide a framework for the fair allocation of affordable temporary accommodation within and close to the London Borough of Lewisham. This policy applies to the allocation of temporary accommodation secured under Part VII, Housing Act 1996 and under Part III, Children Act 1989.
- 1.2. This policy does not prevent a household from considering other housing options, including asking the Council for advice, support and assistance in relocating to more settled accommodation.

#### **Categories of Location Priority**

- 2.1. If the local authority has a duty to secure accommodation, an assessment will be carried out to determine the location priority of the applicant. The assessment will determine whether the applicant has:
  - Priority to be located in the London Borough of Lewisham
  - Priority to be located close to the London Borough of Lewisham
  - No priority as to the location of a property.
- 2.2. The award of an 'In-borough' or 'Close to Borough' location priority does not guarantee the provision of temporary accommodation within those areas, rather priority for such accommodation should it be available and suitable.
- 2.3. Where the household is in receipt of welfare benefits, this may place additional constraints on the availability of affordable accommodation, including constraints on its type and location.
- 2.4. The Council will have due regard to the principal needs of any children in the household, and the need to safeguard and promote the children's welfare. In particular, regard will be had to any disruption to schools, medical care, social work, other key services and other support.

### **In-borough Priority**

- 3.1. Priority for available in-borough accommodation will be given to certain households who have a compelling need to be housed within the London Borough of Lewisham.
- 3.2. An 'In-borough' priority does not guarantee an in-borough placement, but should suitable and affordable accommodation be available within that area, it does give that household priority over others without this assessed priority.
- 3.3. Applicants and their household members to be housed with them who satisfy one or more of the following criteria will qualify for 'In-borough' priority:
  - a. They are receiving treatment for a physical or mental health condition from a specialist hospital unit which cannot be transferred to another NHS service or they are at a critical point in their treatment.
  - b. Children subject to a Child Protection Plan in the London Borough of Lewisham which cannot be transferred to another local authority without causing serious detriment to a child's welfare.
  - c. Children subject to an Education Health and Care Plan (EHCP) or a Statement of Special Educational Needs in the London Borough of Lewisham which cannot be transferred to another local authority without causing serious detriment to the child's welfare.
  - d. They have a longstanding arrangement to provide essential care to another family member in the London Borough of Lewisham who is not part of the household. Carers must be in receipt of Carer's Allowance.
  - e. Other circumstances which demonstrate an exceptional and compelling need which cannot be met outside of the London Borough of Lewisham.

### **Close to Borough Priority**

- 4.1. 'Close to Borough' priority is defined as priority for accommodation located within 90 minutes travelling distance of the London Borough of Lewisham by public transport.
- 4.2. Such priority does not guarantee a placement within 90 minutes travelling distance of the London Borough of Lewisham by public transport, but should

suitable and affordable accommodation be available within that area, it does give the household priority over others without that assessed priority.

- 4.3. Applicants or their household members to be housed with them who satisfy one or more of the following criteria will qualify for 'Close to Borough' priority:
- a. They have been continuously employed close to the London Borough of Lewisham for 16 hours or more per week in a role which cannot be transferred to another area. Applicants must have been employed in this role for six months prior to the date of application and remain so employed. Wherever practicable, the Local Authority will seek to place such households within 90 minutes travelling distance, by public transport, from the place of employment at the time of application.
  - b. Women who are on maternity leave from employment and meet the above criteria will also be prioritised for placements close to the London Borough of Lewisham. Wherever practicable the Local Authority will seek to place such households within 90 minutes travelling distance by public transport from their place of employment.
  - c. Children who are enrolled in GCSE, AS, or A level courses in the London Borough of Lewisham, with public exams to be taken within the current or next academic year. Wherever practicable the Local Authority will seek to place such households within 90 minutes travelling distance by public transport of their school or college.
  - d. Other exceptional circumstances, where applicants demonstrate an exceptional and compelling need to be housed close to the London Borough of Lewisham.

### **No Locational Priority**

- 5.1. Applicants who meet none of the 'In-borough' or 'Close to Borough' criteria will be offered properties further afield than 90 minutes travelling distance of the London Borough of Lewisham by public transport, when no suitable property is available within these areas.
- 5.2. The Council will have regard to the principal needs of any children in the household, and the need to safeguard and promote the children's welfare. In particular, regard will be had to any disruption to schools, medical care, social work, other key services and other support.

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## **Appendix C: Location Priority Policy - Equality Analysis Assessment**

### **1. Introduction**

- A. Public bodies such as local authorities are legally required to consider the three aims of the Public Sector Equality Duty (set out in the Equality Act 2010) and document their thinking as part of the process of decision making. The Act sets out that public bodies must have regard to the need to:
- eliminate unlawful discrimination, harassment and victimisation;
  - advance equality of opportunity between people who share a protected characteristic and those who do not share that characteristic;
  - foster good relationships between those who share a protected characteristic and those who do not share that characteristic.
- B. This equality analysis assessment sets out how the Council has considered the likely impact of the Location Priority Policy on the characteristics protected under the Equality Act of 2010.

### **2. Location Priority Policy - background and context**

- A. The Council has a duty to provide suitable temporary accommodation under part VII Housing Act 1996 and under Part III, Children Act 1989 to households who are eligible, homeless and have a priority need until a decision has been reached on their application as to what duty if any is owed. If the council decides that it owes a 'full housing duty' an applicant will continue to be provided with temporary accommodation until they find their own accommodation or are offered permanent housing.
- B. The Council takes into account the circumstances of each household when allocating temporary accommodation to ensure that it is suitable. Lewisham Council's Location Priority Policy outlines the approach that will be taken in making placements into temporary accommodation and formalises an approach that has been in operation informally for a number of years.
- C. The Council would prefer for all placements to be made within borough boundaries and it is important to note that of those placed out of borough. However, in borough placements are in increasingly short supply due to rising costs and benefit restrictions and it is likely that an increased proportion of households will need to be placed out of borough and possibly out of London in future.
- D. The aim of the Location Priority Policy is to prioritise the supply of suitable, in or close to borough temporary accommodation to those that need it the most and make the Council's position consistent and transparent.
- E. Depending on their individual circumstances, households could be placed in one of three groups:
- Priority to be located in the London Borough of Lewisham
  - Priority to be located close to the London Borough of Lewisham
  - No priority as to the location of a property

- F. The Location Priority Placement provides guidelines for officers to follow and ensures that the individual circumstances of each case are considered. All placements are subject to a thorough suitability assessment to determine the type and location of accommodation that should be offered.

### **3. Consultation**

- A. A consultation event was held on 25 September as a means of providing information to stakeholders on the proposed policy and an opportunity for them to communicate their views and raise any concerns that they might have. Officers attended the Homelessness Forum in order to give a verbal invitation to the event and invitations were also sent via the Forum's email list. Invitations were also sent to a range of other support services including housing, health and preventative services. A total of 18 people attended the event.

- B. Issues and questions raised is provided can broadly be summarised along with responses on the day under the following headings:

- General questions and comments

Questions were largely about clarifying the details of the policy and its implementation which were provided on the day.

- Financial impact on service users

Concern was particularly raised about the impact on people who might want to travel back to Lewisham for work, study or to access services. Concern was noted but it was pointed out that accommodation outside of the borough would be more affordable and therefore sustainable because it would put less of a financial burden on service users.

- Equalities impact

Concern was raised about the possibility that people from black and minority ethnic communities or with particular religious beliefs might be placed in parts of the country they would become isolated or potentially ostracised. Participants were assured that officers would be sensitive to these issues when considering options around housing.

- Health and wellbeing impact

Concern was mainly around taking people away from specialist support services that they were accessing in the borough, such as those around issues such as substance misuse or domestic violence. Again participants were assured that these issues would be taken into account when considering options around housing.

### **4. Impact of proposed changes on specific groups**

In developing Lewisham's Location Priority Policy, consideration has been given to the impact of the proposals on specific groups protected under the Equality Act 2010. The Act provides specific protection to the following:



Age	<p>Overall, the impact is positive as it formalises existing practises, making them more transparent, consistent and clearly defined.</p> <p>Priority for housing is generally through having dependent children, and there are therefore a higher proportion of younger households in receipt of temporary accommodation.</p> <p>The Location Priority Policy stipulates that the welfare of children is a key consideration, which means that families with children are more likely to be placed in or close to borough.</p>
Disability	<p>Overall, the impact is positive as it formalises existing practises, making them more transparent, consistent and clearly defined.</p> <p>In general disability is not part of the assessment criteria specified within the policy – except for the following exceptions</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Households with children subject to an Education Health and Care Plan (EHCP) or a Statement of Special Educational Needs in the London Borough of Lewisham which cannot be transferred to another local authority without causing serious detriment to the child’s welfare will qualify for ‘In-borough’ priority.</li> <li>• This will also be true for applicants who have a longstanding arrangement to provide essential care to another family member in the London Borough of Lewisham who is not part of the household. Carers must be in receipt of Carer’s Allowance.</li> <li>• Disabled applicants receiving treatment for a physical or mental health condition from a specialist hospital unit which cannot be transferred to another NHS service or they are at a critical point in their treatment.</li> </ul> <p>Disabled applicants may also be able to show other circumstances which demonstrate an exceptional and compelling need which cannot be met outside of the London Borough of Lewisham.</p>
Gender	<p>Overall, the impact is positive as it formalises existing practises, making them more transparent, consistent and clearly defined.</p> <p>There are a higher proportion of women amongst service users – this is explained by the higher proportion of families with mothers as compared to those with fathers and the fact that children are a key consideration for local authorities in providing accommodation.</p>
Gender reassignment	<p>No data is collected on gender re-assignment in relation to housing but a clearer and more transparent process based on individual assessment is likely to be beneficial to all groups.</p> <p>.</p>
Marriage & civil partnership	<p>Positive for the general reasons already given. No data is collected on marital status, though the majority (75 %) are single or single parent households, suggesting a relatively low percentage of married or civil partnerships in this group.</p>

Pregnancy & maternity	Positive, for the general reasons of clarity and transparency. No data is collected on pregnancy & maternity.
Race	<p>The introduction of the policy is overall positive as it formalises existing practices whilst at the same time making them more transparent, consistent and clearly defined.</p> <p>Data gathered in 2014-15 shows that 73% of service users are from black and minority ethnic communities and it is recognised therefore that there will be a higher level of impact on this group. However the individual assessment carried out on each case allows for any factors which may be related to race to be considered.</p>
Religion & belief	<p>No data on religion and belief is collected in relation to housing. A clearer more transparent process based on individual assessment is likely to be beneficial to all groups.</p> <p>As part of the duties under the Equality Act 2010, the Council will have due regard to the religion or belief of the applicant when determining the suitability of a property. Individuals will be have the opportunity to show other circumstances which demonstrate an exceptional and compelling need which cannot be met outside or near to the London Borough of Lewisham.</p>
Sexual orientation	Positive – no data is collected on sexuality but a clearer more transparent process based on individual assessment is likely to be beneficial to all groups. However the individual assessment carried out on each case allows for any factors which may be related to sexuality to be considered under ‘exceptional and compelling circumstances’.

## 5. Conclusion

As noted above, it is anticipated that the introduction of a Location Priority Policy will have a positive impact on all groups protected under the Equality Act 2010 because it will provide a clearer more transparent process in the allocation of housing. This Equalities Analysis Assessment recognises that the implementation of the policy will have a greater impact on specific groups because they have a higher representation within the overall service user profile. The impact on these groups will be mitigated by the individual assessment carried out on each case which will allow for any relevant factors to be considered in the allocation of housing.

## **1 Purpose**

- 1.1 The purpose of the Temporary Accommodation Procurement Strategy is to set out how the Council plans to procure sufficient units of temporary accommodation to meet the anticipated demand during the coming year.
- 1.2 It will help to guide temporary accommodation letting teams in their daily business, helping to ensure that the right accommodation is procured for a household.
- 1.3 The Procurement Strategy takes into consideration the local and national shifts in the Private Rented Sector landscape driven by the buoyant property sales and lettings market, legislative changes and recent legal judgements.
- 1.4 This document forecasts demand for the coming year. We will review this forecast regularly against actual demand. An estimated 600 units of nightly paid accommodation are needed during 2015/16 that are accessible to households on benefits, and a TA portfolio of around 1800 units will be needed until 2020.

## **2 Introduction**

- 2.1 The Procurement Strategy has been developed to meet the needs of homeless households and households being assisted by social care to address the shortage in supply the Council is currently facing. This Procurement Strategy aims to meet the needs of Lewisham's residents in conjunction with Lewisham Council's Location Priority Policy and overall Housing Strategy.
- 2.2 Lewisham Council set up a Private Sector Housing Agency (PSHA) in September 2013 to act as the procurement hub to meet the housing demand of various departments such as housing and social care, procuring temporary accommodation to meet this need both inside and outside of the Borough.
- 2.3 This innovative approach would ensure the Council:
  - Achieves value for money through its collective buying power and by eliminating internal competition for PRS accommodation
  - Delivers accommodation which is fit for purpose
  - Delivers an enhanced customer focussed service both landlords and tenants

- Identifies and swiftly deals with rogue landlords operating within Lewisham Council's private rented sector
- Increases joint working between different teams and departments across the Council, minimising duplication and waste, contributing to the Council's futures programme by delivering its vital services efficiently, effectively and economically.

### **3 Background and context**

3.1 Traditional models of Temporary Accommodation procurement and types of supply are no longer adequate due to the combined effect of the following:

- Supply of social housing not meeting demand, with this gap increasing year on year
- Housing Benefit caps and the wider welfare reforms, including Universal Credit.
- Rising homelessness
- PRS market conditions
- Legal judgements
- Pressures on current supply and the Temporary Accommodation funding model.

3.2 Shortages of self-contained Temporary Accommodation accessible by benefit-dependent households is leading to more dependence on emergency bed and breakfast accommodation being spot purchased at a greater cost to Council Tax payers. This additionally puts pressure on the Council trying to meet the statutory requirement that homeless families should not spend more than six weeks in shared bed and breakfast accommodation. This pressure can only be further exacerbated as most of the existing in Borough Temporary Accommodation will become unaffordable to households on benefits when the lower £23k household benefit cap is introduced in 2016.

3.3 The Council needs to innovate and identify new modern methods of procuring self-contained Temporary Accommodation to meet its ever increasing demand. The accommodation must be suitable, accessible and affordable to households in receipt of benefits, without increasing the burden on the tax payer. This means some accommodation will have to be out of the London Borough of Lewisham area and some will have to be out of London, in line with the Location Priority Placement Policy.

#### **Traditional model of Temporary Accommodation procurement**

3.4 Temporary Accommodation is private rented sector (PRS) accommodation for homeless households and can either be first or second stage. First stage is emergency housing provided while a homeless application is assessed and is normally nightly paid. In Lewisham currently 71 per cent is Out of Borough of which 20 per cent is shared accommodation. Second stage is self-contained accommodation, largely hostels or private sector leased accommodation, provided once a statutory housing duty is accepted. The household is expected to stay in this form of Temporary Accommodation until they are successful in

their bid for social rented housing or where the Council's housing duty is discharged through an offer in the PRS.

- 3.5 Although around 71 per cent of Temporary Accommodation is out of borough it has largely been procured in neighbouring Boroughs mostly South East or East London. Historically nightly paid accommodation has been procured through spot booking of hotels. However, due to severe shortage of suitable B&B accommodation within agreed rates the Council is looking at other formal contractual arrangements to ensure it has access to adequate nightly paid accommodation to meet its statutory demand. Self-contained accommodation was primarily procured through private sector leasing schemes with medium term leases called Private Sector Leased and Housing Associations Leased accommodation (PSL/HALs).
- 3.6 This approach worked well whilst homelessness was at manageable levels, there was a sufficient supply of stable social rent accommodation and the use of Temporary Accommodation was a short term measure. This was the case until 2011, when the first set of welfare reforms were implemented and rents were not increasing at such an accelerated pace. Prior to the implementation of the welfare changes and the acceleration of values and rents within the market a sufficient supply of properties could be procured in Lewisham and in London. However landlords are withdrawing their accommodation from the PSL schemes to let them privately at higher rent levels, let to other higher paying schemes such as nightly paid, or sell their properties, taking advantage of the current increase in property prices, as illustrated below.

<b>Year</b>	<b>No of Handback Notices Received</b>
2013/14	24
2014/15	60
Percentage increase in handback notices	150 per cent

### **Supply and demand for social housing**

- 3.7 The need for longer term Temporary Accommodation is deep rooted in the wider national housing crisis. The decline and in some cases the complete absence of new house building has contributed to house price inflation and affordability issues, which have been compounded by the economic downturn starting in 2007. The lack of affordable market housing has in turn significantly increased demand for social rented housing at an alarming rate and there is nothing to suggest that this demand is likely to subside in the future. Over 55 per cent of Lewisham's population now rent, either in the private or social sector, illustrated below:

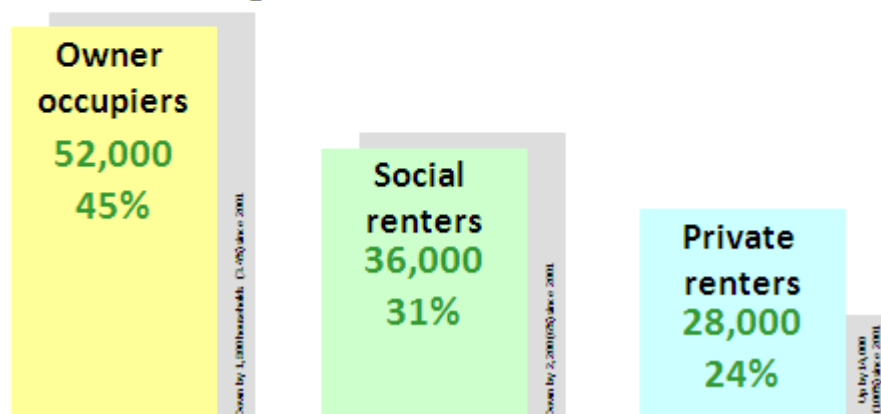
## Rising house prices = doubling of PRS



- Number of private rented homes in Lewisham doubled in 10 years

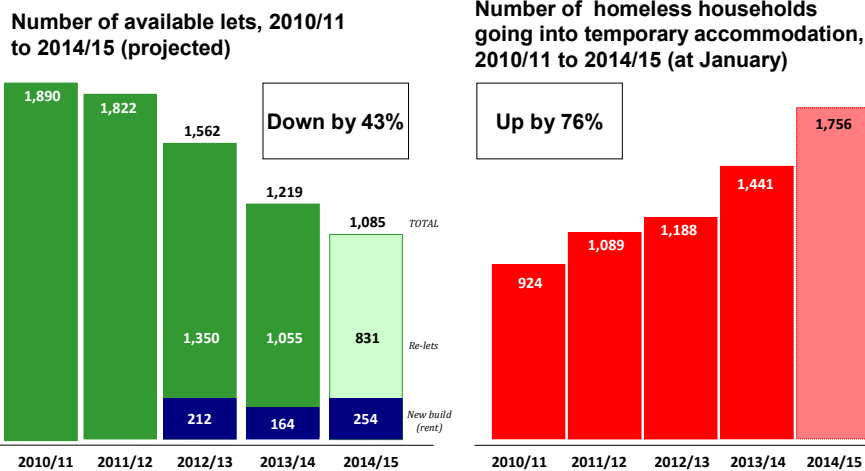
**116,000**

households living in Lewisham (at 2011 census)



- 3.8 Most London boroughs have high demand for social housing, driven by population growth, lack of affordable market alternatives and low turnover in the social sector, which is well documented. At the beginning of 2015, the lowest house price recorded by land registry in Lewisham was £245,304. Based on a 10 per cent deposit and a mortgage based on 3.5 times household income this would be affordable to a household with an annual income of £63,078 – 1.7 times higher than the borough median household income of £36,145. Even at the lowest end of the property market, home ownership remains unaffordable to two thirds of Lewisham households. London has seen a tenure shift with fewer households now owning their own homes, London's private rented sector has subsequently grown and now makes up over 30 per cent of Lewisham's total stock; a 100 per cent increase over the last 10 years.
- 3.9 The need for increased Temporary Accommodation is a result of the shortage of social housing, which is required to meet demand. However the nature of Lewisham's social stock, demography and buoyant private rented sector market makes the disparity between supply and demand particularly acute. This problem is further compounded by Housing Associations reviewing their business models and moving away from their traditional roles of providing temporary accommodation through affordable housing.

## Supply is Down, Demand is Up



- London-wide, the availability of lets is falling
- Consequently the need to use temporary accommodation continues to increase

3.10 Demand has always outstripped supply in Lewisham and there has always been a need for Temporary Accommodation but never at the levels currently being experienced and or as future projections. Homelessness, and rough sleeping in particular, is the most obvious expression of housing need. In Lewisham, the number of accepted homeless applications increased by 43 per cent between 2010 and 2014/15, and the number of households in temporary accommodation has increased by 76 per cent over the last 5 years. Across London, the number of households placed in temporary accommodation is increasing. Lewisham is no exception to this trend. Furthermore, it is estimated that the number of people sleeping rough in London rose by 13 per cent between 2011/12 and 2012/13 & 14 per cent between 2013/14.

3.11 Currently there are 1,908 households with priority waiting for social housing, which includes 1,197 homeless households in TA. Currently the Council has over 9000 individuals and families on the housing register and indications are that this number will increase in the years to come.

3.12 Demand in Lewisham is predominantly for family sized homes with 80 per cent of households needing two bedroom accommodation. The remaining 20 per cent need is a mix of 1, 3 and 4 bedroom plus. Private rents are also considerably expensive and are the third/fourth/fifth or sixth highest in London.

3.13 New affordable housing development has been limited not only in Lewisham but London and nationally due to the high cost of land and increasingly the lack of funding from central government is limiting the viability of new schemes. New supply of homes is at an all-time low, well below the London Councils estimated requirement and the GLA Housing strategy target as shown below:

## New housing delivery in London



- GLA target is half of London Councils' estimate requirement
- Actual delivery target is half the GLA target

3.14 Due to the current housing crisis, exacerbated by lack of new development, Lewisham households are staying in temporary accommodation for longer periods, whilst bidding for their council housing.

3.15 It is however the joint effect of rising homeless demand due to the impact of the welfare reform(see below), combined with historic supply and demand disparity and various recent legal judgements, that is contributing to the current increased Temporary Accommodation challenge. As homelessness increases, waiting times for social housing will grow and longer waits in second stage Temporary Accommodation can be expected, particularly for families.

### Rising homelessness

3.16 Prior to 2011 homelessness acceptances were falling. Acceptances rose to over 43 per cent between 2011/12 and 2014/15, as illustrated below:

Year	2011/12	2012/13	2013/14	2014/15	2015/16 (forecast)
Homeless duty accepted	538	653	710	769	838

3.17 In 2009 only a small percentage of acceptances came from households living in the private rented sector but during 2014/15 this rose to over 54.3 per cent.

3.18 Other reasons why the impact has been so acute in Lewisham are:



- 3.19 The size of the private rented sector means greater numbers have been affected by the welfare reforms. Lewisham's PRS is made up of upwards of 36,000 properties.
- 3.20 Local connection rules under homeless legislation mean boroughs must accept a duty towards eligible homeless households that have resided locally for six out of the past twelve months. Shorter residency is more likely in areas with large private rented sectors, due to the short term nature of tenancies and high churn. Around 99.8 per cent of Lewisham's homeless acceptances are to households that have six out twelve months local connection. Churn in the private rented sector is particularly high, a survey in 2010 found that almost a third of private tenants had been in their current property for less than a year and 63 per cent intended to move within the next two years.
- 3.21 The rise in acceptances is not withstanding work done by the Housing Options Centre (HOC) to address the impact of the LHA caps such as; working with landlords to negotiate lower rents, prevention assistance to help households move out of the borough and to affordable areas, financial assistance with removal and other expenses and support and assistance to find alternative accommodation.
- 3.22 Further increases in homeless are expected in 2015/16 from households living in the private rented sector due to the continuing impact of the welfare reforms which will accelerate with the implementation of the lower benefit cap of £23,000, reduced from £26,000. As a majority of homeless households receive benefits, this further reduction is going to increase the number of households requiring assistance from Lewisham Council in terms of their housing need. It will also drive more landlords from this market into the more lucrative "young professional renter" market.
- 3.23 In the longer term, homeless acceptances are difficult to predict as they are influenced by macro-economic factors. However for reasons stated above it is estimated that they will remain high.
- 3.24 Future demand for Temporary Accommodation will also be affected by Lewisham Council's new power to discharge its permanent housing duty through an offer of housing in the private rented sector (as an alternative to waiting in Temporary Accommodation for social housing). Lewisham intends to use this power and offer private tenancies whenever possible and where a household can maintain a tenancy. However the challenge here remains finding suitable accommodation to meet the specific needs of the household.
- 3.25 The property must be suitable and there is a large body of case law in this area. It must be affordable, of the right size and the location will need to take into account matters such as employment, schools etc. The Council's locational placement policy will be applied to ensure Temporary Accommodation meets the needs and requirements of the household.

#### **Pressures on current supply and the Temporary Accommodation funding model**

- 3.26 The severe shortage of self-contained Temporary Accommodation units (PSLs and Privately Managed Accommodation/PMA) has been contributed to by the current Temporary Accommodation funding model. Councils are able to recoup some or all of the costs of Temporary Accommodation by charging residents to live there at rents set by a prescribed government formula, which is 90 per cent of January 2011 LHA plus a management fee of £40 per week, and up to a £500 per week cap for families. However due to the current PRS market conditions, the Council is no longer able to procure Temporary Accommodation under this existing financial model within Lewisham and most parts of London.
- 3.27 The strength of the private rented sector (PRS) across London and in Lewisham in particular has resulted in landlords moving into other ‘non benefit’ markets. Given the decline in home ownership in London, the private rented sector has become the only solution for many households. The Mayor’s Private Rented Sector Housing Covenant highlights how the sector is changing and is now accommodating more families. Due to the implementation and impact of the overall benefit cap, landlords are moving into other markets i.e letting to private tenants. Competition from other London boroughs facing similar issues is also a factor.
- 3.28 The impact of these combined factors has resulted in Lewisham Council having to spot book emergency self-contained and nightly paid accommodation at a significantly higher cost to meet rising demand and to be able to meet its statutory housing duty.
- 3.29 Temporary Accommodation supply within the PRS will continue to diminish as the on-going implementation of welfare reforms bites deeper and more landlords move into other markets. An average couple with two children and no special circumstances currently receive approximately £266.19 per week in benefits (excluding housing benefit). This would leave approximately £233.81 per week for housing costs as a direct result of the overall benefit cap. Table below shows private rented sector market rents (median) in Lewisham to be much higher than the current LHA rates. As a direct result of this gap, the accommodation is unaffordable and Lewisham Council will have to look further afield to source suitable affordable accommodation.

BRMA Area			Rent Rate	One Bed	Two Bed	Three Bed	Four Bed
<b>Lewisham</b>							
Inner London	South East		LHA Rate	204.08	265.29	330.72	417.02
			Median Market Rent (Zoopla)	265.00	323.00	369.00	496.00
Outer London	South East		LHA Rate	161.02	198.11	242.40	312.77
			Median Market Rent (Zoopla)	265.00	323.00	369.00	496.00

- 3.30 These overall benefit caps will continue to impact existing households in Temporary Accommodation and the affected households will need to be moved into alternative affordable accommodation, which is likely to be outside Lewisham and London. However alternative housing solutions will be considered for households that need to stay in Lewisham or “close to the Borough”, as detailed in the attached Location Priority policy. If households need to remain in Borough to receive specialist support only available in

Lewisham then they would need to be supported with such funding streams as the Discretionary Housing Payment.

3.31 The implementation of the new overall benefit cap of £20k for households living out of London will also render a lot of currently affordable out of London accommodation unaffordable. Therefore, the Council will need to source affordable accommodation further afield, for example currently, in Birmingham 750 households are affected by the welfare reforms, however, with the implementation of the £20k cap, this number increases to 7,500 households.

#### **4 Other housing demand from No Recourse to Public Funds/Social Care**

4.1 There are other departments within the Council assessing the needs of customers, which may include a housing need, although this is outside of the statutory housing duty. In the past the procurement of properties for these client groups was undertaken by social care teams, inexperienced in property procurement or the market, which led to price inflation and property conditions that did not meet the Councils required standards. As a result the responsibility for this function was transferred to the PSHA. The needs of these services are for Bed & Breakfast and settled accommodation in the PRS. This procurement is delivered in tandem with sourcing supply for homeless families.

#### **5 The new approach to Temporary Accommodation Procurement**

5.1 The principles of our procurement approach are to:

- Increase Private Sector Leasing (PSL)/Privately Managed Accommodation (PMA) supply and reducing dependence on Bed & Breakfast where possible
- Provide Temporary Accommodation at a cost that is affordable to residents and value for money for the Council.
- Provide a range of Temporary Accommodation products to meet various different needs
- Support those affected by homelessness or those having a housing requirement as part of their engagement with the Council, including NRTPF and Childrens Social Care (CYP).

5.2 The approach will complement and dovetail the existing work to manage homeless demand and increase social housing supply.

##### **Increase Supply**

5.3 An estimated 600 new self-contained emergency accommodation units are needed during 2015/16 for applicants presenting as homeless and 80 for NRTPF and CYP. Also required is a portfolio of at least 1800 temporary accommodation units for applicants presenting as homeless will be needed until 2020. The requirements for settled accommodation for NRTPF and CYP

are estimated at approximately 100 over the next 12 months. The Council will aim to achieve an increase by:-

- Entering into short and medium term block booking arrangement for shared and if necessary self-contained accommodation to avoid spot purchasing temporary accommodation that is sub-standard and not fit for purpose
- Maximising use of the Council's hostel stock through effective management
- Increase the Council's hostel stock through new acquisitions (purchasing)
- Direct purchasing of units through Lewisham Homes
- Maximising use of the empty property grants programme
- Entering into new PSL leases, PMA leases and settled accommodation
- Entering into long term leasing deals with developers and portfolio landlords
- Working with other sub-regions across London on new procurement initiatives such as the DPS (Dynamic Purchasing System) to procure temporary accommodation
- Bringing back into use properties for the provision of temporary accommodation, which are owned by the Council but are currently empty
- Bringing back into use Council accommodation which is currently let to third parties at peppercorn or below market rents

**Provide Temporary Accommodation at a cost that is affordable to residents and value for money for the Council**

- 5.4 The welfare benefit cap and competition for properties in London means a considerable number of new units will need to be out of Lewisham and London to be affordable to non-working households. This approach will allow households to create a stable, secure family environment and sustained community cohesion. Accommodation outside London is affordable due to the LHA rates being in line with open market rents. That synergy between the LHA rates and open market rates does not exist in Lewisham or London.

**Provide a range of Temporary Accommodation products to meet various different needs**

- 5.5 A range of different types of Temporary Accommodation is needed to meet demand for short term and long term temporary accommodation from the Council's various departments such as housing and social care, for various client groups such as Statutory Homeless, No Recourse to Public Funds, Intentionally Homeless assisted under S17 and Care Leavers etc. Longer term Temporary Accommodation is required due to the longer waits which households can expect for social housing due to rising homelessness and the acute shortage of Council social housing.
- 5.6 The suitability of Temporary Accommodation is defined by legislation in terms of location, cost size and condition. Councils are required to offer Temporary Accommodation in their district 'so far as reasonably practicable'. However, for the reasons previously stated procuring affordable accommodation within Lewisham and London is extremely challenging.

- 5.7 Significant amount of work in terms of market analysis is being undertaken to assess where accommodation will be affordable, namely within LHA levels and the benefit caps. Accommodation will be allocated in compliance with Lewisham Council's Location Priority Placement Policy with the caveat that compliance with government legislation is of paramount priority.
- 5.8 Suitability assessments will be undertaken to determine suitable and affordable accommodation allocated using the Council's Location Priority Placement Policy.

**Support those affected by homelessness**

- 5.9 Homeless households placed in temporary accommodation are supported by the Homeless Families Floating Support Team, empowering them to take control of their lives and encouraging them to live independently. Emphasis will be placed on supporting the Temporary Accommodation households into work so they will not be affected by the household benefit caps.

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<b>Housing Select Committee</b>			
<b>Title</b>	Key Housing Issues: Housing and Planning Bill		
<b>Key decision</b>	No	<b>Item no</b>	6
<b>Wards</b>	All		
<b>Contributors</b>	Executive Director for Customer Services		
<b>Class</b>	Part 1	Date: 27 <sup>th</sup> October 2015	

## 1 Summary

- 1.1 As part of the work programme, Housing Select Committee agreed to review the main housing policy implications arising as a result of the Government's legislative agenda, following the General Election in May. Committee also resolved to review the implications of any welfare reforms that would also be pertinent to housing.
- 1.2 The Housing and Planning Bill was published on 13 October. The Bill includes a range of measures including:
- Provisions to encourage the development of more Starter Homes
  - Measures targeting rogue landlords
  - Pay to Stay – where high earning social tenants will be made to pay higher rents
  - The Right to Buy extended to Housing Association tenants
  - Local authorities being compelled to sell high value assets
  - Changes to planning permission so that some sites have permission in principle
- 1.3 Officers have begun assessing the impact and implications of the draft bill and will update Committee at the meeting. To enable the update to be as full and timely as possible, a presentation covering the key housing issues and the implications of the Bill will be tabled at the time of the meeting.

## 2 Recommendation

- 2.1 The Select Committee is asked to note that a full detailed presentation on the main policy implications of the draft Housing and Planning Bill will be tabled on the night of committee.

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Housing Select Committee		
<b>Report Title</b>	Voluntary Sector Accommodation Consultation Update	
<b>Contributors</b>	Head of Culture and Community Development	
<b>Class</b>	Part 1	Date: 27 October 2015

## 1. Purpose of Report

- 1.1 To provide feedback to Housing Select Committee on the responses to consultation on proposals for closure, redevelopment and change of use of some of the borough's community centres.

## 2. Background

- 2.1 As part of the Council's fundamental review of all its budgets, it has been looking at the costs of maintaining its range of assets and the potential income that these assets could generate for the Council that could be used to fund other services. In order to release substantial revenues savings and therefore safeguard frontline service delivery, the Council is in the process of reducing its public buildings. This work has already commenced with the transfer of staff working in the Catford complex into Laurence House, and the changed use of the Town Hall.
- 2.2 In April 2015 Mayor and Cabinet considered the outcome of a three month consultation with the voluntary and community sector on a new framework for the council's use of assets to support the sector. This framework was agreed by Mayor and Cabinet and sets out four categories for VCS assets as follows:
- **Sole occupancy of a building (not at full market rate)** – This would be a building, wholly or predominantly utilised by one VCS organisation. In order for an organisation to have sole occupancy of a building it would need to demonstrate a need for specialist facilities that could not be provided elsewhere and/or within a shared facility. The organisation would need to demonstrate that it can't afford full market rate. The organisation would also need to be delivering services that meet our priorities.
  - **Voluntary and Community Sector Hub** – This would be a shared building with all inclusive affordable rents. This would be the preferred category for organisations that are providing services that meet our priorities (and cannot demonstrate the need for specialist facilities above). The Hubs will provide office and meeting space. Activity space where appropriate and possible may also be provided, otherwise this would need to be hired elsewhere.
  - **Community Centre** – This would be a neighbourhood based facility with activity space that is predominantly geared towards providing services at a neighbourhood level. Community Centres currently have a range of different terms and conditions, some are on full repairing leases, some directly provided and others managed by Premises Management Organisations (PMOs) but with Repairs & Maintenance

provided by the Council. Many community centres are currently underutilised and we would be looking to rationalise the number of centres taking into account what other community facilities are available in the area. As the number of centres is reduced we would work to reduce the overall financial burden to the Council and put in place equitable arrangements across the portfolio.

- **Sole occupancy of a building at full market rate** – This would be for larger VCS organisations that can afford to pay full market rates, for those that are not delivering services that meet our priorities or for organisations that are delivering services that meet our priorities but that do not wish to be housed within one of the VCS hubs. These organisations would still be able to access buildings (where available) on the Council’s standard letting terms and conditions.

2.3 Following the adoption of the framework the next step was to develop an implementation plan to demonstrate the impact of the framework on the existing portfolio of community premises. The following principles that were agreed as part of the framework were used to guide the development of the implementation plan:

- Demand for subsidised space will always outstrip the available resources and it is therefore essential to have a process for allocating support that is open and transparent.
- Lease and hire arrangements should be equitable.
- Council Assets used by VCS organisations need to be fully optimised to ensure the Council is achieving best value for its’ residents.
- The overall cost to the Council of assets used by VCS organisations should be reduced in order to release savings.
- The model for the use of Council assets to support VCS organisations in the future should allow some flexibility for changing needs.
- The model should support the Council’s partnership approach
- Enabling VCS organisations to access Council assets is a way of supporting the sector.
- The model should help the sector to help themselves by optimising the use of their resources.

In addition the following factors have been considered in developing the implementation plan:

- Usage levels
- Other facilities in the locality
- Impact on council’s ability to meet its statutory duties
- Existing lease arrangements
- Potential for redevelopment
- Potential for shared use
- Condition of the asset

2.4 The Implementation Plan was taken to Mayor and Cabinet in July 2015 and contained outline proposals for how each of fifty assets fitted into the framework. Within the community centres category there were a number of proposals to close or redevelop a centre. It was agreed that further consultation should be undertaken and the outcome of this reported back to Mayor and Cabinet before implementation could proceed.

- 2.5 The plans set out in this report reflect in part a response to the requirement to ensure childcare and school places. Local authorities are under a duty to ensure that there is sufficient childcare provision in their areas. The provision must be “sufficient to meet the requirements of parents in the local authority’s area who require childcare in order to enable them to take up, or remain in, work, or undertake education or training which could reasonably be expected to assist them to obtain work.

Ensuring that the supply of school places meets demand remains a statutory duty of local authorities. In terms of meeting demand, local authorities are also subject to constraints under the Education Act 2011. The 2011 Act requires that this demand for school places be met through the building of new free schools and academies, and the expansion of existing schools where possible.

- 2.6 The plans set out in this report also reflect in part a response to the massive housing challenges in Lewisham and London more broadly. A combination of population growth and an acute shortage in the supply of new homes has led to an affordability crisis in every sector of the local housing economy. This is reflected in the fact that the average house price in Lewisham is now more than 12 times the median local income, and that rents in the private rental market have increased by a third in the past three years. It is expressed most clearly however in the rise in homeless households living in temporary accommodation, a number which now stands at more than 550, representing a ten-fold increase in just over two years.

The Council has initiated a wide range of responses to this crisis, principal amongst which is a return to Council house building in order to increase the rate at which new affordable homes are made available to residents. The Council has committed to delivering at least 500 new Council homes by 2018 as part of a mixed-tenure development programme. Sites for new homes are generally identified with the following criteria:

- Preference for sites with a capacity of more than 10 homes
- Underused and or redundant land
- Locations which are popular for both rented and homes for sale
- Places which may benefit existing as well as new residents

In a number of cases the community centres under consideration in this report have the capacity to contribute towards the delivery of the house building programme by reconfiguring the layout of a site, to deliver both new homes and improved community facilities.

### **3. Consultation**

- 3.1 There are 16 assets where further consultation has been undertaken. Meetings were held with the management committees and users of these centres. A list of these meetings is contained at appendix A. Management committees and users were invited to make written submissions to the consultation and these are summarised in section 4 of this report and provided in full in appendix B.

#### 4. Summary of Responses

4.1 A summary of the feedback for each centre is given below and an initial response to the issues raised. A further response and recommendation for each asset will be presented in a paper to Mayor and Cabinet on 11<sup>th</sup> November 2015.

#### 4.2 Barnes Wallis Community Centre: Telegraph Hill Ward

**Original Proposal:** To redevelop the site of the community centre for housing and reprovide community space within the new development.

**Consultation Feedback:** The consultation meeting was well attended with representatives of the management committee, user groups and local residents. Attendees were overwhelmingly opposed to the proposal. The main reasons given were the importance of the centre to enabling local community activity to take place, the hard work and commitment of local residents who have kept the centre operating and a view that additional housing and associated increase in the local population could bring with it social problems and place a strain on local public infrastructure. Concern was raised about the level of disruption to centre users that redevelopment would bring in particular with reference to the newly established nursery. People also spoke about a deep personal attachment to the building and a fear that whatever replaced it would not meet the needs of the community in the same way. A number of other potential sites for housing were suggested and the council was urged to look elsewhere and leave the community centre as it is.

**Response:** The council recognises the need to ensure that community activity is able to continue on the Somerville Estate and the role that community and voluntary organisations and the individuals who give their time to deliver these activities play. It is for this reason that the council will ensure that any redevelopment of the site makes provision for community space to compliment other facilities in the area such as the new big lottery funded community space at Somerville Adventure Playground. The council acknowledges that any redevelopment is likely to cause disruption both to centre users and neighbouring properties and detailed planning will be done to try and minimise this disruption. The redevelopment of the centre would be part of a wider estate development with a number of sites being developed. It is unknown at this stage how many new homes could be provided on the community centre site, but the council feels that the potential to provide new homes and a new community space and the benefits this will bring could outweigh the short term disruption that would be caused.

**Consideration:** Consideration is being given to the Barnes Wallis community centre site being included within the wider development of housing on the Somerville Estate. This would be subject to detailed design work to include the provision of community space that complements other facilities in the locality and that the views and needs of users and residents are used to inform the design. Barnes Wallis community centre to be retained until such time as any housing development is agreed.

#### 4.3 Brandram Rd Community Hall: Blackheath Ward

**Original Proposal:** To close Brandram Rd Community Hall and make the site available for disposal.

**Consultation Feedback:** The management committee and users of Brandram Rd are strongly opposed to the closure of the centre. A petition with 1400 signatures at time of writing has been submitted alongside the consultation response. The management committee recognise the need for the council to make savings but feel that the Hall provides a valuable community resource. They have made an alternative proposal that they take on a full repairing and maintaining lease and pay any surplus income over expenditure as rent.

**Response:** The council recognises the value of the community activities that take place at Brandram Rd Hall but feel that there are a number of possible alternative venues in the locality. Lochaber Hall which is just across the ward boundary has a main hall, small hall and crèche and could accommodate some users from Brandram Road. There is also St Margaret's Church nearby that can be hired out for up to 50 users in the crypt and a maximum of 300 seated; and Kingswood Halls which has a large hall (130 seated) and annexe (40 seated), available at £20-£40ph. Manor House Library offers five meeting rooms, ranging from small (10 seated) to large (30 seated); prices range from £12ph to £38ph as a subsidised rate. The Brandram Road site has been assessed as having the potential for nine housing units.

**Consideration:** Consideration is being given to the alternative proposal presented by Brandram Rd Management Association and the timing of any future housing development.

#### 4.4 Champion Hall: Bellingham Ward

**Original Proposal:** To close the hall and redesignate solely for childcare use.

**Consultation Feedback:** The management committee recognised that the council needs to make savings but felt that although the hall provides valuable childcare facilities it should still accommodate other users. The committee presented an alternative proposal to take on a full repairing lease for the Hall and pay rent but to still accommodate other community uses alongside the childcare provision.

**Response:** The proposal put forward by the management committee may yield less income than could be achieved by marketing the hall as a commercial nursery. However the additional community benefits that continuing to operate as a community centre and the saving that would be achieved through the management committee paying rent and taking on repairs and maintenance liabilities may provide a good value use of the asset.

**Consideration:** consideration is being given to the alternative proposal to negotiate a lease with the Champion Hall management committee that would safeguard the childcare offer at the hall, provide continued community benefits and achieve a saving for the council.

#### 4.5 Clare Hall: Brockley Ward

**Original Proposal:** To designate the hall as a nursery.

**Consultation feedback:** The hall is solely occupied by Little Gems nursery although it is occasionally used for councillor surgeries and meetings of the Tenants and Residents Association. The nursery management are happy to take on a lease for the building as a nursery and have commenced negotiations. They have indicated that they would be happy to continue to accommodate the other occasional uses.

**Response:** the consultation feedback was in agreement with the original proposal.

**Consideration:** negotiations have commenced for a full repairing lease with Little Gems nursery on similar terms to other nurseries in council buildings.

#### 4.6 Evelyn Community Centre: Evelyn Ward

**Original Proposal:** To redevelop the site of the community centre for housing and reprovide community space within the new development.

**Consultation feedback:** The consultation meeting was attended by the TRA chair and members of the various user groups, including a nursery, a number of church members and Vietnamese women's group. There was consensus amongst the attendees that the centre was well used and was the heart of the community; particularly from the nursery that had been established for over 20 years and served a number of children with additional needs and from vulnerable homes. The centre is also used by the TRA for resident meetings and they did not want these links with the community to be broken. Some users did highlight the repairs required at the centre and the lack of storage available and felt that redevelopment could provide an opportunity to look into these issues. However, there were concerns raised about the loss of greenspace cause by another housing development and that reproviding a smaller centre on this site would not be able to accommodate all of the current users.

**Response:** The council recognises the need for community activity on the Evelyn Estate. It is for that reason that the original proposal was to redevelop the site and reprovide community space as part of the development. Looking at the site in more detail there is concern that it would not be financially viable to provide both housing and community space on the site due to the very close proximity of designated open space surrounding the centre. It may only be feasible to develop along with other sites nearby and currently no such sites have been identified.

**Consideration:** Consideration is being given to Evelyn Community Centre being retained but that the site remain earmarked for possible housing development with community space should other sites that could be developed alongside it be identified at a later date.

#### 4.7 Ewart Rd Club Room: Crofton Park Ward

**Original Proposal:** To close the club room and develop housing on the site.

**Consultation Feedback:** A meeting was held at the club room which was attended by members of the management committee, a representative from the Housing Co-op, users and residents. Attendees were opposed to the closure of the centre and put forward an alternative proposal that the club room be transferred to the Housing Co-op to remove

repairs and maintenance costs from the council. They also raised reservations about the suitability of the site for housing given its very close proximity to the surrounding buildings.

**Response:** In looking at the site further it is felt that it would not be suitable for development and the only housing option would be a simple conversion to a single flat. This would be insufficient benefit to warrant the loss of the community space and the alternative proposal of a transfer to the housing co-op would achieve the required reduction to the council's revenue budget.

**Consideration:** consideration is being given to the Ewart Rd Club Room being transferred to the Housing Co-op either as a freehold transfer or on a full repairing lease for community use.

#### 4.8 Goldsmiths Community Centre: Whitefoot Ward

**Original Proposal:** To retain community space on Goldsmiths Community Centre site either by retaining the current building or through developing the site for housing and re-providing community space.

**Consultation feedback:** the Goldsmiths Community Association who hold a lease for the building which expires in 2038 wish to make the necessary repairs to the building to continue to operate the centre and are currently opposed to the idea of redevelopment. They have requested an extension to their lease to assist with capital fundraising.

**Response:** Given that the current lease has a further 23 years before it expires any plans for the site need to be developed in collaboration with the current leaseholders. The council is sympathetic to Goldsmiths Community Association's desire to raise funds to repair the centre but are not in a position to make capital funding available. If the association are not able to raise the capital funds needed then further discussions about redevelopment may be required.

**Consideration:** Consideration is being given to retaining Goldsmiths Community Centre; and to revisit the future use of the site dependent on progress on raising the capital required for the works to the building.

#### 4.9 Honor Oak Community Centre: Telegraph Hill Ward

**Original Proposal:** to redevelop the community centre site for housing and re-provide community space as part of the development.

**Consultation feedback:** A meeting was held at Honor Oak Community Centre that was hosted by the Honor Oak Community Association and attended by centre users and residents. An additional meeting was held with the management committee of the community association. A petition of 668 signatures, at the time of writing, opposing the proposed redevelopment has been submitted. The community association and attendees at the public meeting were strongly opposed to the proposal. They were concerned that any replacement community space would not meet the community's needs and they expressed fear that the council would not provide any space at all. They were concerned about the

impact on the youth centre that adjoins the community centre and the need to ensure that youth activity on the estate did not suffer as a result of the proposal. Concerns were also voiced about the impact of more housing on the Honor Oak Estate in relation to the strain on public infrastructure and the potential for increased social problems. An application to add the Honor Oak Community Centre and Youth Centre to Lewisham's register of assets of community value was received and accepted. A request has also been made by the Honor Oak Management Association for a community asset transfer.

**Response:** The council recognises the need to ensure that community and youth activity is able to continue on the Honor Oak Estate. It is for this reason that the council will ensure that any redevelopment of the site makes provision for youth and community space. At present it is not certain how many new homes could be delivered, although for the purposes of modelling the programme the current assumption is 57 units. This is only an indication, detailed design work and further consultation about what youth and community space was needed would be undertaken before the development could be taken through the planning process. Although the council recognises that development would cause some disruption the benefits of more social housing and new community facilities could outweigh the short-term disruption that would be caused. It is unlikely that the council would wish to consider an asset transfer at this time as this would not allow for any housing development.

**Consideration:** Consideration is being given to the Honor Oak Community Centre site being earmarked for housing development with youth and community space but that the position of the Honor Oak project within the housing programme be reviewed to allow more time for further consultation and detailed design work to be undertaken. Given the pressing need to deliver new affordable homes for our residents, officers will continue to programme for 57 new homes to be delivered in this area, alongside wider community investment, by March 2018.

#### 4.10 Lethbridge Club Room: Blackheath Ward

**Original Proposal:** to close the Lethbridge Club room when the new community centre that is being provided as part of the redevelopment of the Heathside and Lethbridge Estate is completed.

**Consultation feedback:** this has been planned for several years and there has been a great deal of engagement locally on the provision of the new centre. Interest has been shown in the plans for the site once it is closed by users being displaced from other centres.

**Response:** The Lethbridge Club Room site is included within the plans for the redevelopment of the estate and is not available for other community use.

**Consideration:** It is not considered necessary to propose any changes to what has already been agreed for this site; that the planned closure of Lethbridge Club Room takes place once the new centre on Heathside and Lethbridge is ready for occupation and that the site continues to be earmarked as part of the estate development.



#### 4.11 Saville Centre: Rushey Green Ward

**Original Proposal:** to close the Saville Centre and relocate users to other centres where possible.

**Consultation feedback:** the user groups at the Saville Centre were disappointed that the centre was proposed for closure as a number of them have used the centre for many years. The compact nature of the building and close proximity to several bus routes make it particularly well suited to the vulnerable and older adults who are the main users of the centre. Some concern was expressed about how well other centres may be able to accommodate users with additional needs such as the Social Eyes visually impaired group and one user explained that their funding required them to remain within one of two super output areas.

**Response:** the council recognises that a number of the user groups at the Saville centre have particular needs that will have to be taken into account when looking for alternative spaces. However, there are a number of spaces in the area with spare capacity some of which are used to accommodating vulnerable adults. These include the Point community centre on Rushey Green which has a main room with seated capacity for 30. Calabash Day Centre with a community hall for hire and fully equipped kitchen (Hall A - capacity 200, Hall B - capacity 200), Lewisham Irish centre with a main Hall with capacity for 150 standing and three offices, open 8:30am - 10:30 pm 7 days a week, Mecca Bingo Ltd, Unit 4, Plassy Road, have a meeting room for hire in the mornings before 11:30 and lounge area with capacity for 70 users and the St Laurence Centre. In addition a couple of the user groups indicated that they did not need to be located in Rushey Green ward as they serve the whole borough.

**Consideration:** Consideration continues to be given to closing the Saville Centre and relocating users to alternative premises where possible.

#### 4.12 Scotney Hall: New Cross Ward

**Original Proposal:** To close the Hall and redevelop the site for housing.

**Consultation Feedback:** The current users of the Hall acknowledged that the building is not well used but stressed that this is largely due to the poor state of repair. They expressed concern about the lack of any other facilities in the area for community activity to take place and felt that the Winslade Estate is geographically isolated from other parts of the borough and generally not well provided for.

**Response:** The proposal to close Scotney Hall was largely due to the very low usage and poor condition of the building. However the council acknowledges that there is little current community premises provision on or near the Winslade Estate. The proposed redevelopment of Scotney Hall would need to form part of a wider scheme taking in other sites in the area and this is not likely to take place for a number of years. It is proposed to consider some temporary repairs to Scotney Hall to extend it's life for a further 3-5 years subject to affordability. The community premises needs of the neighbourhood would then be reviewed again prior to any redevelopment and consideration given to reproviding some community space as part of the new scheme.

**Consideration:** Consideration is being given to the Scotney Hall site being designated for future housing development but that it be retained in the meantime subject to the affordability of necessary repairs. Consideration will also be given to re-providing some community space as part of any future housing scheme.

4.13 Sedgehill Community Centre: Bellingham Ward

**Original Proposal:** redevelopment of the site for additional school places and a community use agreement.

**Consultation feedback:** Happy Days nursery who are based at Sedgehill Community Centre and provide breakfast and after school clubs for seven local schools as well as pre-school childcare, were very concerned about the potential impact of the proposal on their business and the families they serve. They have asked the council to consider selling a part of the site to them to enable the continuation of the nursery. The Greater Faith ministries also expressed concerns about the proposal and wanted an undertaking to involve them in the planning for any redevelopment. Sharon Abraham Dance school who have been using the hall since just after it first opened were disappointed that they would need to move but understood the council's rationale and felt that space within a secondary school could potentially meet their needs.

**Response:** It is anticipated that the school places being considered for this site will be for a school expansion. Any development will be subject to consultation on school expansion and a detailed feasibility study including a financial viability assessment. There is specific design guidance for schools that any new building would need to adhere to and affordability will be a key consideration. These two factors will limit the flexibility to incorporate any specific requirements linked to the community use of the school but engagement would take place to ensure that the best use of the space could be achieved given these constraints. It is unclear at this stage whether the current nursery provision could be accommodated as part of the expanded school. However, as part of the feasibility work for the school expansion an audit of pre-school childcare provision in the ward will be undertaken and opportunities to expand the number of registered childminders and other nurseries will be considered. Sedgehill School currently opens for community use after school hours until 7pm Monday to Friday and from 10am to 6pm on Sundays and could be considered as an alternative venue for Greater Faith ministries and/ or Sharon Abraham dance school.

**Consideration:** Consideration is being given to the Sedgehill Community Centre site being earmarked for potential school places subject to a detailed feasibility study, school expansion consultation and planning permission. Consideration also to be given to different ways to use the site in order to provide for school expansion and the different impact options would have on community uses.

4.14 Silverdale Hall: Sydenham Ward

**Original Proposal:** to close Silverdale Hall and seek to relocate users to the Sydenham Centre where possible.

**Consultation Feedback:** Silverdale Hall is managed by the Venner Road Community Association. The Venner Rd Management Committee felt that current activities at Silverdale could be relocated and the main user who provides Pilates classes has visited the Sydenham Centre.

**Response:** A housing capacity study for the Silverdale site indicates that five flats could be provided, with a total of 13 units using some adjacent land. In addition to the Sydenham Centre there is also alternative community premises provision at Here for Good-Community Centre which has a hall for 30 to 40 people. TNG Youth and Community Centre offers meeting and event space with a main hall which has capacity for up to 100 people and is equipped with a sprung floor and blackout blinds; and the Golden Lion Pub, 116 Sydenham Rd, has a function room for hire for up to 50 people. The availability of alternative spaces in the area combined with the capacity of the site to offer much needed housing confirms the original proposal to close the centre.

**Consideration:** Consideration is being given to closing Silverdale Hall and seeking to relocate users to other local provision where possible.

#### 4.15 Venner Rd Hall: Sydenham Ward

**Original Proposal:** to redesignate the site for childcare use.

**Consultation feedback:** The Venner Rd Management Association recognised that the council needs to make savings but felt that although the hall provides valuable childcare facilities it should still accommodate other users. The committee presented an alternative proposal to take on a full repairing lease for the Hall and pay rent but to still accommodate other community uses alongside the childcare provision.

**Response:** The proposal put forward by the management committee may yield less income than could be achieved by marketing the hall as a commercial nursery. However the additional community benefits that continuing to operate as a community centre and the saving that would be achieved through the management committee paying rent and taking on repairs and maintenance liabilities may provide a good value use of the asset.

**Consideration:** consideration is being given to the alternative proposal to negotiate a lease with the Venner Road management association that would safeguard the childcare offer at the hall, provide additional community benefits and achieve a saving for the council.

#### 4.16 Wesley Halls: Downham Ward

**Original Proposal:** To redevelop Wesley Halls for housing and reprovide community space as part of the new development.

**Consultation feedback:** The management committee and current users of Wesley Halls are opposed to the proposed redevelopment of the Halls. They highlighted the history of the building and the wide range of users. They recognise the need for additional housing in the borough and would not be opposed to houses being built on the vacant adjacent plot on

Bankfoot Rd but wish the Halls to remain untouched. A petition has been started, opposing the redevelopment of the hall, which at the time of writing had 722 signatures.

**Response:** A detailed capacity study of the site is required to identify the housing options that would be possible alongside Wesley Halls or any redeveloped community space which could accommodate the level of local community activity. This proposal would be subject to considerable design and space allocation which would require detailed feasibility work and further community consultation.

**Consideration:** Consideration is being given to undertaking more consultation with the Downham Community Association, users and residents on the best way to provide both housing and community space on the site and adjoining land.

#### 4.17 Woodpecker Community Centre: New Cross Ward

**Original proposal:** to close Woodpecker Community Centre and redevelop the site for housing.

**Consultation feedback:** Milton Court TRA and the current users of the Woodpecker Community Centre are opposed to the proposal. They feel that the community centre needs to be a hub for the local community and that other community facilities in the area would not be sufficient. A number of other potential sites for housing were suggested and the council was urged to look elsewhere and leave the community centre as it is.

**Response:** The following alternative provision is within a mile of the Woodpecker Community Centre: St Michaels Community Centre has a large hall (capacity up to 200), kitchen and outside space for hire for £30ph (with a £250 refundable deposit). The Samaritans of Lewisham Greenwich and Southwark have a small seminar and large seminar room for hire for up to 40 seated; available 9am to 11pm for a minimum charge of £30 per session. Deptford Green School have classrooms and dance/drama studios for hire on Saturdays between 10am and 5pm, prices range between £15ph and £25ph depending on number of users and size of classroom/ studio. Moonshot Centre offers an atrium, two dance studios, lecture room, library, two offices, drama room and three activity rooms for hire.

Woodpecker Community Centre is currently used 5 days a week by a private school providing education for 20 children. This limits other uses of the building. Casual usage for private hires and resident meetings have been very low for the last two years and could be accommodated in the alternative venues. There is significant potential to develop the area around the Woodpecker Community Centre including some of the sites suggested during the consultation. As well as providing much needed housing the redevelopment would also significantly improve the quality of the public realm.

**Consideration:** Consideration is being given to closing the Woodpecker Community Centre and the site being designated for housing as part of a wider development. Consideration is also being given to the private school being allowed to remain in the centre in the interim period until the site is developed subject to suitable terms being negotiated.

## **5. Conclusion**

- 5.1** This report provides Housing Select Committee with an update on the consultation on proposals relating to 16 of the borough's community centres. Comments are invited from the committee to further inform the report that will be taken to Mayor and Cabinet on 11<sup>th</sup> November 2015 with recommendations on the next stage for each proposal.

Appendix A – list of consultation meetings

Appendix B – consultation responses

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**APPENDIX A - Consultation meetings**

<b>Date of meeting</b>	<b>Community Centre</b>	<b>Meeting attendees/ representatives</b>
02-Sep-15	Sedgehill Community Centre 69-85 Sedgehill Road Bellingham SE6 3QN	Happy Days Nursery
02-Sep-15	Saville Day Centre 436-438 Lewisham High Street SE13 6LJ	Lewisham Pensioners Forum Providence LINC United Services Thursday Club Social Eyes My Complete Focus/ CIC Christ Chapel
03-Sep-15	Brandram Road Community Centre 25-33 Brandram Road SE13 5RT	Brandram Road user group
04-Sep-15	Sedgehill Community Centre 69-85 Sedgehill Road Bellingham SE6 3QN	Greater Faith Ministries
04-Sep-15	Honor Oak Community Centre 50 Turnham Road SE4 2JD	Honor Oak Community public meeting - Residents
07-Sep-15	Honor Oak Community Centre 50 Turnham Road SE4 2JD	Honor Oak Community Trustees
07-Sep-15	Woodpecker Community Centre 101 Woodpecker Road SE14 6EU	Milton Court TRA Kings Kids Christian School Christ above all Gospel Church, The Quay Point.co.uk
08-Sep-15	Barnes Wallis Community Centre 74 Wild Goose Drive SE14 5LL	Somerville United TRA Residents Somerville adventure playground Centre users - 'Joy' Tenants Fund Genie Tutors New Cross Ltd Nursery Tae kwon do Church of Christ
09-Sep-15	Wesley Halls 2 Shroffold Road BR1 5PE	Downham Community Association
11-Sep-15	Sedgehill Community Centre 69-85 Sedgehill Road Bellingham SE6 3QN	Sharon Abraham Dance School
14-Sep-15	Scotney Hall 17 Sharratt Street SE15 1NR	REMEC
16-Sep-15	Clare Hall St Donnatts Road SE14 6NU	Little Gems Nursery
18-Sep-15	Ewart Road Clubroom 44 Wastdale Road Forest Hill SE23 1HN	Ewart Road Housing Cooperative Ltd
18-Sep-15	Venner Road Hall Venner Road SE26 5EQ  Silverdale Hall 8 Silverdale SE26 4SZ	Venner Road Hall Community Association
21-Sep-15	Evelyn Community Centre Kingfisher Square 1 Clyde Street SE8 5LW	Evelyn TRA Bunny Hop Nursery Mount Carmel of the Apostolic Faith Vietnamese Women and Families Association
23-Sep-15	Champion Hall 1 Holmshaw Close SE26 4TH	Champion Hall Community Association

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## Appendix B – Consultation responses

### Barnes Wallis Community Centre

11<sup>th</sup> September 2015

Following our recent meeting regarding the future of the Barnes Wallis last Tuesday evening.

After the meeting we were left in a bad feeling that Joan Millbank and Bradley Cummings had tried to sabotage the feeling of our committee members by telling members that Bradley had space in his new building which my members can rent. I did not invite Bradley to this meeting, Joan Millbank must have.

As all my members said this centre is a hub for our local community. From ballet and Tae Kwon Do for the children to Seated exercise and Line dancing for the elderly, plus our very strong Church of Christ assembly. Our Somerville United TRA operates from the centre. We hold general meetings every two months to inform tenants and residents of any changes and hear from them of any problems they are experiencing. The TRA organises coach trips and outside party every year to get people involved and talking to each other. I am also the chair of our local Telegraph Hill SNP team, which is why we have a very low crime rate on the estate. We also operate a very good nursery and school with in the centre. Tenants and residents come into the centre seeking information on Rent, council tax, repairs, anti-social behaviour etc. and asking on classes in the centre.

We have also been informed that you plan to demolish our shops and offices in Wild Goose Drive. This was not mentioned at the meeting, the same as we never received any notices, plans before this meeting.

Should this proposal go ahead, it leaves me with no option but to resign my posts as Manager of the Barnes Wallis, Chair of Somerville United TRA, Chair of Telegraph Hill SNP, member of Lewisham Tenants Fund and a member of Lewisham homes area panel, which will be a sad loss to our local community which I have built up over the last ten/eleven years. To ensure the smooth running of the centre, I have not had a holiday for the last 10/11 years, working most weekends also.

We have been working hard for the last six months to become a registered charity, Only last week we received an email from the charity commission saying we are now included in their register.

In the last 10/11 years we have had nothing from Lewisham Council to help us, but look what the council has done. Charge us for water rates £2,300, Business rates of £6,300, No repairs, some over one year old, we have spent between £5000 to £6000 on repairs to the centre, alone in the last year. You may remember that we pointed out several sites on the estate where you build new homes, one being on the corner of Mona Road, a green area, you said that would not happen, well this morning I received papers from you saying that homes will be built on that green area. We still believe that the area at the rear of Edmond Court, the car old parking area and old ball court would be a great area to build new homes instead of demolishing the Barnes Wallis centre.

Through our TRA, I shall be calling a meeting for our tenants and residents to hear your proposals and what action we will take against the closure of the Barnes Wallis.

Yours sincerely

Ken Wakeman

Manager

23<sup>rd</sup> September 2015

Following a very well attended TRA meeting last night, the tenants and residents of the Somerville estate have asked me to write to you regarding the following issues.

1. The rear of Edmond Court including the ball court and old garage area is not to be used for new housing, not enough space and too close to other people's homes.
2. With all the extra housing being proposed, tenants and residents are concerned that the amount of parking on the estate, which at the moment is limited, would run out of control.
3. A young school girl from Mona Road, said that she is frightened to go out at night time because  
of strangers walking about, with building more flats and houses on the grass at Mona and Dennett's

Road, this would cause her more problems.

4. Our members said that Edmond Waller School is already full to bursting point, and any more children will not be able to attend the school.
5. Members stated that the council should meet us halfway with their proposals, and not to knock the Barnes Wallis and shops down, but to leave it as it is, as it is the hub of the community, and always open for tenants, residents, young, elderly and disabled to attend meetings and classes.
6. With all the extra flats and houses, tenants and residents are worried about extra traffic on the estate, speeding cars and vans, as lots of Edmond Waller and Kender Street children walk through the estate.
7. Extra rubbish will be generated by this proposal, the situation is bad at this moment without extra more being put upon us. Our present caretaker can hardly cope with his work, any more will tip him over the edge.
8. Demolition of the Barnes Wallis would also mean the cutting down of cherry trees, walnut trees plus another one, which is against the environment.
9. One member of the TRA has a relation working for the South London Press, who will be asked to contact myself to see if we could get space in the paper to write about our situation.
10. One committee member will be going door to door around the estate to get signatures for a petition which will be presented later.

Yours sincerely

Ken Wakeman

Chair

Somerville United TRA

Hi Liz

Just to let you know that following a management meeting of Lewisham Tenants Fund, they will back any action against the demolition of the Barnes Wallis Community Centre.

Our Somerville United TRA will be holding a meeting next week with the residents to see what action we will take to stop this happening.

Kind regards

Ken

Dear Steve,

I am writing to you as the individual who has brought in over £1.3 million to the Somerville Youth & Play Provision in New Cross from external funding bodies in the last year.

I understand that proposals are underway to close the Barnes Wallis centre on the Somerville estate, as well as the Honor Oak Community Centre on Turnham Road in Brockley.

The funders for Somerville have grasped just how necessary community spaces like this are. You are responsible for the facilities in our deprived communities and in my opinion you need to have a clearer understanding of the local needs that these places address. Please consider these facts:

**Issues and evidence of need through research and consultations:**

Lewisham is the 31st most deprived Local Authority in England (bottom 10%) and the 13th most deprived London borough (Lewisham JSNA 2011); relative to the rest of the UK Lewisham's deprivation is increasing (most recent Indices of Multiple Deprivation 2010). 34% of children in Lewisham live in poverty which is the 18th worst Local Authority in the UK (End Child Poverty Report October 2014); an estimated 20,355 children live in poverty in Lewisham (Lewisham Children and Young People Plan 2012-15). Within the New Cross ward 33% of children in our nearest primary school are entitled to free school meals (DfES 2012) and 26% of year 6 children are obese (Childrens Centre Area 1 profile 2012).

**Facilities like Somerville, Barnes Wallis and Honor Oak Community Centre address the following specific needs:**

1.Children and young people living in cramped, poor quality housing need places to exercise and a safe space to play and engage in positive activities. Within New Cross 20% of the population live in poor quality social housing (IMD 2010); an estimated 95% of Somerville's attendees live in social housing. 68% of participants said they are "more fit and healthy" from being here (Oct 2014 survey of 44 participants). The nearest free outdoor sports facility is almost 1 mile away.

2. A lack of local provision for young people can result in crime, gang involvement, anti-social behaviour and substance misuse, further reducing their life chances. 75% of our participants said they are “less likely to get into trouble by being at Somerville” (2014 survey); this is supported by informal feedback from our Safer Neighbourhoods team and local residents.

The Telegraph Hill Assembly Action Plan (2012) identifies youth issues as the highest local priority, with 12 of the 23 objectives focused on youth needs. Almost half of our young people say “there is nowhere else that we can hang out” (2014 survey). There are no other youth services within a mile and the nearest adventure playground is almost 2 miles away. Our events are often over-subscribed, e.g. over 600 young people attended the Skate Park Event in 2013.

3. Many of Somerville’s young people have low levels of skills and educational attainment, Special Educational Needs (SEN) or behavioural problems, and increased risk of exclusion from school. DfES data (2012) shows that nearly a third of children in the 3 nearest primary schools have SEN (with or without statements). Over 70% of participants said that they “learn new things” and “being here helps me feel more confident and good at stuff” (2014 survey).

4. Somerville’s young people struggle to overcome multiple barriers to employment and need additional employability support. In New Cross ward 7.8% of households with dependent children have no employed adults compared to 4.2% in England (Census 2011). Expectations of securing employment remain low. The 102 young people who gained employability support through Somerville in 2014 said they could not have accessed support elsewhere; the local Connexions service closed in 2011 and has not been replaced. Somerville has also been shown to help the majority of employed parents to stay in work: “It’s a Godsend in school holidays and free which means I can go to work.”

5. Many of our children and young people are socially isolated; around 75% are from BME families /refugees / asylum seekers or from single parent or workless households. These families tend to have limited support networks, low levels of community engagement and a lack of knowledge of support and advice available. 66% of participants agreed that “Somerville makes me feel less lonely” (2014 survey). Informal feedback from parents shows a lack of community feel on local estates and a need for community activities.

#### **How community facilities fit with national, regional and local strategies and priorities:**

The Governments ‘Positive for Youth’ Strategy (December 2011) states “a common goal of young people having a strong sense of belonging, and the supportive relationships, strong ambitions, and good opportunities they need to realise their potential” and includes a commitment to retain a statutory duty on local authorities to secure positive activities for young people.

At a regional level the London Mayor “wants to increase opportunities for—and promote the aspirations of—children and young people in London, to improve their life chances and reduce youth crime” (*ref: Young Londoners—successful futures, 2010*).

The 2009 Young Londoners Survey found that children and young people in urban and deprived areas of London are likely to have fewer opportunities to engage in positive activities than those in more affluent areas—and this lack of provision can hold back their social development and life opportunities (8). Furthermore, National research for the Cabinet Office shows that closure of youth

clubs have been a factor in the riots in England; in neighbouring Peckham on 8th August 2011, clashes between police and groups of largely local young people sparked violence that turned into looting (*ref: The August Riots in England, understanding the motivations of young people*).

Lewisham Council's Children and Young Peoples Plan (CYPP) 2012-15 states its vision as "Together with families, we will improve the lives and life chances of the children and young people in Lewisham" and its priorities include reducing childhood obesity, teenage conceptions, substance misuse, anti-social behaviour and youth crime, ensuring children and young people access culture, sport, leisure and play activities. Fine, but how, without these places?

Can I remind you that Lewisham also says it will "continue to put a high priority on the provision of play areas ...".

You probably don't need reminding that there have been two youth murders in our area (SE4) in the last month. Any decision to remove such community facilities, that are primarily of benefit to children and young people, will be fuelling the fire for future violence that is borne out of communities that are fearful and broken.

Once these places are gone they are very hard to replace. Please reconsider the options.

Kind regards

Clare Sharpen (MA Cantab, MSc)



## **RESPONSE TO THE PROPOSED CLOSURE/DEMOLITION OF BARNES WALLIS COMMUNITY FROM JOY (JUST OLDER YOUTH)**

As a regular user of the Barnes Wallis Community Centre, JOY wishes to express its concern and register its protest about the proposed closure/demolition of this Centre.

We are concerned about the effect that this closure will have on the future of JOY classes, however it is not just about JOY. The centre has been at the heart of the Somerville Estate for decades and continues to be so. It is still used regularly by a number of groups, including JOY.

We regard Barnes Wallis as our home. In order to keep costs low JOY has no permanent base. We use the centre for holding our monthly meetings, training sessions and meeting people from other projects as well as the classes. We also use the hall for our fundraising events, which are absolutely vital for JOY to continue to offer affordable, low cost classes.

On Monday mornings, we hold our seated exercise class in the hall, followed by a social gathering where people can stay, have a cup of tea or coffee and have a chat. This class attracts 20 plus participants.

On Tuesday afternoons we hold our singing class attended by 15 plus participants.

On Wednesday mornings, we use the foyer of the Centre for meeting up before our weekly health walk (10 – 15 participants) and our Let's Dance class uses the hall for its weekly 2 hour class with 20 plus participants.

On Thursday mornings, we use the Centre for our weekly Zumba Gold class with 15 plus participants and in the afternoon our Craft Club takes place with a smaller group of about 7 – 10 participants.

Over 90 people from JOY use the centre on a weekly basis, many of whom come from the surrounding area.

It been suggested that we could use the new building at Somerville Adventure Playground, however it has not been made clear to us the size of the space that would be made available and whether it could accommodate all the groups from the Centre.

And as for the site at Besson Street, which we are told will have community space, we are just not confident that this will ever happen. For years it has been on hold and promises have not been fulfilled.

We do use All Saints Community Centre but it would not be able to house JOY classes that take place at Barnes Wallis.

And if the Barnes Wallis site is to be developed, how do we know that there will be adequate community space?

We realise that this proposal is based on financial considerations – the Council has to save millions of pounds, but surely Barnes Wallis is not such a drain on council resources? The Centre is run by volunteers and makes most of its revenue from rentals such as ours.

What about community? JOY provides an excellent programme of weekly activities for older adults such as Seated Exercise, Zumba Gold, Crafts, Singing, Dancing as well as other as other activities at other centres. We run on a shoe string – volunteers run the project. We have no paid workers apart from our tutors. We have no base or place that we can hold classes.

Without Barnes Wallis, JOY would struggle to run such a full programme of affordable classes. Its closure would definitely have ramifications for JOY's future as well as the other projects that use the Centre. It provides a lifeline for us and for local people.

Please do not allow this valuable community resource to be destroyed.

Jane Keane (Chair JOY) 30/9/2015

### **Officer Comments:**

There are currently no plans to demolish the shops and offices in Wild Goose Drive, as the wider regeneration plans for the Somerville Estate are at a very early stage of development.

The other sites mentioned will be looked at as part of the feasibility study for new housing on the estate.

The proposal is not to close the Barnes Wallis Centre but to redevelop the site and include the provision of community space that will take into consideration the views and needs of users and local residents in shaping the plans. We will also look at how the other community provision in the area complements any new centre.

## **Brandram Community Centre**

[The following represents part of the Brandram Road response to consultation. The full response will be submitted to Mayor and Cabinet on 11<sup>th</sup> October 2015]

### **Representation re closure/redevelopment of Brandram Road Community Centre**

**(BRCC) 25-33 Brandram Road, London SE13 5ET.**

Any proposed redevelopment of the Brandram Road Community Centre (BRCC) and the site on which it is located is subject to certain extremely sensitive considerations which relate to (a) the building itself and (b) the site's location.

#### **The Building**

- **The BRCC (1978) was designed by the award-winning architect, Royston Summers (1931-2012)**

Please see the supporting document (1) *Royston Summers Obituary RIBA Journal* for an overview of Mr Summers' work.

Royston Summers lived and worked locally in the Borough of Lewisham, and completed several projects for Lewisham Council during the 1960s and 1970s.

- **Buildings designed by Royston Summers are already on Lewisham Council's Local List**

Lewisham Council has only two sites from the 1960s and 1970s on its Local List. A group of seven houses fronting the Heath designed by Royston Summers, **North Several** (1963) is one of the two.

Please see supporting document (2) *North Several, Blackheath - Local List Appraisal*.

- **Buildings designed by Royston Summers elsewhere in England are subject to statutory protection**

In 2013, Elmbridge Council deemed **Riverside Drive** (designed 1968-69, built 1971-78) in Esher as a Conservation Area in its own right. English Heritage wrote: 'an exceptional and probably unique post-war development [...].'

Please see supporting document (3) *Lakeside Drive CA*.

- **Strong and distinctive architectural detailing**

Many of the features of both North Several and Riverside Drive are present on the Brandram Road Community Centre.

In addition to an intact exterior, its interior also remains very much largely as built.

Please see attached documents for various photographs of the site, both exterior and interior:

(4) *BRCC - front elevation*

(5) *BRCC - side and rear elevation*

*(6) BRCC - windows and wood panelling*

*(7) BRCC - foyer and flooring*

- **Historic England and The Twentieth Century Society**

With all of the above in mind, recent representations regarding BRCC have been made to both Historic England and The Twentieth Century Society. Lewisham Conservation are likewise being consulted.

### **The Site's Location**

The Brandram Road Community Centre is located on an extremely sensitive site in terms of any proposed redevelopment.

- **The BRCC is located within the Blackheath Conservation Area**

The site was incorporated into the BCA in April 1978, and the Centre received its planning permission in October 1978.

Please see supporting documents *(8) Brandram Road conservation area notice* and

*(9) BRCC planning permission notice.*

- **The BRCC is located in a sub division of the BCA denoted a Character Area**

It is bordered on two sides by 'Buildings making a positive contribution' to the Character Area.

Please see supporting document *(10) Blackheath CA Appraisal (pp74-75)*

- **The BRCC has a Grade II listed boundary wall**

The site is directly adjacent to the Grade II listed Merchant Taylors' Almshouses (listed March 1973), which have a Grade I listed chapel within their grounds. It is deemed likely that any redevelopment of the BRCC site would therefore require Listed Building Consent.

The Surveyor of the Merchant Taylors' Company has requested he be kept informed of any redevelopment proposals accordingly.

### **Summary**

The Brandram Road Community Centre is a building of quality in terms of both its design and the materials used. Other buildings designed by its award-winning architect have already been deemed to merit both protection and recognition.

The building, by virtue of its distinctive yet subservient design with respect to adjacent buildings, makes a positive contribution to the streetscape in an extremely sensitive location.



## OBITUARY



ROYSTON SUMMERS 1931–2012

Clever, thorough, multiple medal winner who lived the contradictory highs and lows of small practice

IN 1969 ROYSTON SUMMERS went to the RIBA to collect his medal for Good Design in Housing from the housing minister, Tony Benn. After receiving the award for his North Several terraces in Blackheath, he set off to collect his dose money. Such are the vagaries of life in a small architectural practice.

Roy was born in Wolverhampton and after National Service in the Intelligence Corps in Germany, he went to Downing College, Cambridge. Here he read classics for two years before switching to English under Frank Leavis. He graduated in 1954.

After an unsuccessful six months as a trainee with John Lewis – sacked for telling customers what they ought to like – Roy joined the Architectural Association School of Architecture. Five years later he joined the architectural department of Cornwall County Council as part of the team responsible for New County Hall in Truro (Grade 2 listed in 1997), designing a range of office furniture that later went into commercial production. His

first solo job was a new library in Saltash.

In 1964 he set up his own practice in Blackheath, London. North Several was his first project to attract attention, a group of terraced houses on the edge of Blackheath. It was built by a company formed by the proposed residents (including Summers) and had a communal garden, and the carpets, tiling, sanitary ware, kitchen cupboards, bedroom cupboards etc were identical throughout the houses to save money. The wall panelling was the same plywood as used in storage boxes. The solar gain was calculated over a weekend by Ove Arup in a very early use of computers. The houses cost the same per sq ft as the council housing of the time, though they were much bigger.

Other housing schemes followed, notably the prestigious, low-density Lakeside Drive, in Esher, Surrey, which won the RIBA Architecture Award in 1976 and the DoE Medal and Diploma for Good Design in 1980.

Roy then worked for Lambeth Borough Council, designing 52-storey tower blocks to tackle Brixton's terrible housing problems (the experience formed the basis of *Benefactors*, a play by his friend and North Several neighbour Michael Frayn). The flats were never built.

He completed projects for the London Borough of Lewisham, including the first-ever solar-heated council flats, which won a Chartered Institute of Building Services commendation for energy use in 1982.

Refurbishments also came to him – a chateau in France, the Bishop's Palace at Winchester, a couple of Grade 2 Diocesan houses, restoration and conversion of Redlynch Park (Grade 2). He worked briefly in Qatar and Mallorca on houses and his last job was a delightful private house in Bromley.

Roy was an excellent planner, meticulous and obsessional, passionate about proportions, use of space, appropriate materials and always aiming for the best possible result. And if you did not agree with him he would go on arguing until you gave in.

Married in 1957 to Elizabeth Forster, Roy had four children, who survive him. As long as he was able, he pursued his passions of mountaineering, walking, photography, and gardening. After a long illness he died peacefully on 30 May 2012 in Bristol. ■

### IN MEMORIAM

Burt James Leslie Hagger, elected 1951, Bedford
Gordon Victor Charles, elected 1934, London
Walter Flett Faulds, elected 1950, Anstruther, Fife
Leslie Arthur Gear, elected 1950, Hempton, Norfolk
Stewart Faulkner Peck, elected 1952, Dorking, Surrey
Anthony Charles Whitwood, elected 1965, Norwich
George Anthony Wilson Brancheth, elected 1948, Weybridge
Harry Marshall Fairhurst, elected 1949, Wilmslow, Cheshire
John Elwyn Donald, Griffiths, elected 1960, Aberystwyth
Rodney Herbert Taylor, elected 1958, Reading
William Chalmers Thomson, elected 1950
Derek Hawes Richards, elected 1960, Tonbridge, Kent
Frank Richard Walters, elected 1956, Sutton-in-Ashfield, Notts
John Alfred Williams, elected 1955, Neston, Cheshire
Barbara Mary Beresford, elected 1940, Kendal, Cumbria
Patrick John Bishop, elected 1960, Atrincham, Cheshire
Kenneth Harvey Bolton, elected 1951
Bryn Royston-Williams, elected 1942, London
John Drury Meade Taylor, elected 1947, Moreton-in-Marsh
Kenneth Arthur Coombs, elected 1956, Lewes, East Sussex
Terence Lancelot Ellard, elected 1956, Worcester
John Williams, elected 1951, Jersey
Anthony Cave-Browne-Cave, elected 1954, Salop
John Frederick Gray Benfleet, elected 1963, Essex
Raymond John Hey, elected 1949, Oxford
Kenneth Wilson Mellor, elected 1950, York
Edwin Arthur Mouriford, elected 1950, Stoke-on-Trent
Gerald Lou Allison, elected 1972, Corona Del Mar, Calif
Lewis Bernard Henry Cremer, elected 1936, Sittingbourne, Kent
Robert Ragland Meadows, elected 1939, London
Alan Herbert Ross, elected 1955, Budleigh Salterton, Devon
John Hartley Snowden, elected 1952, Kenilworth, Warwick
George Trevenen Wilson, elected 1951, Sherborne, Dorset
Clive Terry Breakspeare, elected 1972, Oakham, Rutland
Lawrence Albert Butterfield, elected 1942, Salisbury
Richard De'ath, elected 1983, Helensburgh, Dunbarton
Hilary Lewis, elected 1932, Victoria, Australia
Thomas Barron, elected 1961, Penarth, South Glamorgan
Harry Brian Jackman, elected 1954, Leeds
Richard Grantley Fitzhardinge, elected 1955, NSW, Aust
Meryn Asenath Wiles, elected 1982, Cardiff
Cornelius Brendan Minney, elected 1971, Swansea
Ernest Cooper Watkinson, elected 1962, Newcastle upon Tyne
Maurice James Walton, Northampton, elected 1954

To inform the RIBA of the death of a member, please email [membership.services@riba.org](mailto:membership.services@riba.org) with details of next of kin

**Street / Road**

**Name / Number**

**Brief Description**

**Conservation Area**

New King Street

The Harp, 2 - 4

Built in 1897, this is a large and attractive pub that sits facing down Deptford High St from Evelyn Street. It is astride the two junctions with New King Street and Watergate Street and has been designed to address these streets as well. It makes a handsome contribution to the streetscape.

Deptford High Street Conservation Area

The pub is in an ornate classical style with Baroque influences and is rendered to the upper floors with an unusual pink marble pub frontage. The roof is a dummy mansard which falls to a simple pitched roof to the rear. There are two ornate dormers to the roof with a circular window to one and a tablet of a harp to the other. There is an ornate frieze that wraps around the building at eaves levels. The first floor windows have decorative pediments and the proportions reveal a generously proportions rooms internally. To the ground floor the two original entrances have been converted into windows but the pediments above the fascias revealing the original locations. All the original timber windows remain to the upper floors.

This building meets the Local List criteria for local architectural and local historic interest.

North Seval

1 to 7

Houses. 1963. By Royston Summers. Concrete frame, brick and glass. Three storey, one full-width, floor to ceiling bay of nine lights. Plain brick elevation to side. Box metal window framing comprised of storey-height mullions and single balustrade-height transom. Flat roof. Open-plan interior. Pure Modern style. Intentioned departure from - and resulting contrast with - surrounding context. Conscious distinction between strong linear quality of buildings with soft landscaping of collectively managed communal gardens. Co-operative experiment between playwright and journalist Michael Frayn and six other families. Of group value. Corner location with aspects north and east over Heath.

Blackheath Conservation Area

Pepys Road

Church of St Catherine

1894 Simple Gothic style church built of rubblestone with ashlar dressings. Saint Catherine is the patron saint of haberdashers. Rebuilt 1913 after a fire and again after bomb damage in 1940.

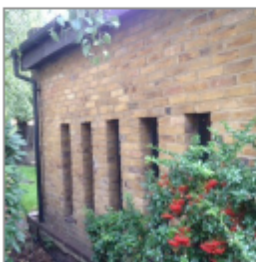
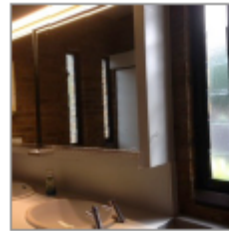
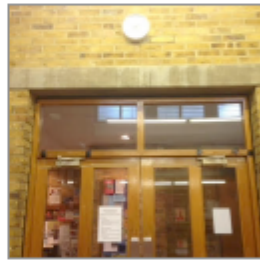
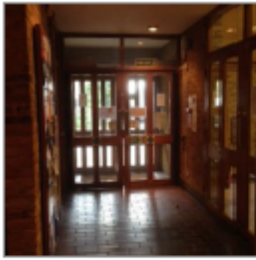
Telegraph Hill Conservation Area

Pepys Road / Vesta Road

Haberdasher's Aske's Hatcham College (former boys' school)

1875 Group of fine Gothic Revival style school buildings in stock brick with red brick and stone detailing. Main building is two storeys in symmetrical design with a central square tower rising up from the entrance. Steep hipped and gabled slate roofs and tall timber sash windows. Chapel to east has hipped slate roof, central porch to east with stone carving over and Early English style tracery windows. Built for the Worshipful Company of Haberdashers using an endowment given by their member, Robert Aske. It became a boy's school after the girls moved to the 1890 building at the bottom of Jerningham Road. The statue of Robert Aske in the forecourt is statutorily listed (Grade II).

Telegraph Hill Conservation Area





Transport Act 1968, or on the grounds that any requirements of that Act or of any instrument made under it, has not been complied with in relation to the Order, you may, within 4 weeks from 26th April 1978, apply to the High Court for this purpose.

F. A. Mallon, Chief Executive.

County Hall,  
Barnsley.

Revenue	
Column 1	Column 2
Printing Office Street from its junction with Fells Close to its junction with Friary Place.	North-westerly
Friary Place	North-westerly

(510)

**SOUTH YORKSHIRE COUNTY COUNCIL**

The South Yorkshire County Council (Barnsley Town Road, Wharfedale) (Prohibition of Waiting) Order 1978

Notice is hereby given that on 17th April 1978, the South Yorkshire County Council made an Order under sections 1 (1), (2) and (3) of the Road Traffic Regulation Act 1967, as amended by Part IX of the Transport Act 1968, Schedule 19 to the Local Government Act 1972, and Schedule 5 to the Road Traffic Act 1974.

The effect of the Order which will come into operation on 17th May 1978, will be to prohibit any vehicle waiting at any time on the north-west side of Barnsley Town Road, Wharfedale in the Metropolitan District of Doncaster which extends from the south-western kerb line of the access road to Rodway Glass Factory for a distance of 20 metres in a north-westerly direction.

Exceptions to the Order will permit waiting for the purpose of picking up and setting down passengers, loading and unloading goods, in connection with building, industrial or demolition operations, the removal of obstructions to traffic, the maintenance of the road and the services therein, in pursuance of statutory powers or duties and for the collection and delivery of postal packets. The usual exceptions for disabled persons' vehicles are also included in the Order.

A copy of the Order and a map showing the road the subject of the Order may be examined during normal office hours at the office of 20 the County Council, County Hall, Barnsley, and 24 Doncaster Central Library, Wharfedale, Doncaster.

If you wish in question the validity of the Order or of any of the provisions contained therein on the grounds that it is not within the powers conferred by the Road Traffic Regulation Act 1967, as amended as aforesaid, or on the grounds that any requirements of that Act, or of any instrument made under it has not been complied with in relation to the Order you may, within 4 weeks from 17th April 1978, apply to the High Court for this purpose.

F. A. Mallon, Chief Executive.

County Hall,  
Barnsley.

(511)

**TOWN AND COUNTRY PLANNING ACTS**

**LEWISHAM LONDON BOROUGH COUNCIL**

Town and Country Planning Act 1971

Lewisham London Borough Council

Conservation Area

Extension of the Blackheath Conservation Area S.E.3 and S.E.11

Revised Notice

Notice is hereby given that on 19th April 1978 the Council of the London Borough of Lewisham designated the following area within 8th and 9th Streets as a Conservation Area pursuant to section 177 of the Town and Country Planning Act 1971 (as substituted by section 1 of the Town and Country Amendment Act 1974):

Extension of the Blackheath Conservation Area S.E.3 and S.E.11 as indicated by broken lines on Plan

Number GEN/YA/77/18/20 which incorporates the provisions listed in the Schedule hereto:

**Conservation**

1-10 (inclusive) and 12-22 (even) Belmont Grove; 21a-71 (odd) and 73 Belmont Hill; 40-84 (even), 20-28 (odd) Belmont Park; 6-18 (even), 20-48 (even), Marjorie Taylor Almshouses, Sussex Chapel, 3, 5, 7, 2a, 8, 11, 11a, 13, 15, 15a, 18 (even), 21 (odd), 21-23 (odd) Broadway Road; 1, 3, 5 and 6 Drake Gardens; 1-12 (inclusive) Blith Hill; 1-3, 5-18 and 17-24 (inclusive) Blith Park; 4-22 (even) and 17-47 (odd) Clarendon Road; 47-50 (odd), 48-50 (even) and Christened Court Greenhill Park; St. Margaret's Parish Rooms and Hall, Kingswood Place; 22-24 (even) and 47-50 (odd) Lewisham Hill; 1-13 (inclusive) Mithras Close; 18-42 (even) Oatlands Road; 1, 2, 3, 4 and 24 Pelham Rise; 1-10 (inclusive) St. August Road; 22 St. Margaret's Passage; 1, 3, 5, 17, 19, 21 and 23 Walstead Road.

The provisions of sections 61a and 27A of the Town and Country Planning Act 1971 (as added by section 9 and 1 of the Town and Country Amendment Act 1974) (provision on cutting down, topping, lopping etc. of trees and the demolition of buildings without the consent of the Council) apply in this extension to the Conservation Area.

The above mentioned drawing may be inspected, without charge at the Town Hall, Cantock, S.E.3 (Floor 419) during normal office hours.

F. E. R. Black, Chief Executive.

Town Hall,  
Cantock S.E.3.

Dated May 1978.

(512)

**NEWCASTLE-UPON-TYNE BOROUGH COUNCIL**

Notice on Public Path Orders

Town and Country Planning Act 1971—Section 218

The Newcastle-upon-Tyne Pathways No. 20 and The Newcastle-upon-Tyne Pathways (Whitwell, Kildagrove) Division Order 1978.

Notice is hereby given that the above-mentioned Order (hereinafter referred to as "the Order") made on the 19th April 1978 is about to be submitted to the Secretary of State for the Environment for confirmation or to be confirmed by the Borough Council of Newcastle-upon-Tyne as an unopposed Order.

The effect of the Order, if confirmed without modification, will be:

- (a) To divert the public right of way over the length of Footpath No. 20 at Whitwell, Kildagrove commencing at its junction with Whitwell Road and running thence in a generally south-westerly direction for a distance of approximately 180 metres then in a generally west-south-westerly direction for a further distance of 20 metres to the line of a new Footpath commencing at the junction of Footpath No. 20 with Whitwell Road, Kildagrove and running along proposed main roads and footways thence in a generally south-south-westerly direction for a distance of approximately 31 metres then in a generally north-westerly direction for a distance of approximately 217 metres then in a generally north-south-westerly direction for a distance of approximately 29 metres to Footpath No. 20 at a point approximately 157 metres from its junction with Whitwell Road, Kildagrove.
- (b) To divert the public right of way over the length of the un-numbered Footpath at Whitwell, Kildagrove commencing at a point on Whitwell Road opposite the junction thereof with Highfield Avenue and running thence northwards in a generally south-south-westerly direction for a distance of approximately 201 metres to the line of a new Footpath commencing at the junction of the un-numbered Footpath with Whitwell Road, Kildagrove and running thence:
  - (i) in a generally west-south-westerly direction over a proposed main open space for a distance of approximately 173 metres; then
  - (ii) along proposed main roads and footways in a generally southerly direction for a distance of approximately 17 metres then in a generally south-westerly direction for a distance of approximately 273 metres then in a generally south-south-westerly direction for a distance of approximately 94 metres; then



**LONDON BOROUGH  
OF  
LEWISHAM**

Certified copy for the Register of Applications -  
Section 24, Town and Country Planning Act 1971

**PLANNING DEPARTMENT**

Town Hall Chambers  
Rushley Green  
London SE8 4RP

telephone 01-890 4343 ext

your ref **Regyston 300000**

please quote **LA/730/25/78**

**MEMORANDUM TO  
Borough Architects**

Date of Council's  
Decision  
*24th October 1978*

**27 OCT 1978**

**DEVELOPMENT PROPOSAL BY THE  
BOROUGH COUNCIL - PERMISSION**

Town and Country Planning Act 1971  
Town and Country Planning General Regulations 1974

Planning permission is deemed to be granted by the Secretary of State for the Environment  
under the above Regulations for the following development:-

Date of Application **23rd December 1977**

Plan Registered No. **15434** Your plan No **02-14/14 and 15**

Development: **The erection of a single-storey building at  
25/33 Broadway Road SE13 for use as a community  
centre, and the provision of 8 car parking  
spaces with access from Plyden Street.**

**The proposal as approved is subject to the  
submission of details of facing materials,  
surfacing materials and tree and shrub  
planting and subject to the car parking area  
being used only by vehicles of the occupants  
(including employees using the building),  
delivery vehicles, and visitors to the  
building.**

**Borough Planning Officer**

**NOTE:** The development approved above must be begun not later than the expiration of 3 years beginning  
the date of this approval.

**C Y Storm Dip Arch Dip CD ARIBA FRPI Borough Planning Officer**

Voluntary Sector Accommodation - Response to consultation

As part of the further consultation on proposed closures and redevelopments of community centres, we would like to include information on current centre activities and users, along with your response in the report back to Safer Stronger Select Committee and Mayor and Cabinet.

Community Centre:                     BRANDRAM ROAD COMMUNITY CENTRE                    

Day	Group/ user	Type of session/ activity	Number of users/ attendees	Types of users	Session fees/ charges	Additional requirements/ user restrictions
<i>Example: Monday</i>	<i>Dance ltd</i>	<i>Line dancing class</i>	<i>15</i>	<i>Older people (aged 50+)</i>	<i>£5 per session</i>	<i>Some limited mobility users</i>
Monday	Drop in club for the over 60's	An opportunity to meet your neighbours, share interests and meet new friends.	No regular attendees as yet	Age 60 +	Free to attend	Some limited mobility users
Monday	Community Events:  Gaye Sturrock - Tutor of the London Centre of Indian Champissage International	Indian Head Massage Workshop. Learn a simple routine that is highly effective in combatting stress. This class gives you the chance to try out the seated massage (through clothes) of the shoulders head & neck. 4 weeks	10	Age 18 and over	Free to attend	Free parking at the centre makes a class/event more appealing and means that more people can attend.
Monday	Davies School of Dance  Ann Davies	Ballet & Tap - Established for over 20 years. Davies School of Dance offers a range of dance classes for children of school age, ranging from Tap & Ballet	11	Ages 3 - 16	£4 per session  Fees are deliberately kept low to enable children from a wide range of backgrounds to	Parking is very convenient as equipment needs to be carried in. It's also very

Voluntary Sector Accommodation - Response to consultation

		to Street Dance. Ann Davies has trained with the Royal Ballet & is a fully qualified & experienced teacher. Examinations in IDTA offered with a 100% pass rate. Every year your child will perform on our annual show designed to showcase their skills & build their confidence. Past pupils have moved on to further study at the Brits & have even performed in West End shows.			attend. Free trial sessions are offered along with free classes during the lead up to the students taking their dance exams.	useful for parents and children.
Monday	Yoga – Hatha - All Levels Sarah Hanks (18.45)	A class that focuses on improving well-being physical and mental. Physical work benefits, stability, mobility and strength. Classes always include a period of meditation and rest. People often begin yoga as they have an injury or problem, i.e. a bad back. Yoga has been demonstrated in a NHS and British Wheel of Yoga study to benefit back pain.	16	Wide range of ages, 18-70's. Mixed gender.	£12 per class or £7 for concessions.  (this is the same as doing a yoga class at a local authority gym)	Parking is a premium for all regular user groups of Brandram Hall

Voluntary Sector Accommodation - Response to consultation

Monday	Yoga For You Sarah Hanks (20.00)	Postures in a flowing sequence YOGA Level 2. A class that focuses on improving well-being physical and mental. Physical work benefits, stability, mobility and strength. Classes always include a period of meditation and rest. Fundraiser in Jan 2015 for Lewisham Foodbank TRessel Trust and raised £550+	10	Wide range of ages, 18-70's. Mixed gender.	£12 per class or £7 for concessions  (this is the same as doing a yoga class at a local authority gym)	Parking is a premium for all regular user groups of Brandram Hall
Tuesday	Theatre Tots Laura Sydonie	Theatre tots offers drama session for early years children and their parents and carers. Following themes and using songs, dance and stories Theatre tots explores early imaginations. The storage in the hall makes it possible for us to store equipment which is a rare bonus for any users. The hall is very well kept with baby change, committee room, equipped kitchen, stair gates and	15 children and their carers	Ages 0 – 5	£6 per class  Theatre Tots offers siblings 10% discount and we are inclusive to children with additional needs. So if a child needs support we cover the cost to enable them to join in. In the past this has included blind, deaf children as well as children in the autistic spectrum.	The parking is a big draw for our customers – from a safety and convenience point of view. We also have a few users with additional needs and the parking enables them to partake.

Voluntary Sector Accommodation - Response to consultation

		small garden area.				
Tuesday	Theatre Tots Laura Sydonie	Theatre tots offers drama session for early years children and their parents and carers. Following themes and using songs, dance and stories Theatre tots explores early imaginations. The storage in the hall makes it possible for us to store equipment which is a rare bonus for any users. The hall is very well kept with baby change, committee room, equipped kitchen, stair gates and small garden area.	15 children and their carers	Ages 0 - 5	£6 per class  Theatre Tots offers siblings 10% discount and we are inclusive to children with additional needs. So if a child needs support we cover the cost to enable them to join in. In the past this has included blind, deaf children as well as children in the autistic spectrum.	The parking is a big draw for our customers – from a safety and convenience point of view. We also have a few users with additional needs and the parking enables them to partake.
Tuesday	Helen O'Grady Drama Academy Neil O'Gorman	The prime aim of the Academy as well as developing creative skills, is to use drama to develop the vital life skills children need in order to have the best possible start in life. We have been developing their confidence, self-esteem & communication skills for nearly 20 years at Brandram Road Community Centre	45 Children spread across three one hour time slots.	Ages 5 - 18	£8.50, with concessions for siblings.  We also offer scholarship places to local schools for pupils they feel would benefit, but would otherwise be unable to afford it.	N/A
Tuesday	Pilates	Intermediate/Advanced. Improves health & well-	20	Age 20 – 80 +	£12 per session	Car park is very useful for

Voluntary Sector Accommodation - Response to consultation

	Nicole Gatter	being for all ages, Particularly those suffering from long-term back/neck pain & can also be successful in helping with chronic conditions such as MS, Asthma & Hyper Mobility, potentially reducing the demand on the NHS. A valuable service for the elderly, helping to remain active & improve strength, mobility, independence & building a network of friends. Pilates is excellent for both physical & mental wellbeing for the community				clients who have mobility problems as space to park is hard to find outside and close to the community centre
Wednesday	Mountain of the Lord's House Prayer Meeting	Inter-denominational ministry committed to helping people in positive ways through Evangelism, to pray & daily outreach. Bringing youth together, teaching the importance of love, respect for themselves & their parents. Marriages: Dealing with marital problems through counselling. Teaching parents how to relate with their children,	18	10 women 8 men Ages 35 – 64	Free of charge	Free parking space is very valuable for those who have very little money



Voluntary Sector Accommodation - Response to consultation

		especially those in their teens. Give hope to the hopeless, teaching prisoners to become responsible citizens, by listening to their views of what lead them to commit a crime. Help bring them back to Christ & reconciling them with their families.				
Wednesday	Davies School of Dance  Ann Davies	Ballet & Tap - Established for over 20 years. Davies School of Dance offers a range of dance classes for children of school age, ranging from Tap & Ballet to Street Dance. Ann Davies has trained with the Royal Ballet & is a fully qualified & experienced teacher. Examinations in IDTA offered with a 100% pass rate. Every year your child will perform on our annual show designed to showcase their skills & build their confidence. Past pupils have moved on to further study at the Brits & have even performed in West End shows.	16	Ages 3 - 16	£4 per session  Fees are deliberately kept low to enable children from a wide range of backgrounds to attend. Free trial sessions are offered along with free classes during the lead up to the students taking their dance exams.	Parking is very convenient as equipment needs to be carried in. It's also very useful for parents and children.
Wednesday	Hatha Yoga	Ideal for beginners. A class that focuses on improving	20	Wide range of ages, 18-70's.	£12 per class or £7 for concessions	Parking is a premium for

Voluntary Sector Accommodation - Response to consultation

	Sarah Hanks	well-being physical and mental. Physical work benefits, stability, mobility and strength. Classes always include a period of meditation and rest. People often begin yoga as they have an injury or problem, i.e. a bad back. Yoga has been demonstrated in a NHS and British Wheel of Yoga study to benefit back pain. Fundraiser in Jan 2015 for Lewisham Foodbank TRessel Trust and raised £550+		Mixed gender.	(this is the same as doing a yoga class at a local authority gym)	all regular user groups of Brandram Hall
Thursday	Home Education Emma Kendall	This group has been meeting at Brandram Road Community Centre for many years. By having the use of the small room as well as the main hall the younger & older children can be catered for. Home Educated children benefit from having a social venue to meet. Families of young ones feel the outside space is safe as it is enclosed & many outside activities have taken place. Planting, growing flowers, forest	10 families (minimum )	Age range 0 - 11	£3 per family (no concessions, no free places	The outside enclosed space provides invaluable benefits for the children's education and safety.

Voluntary Sector Accommodation - Response to consultation

		skills, worm-digs to name but a few of the many great educational experiences when an outside space is available. Some children have been attending for many years so the regular meeting provides a social hub for friendship & learning activities plus valuable discussion time with other children.				
Thursday	Theatre Tots Laura Sydonie	Theatre tots offers drama session for early years children and their parents and carers. Following themes and using songs, dance and stories Theatre tots explores early imaginations. The storage in the hall makes it possible for us to store equipment which is a rare bonus for any users. The hall is very well kept with baby change, committee room, equipped kitchen, stair gates and small garden area.	15 children and their carers	Ages 0 -5	£6 per class  Theatre Tots offers siblings 10% discount and we are inclusive to children with additional needs. So if a child needs support we cover the cost to enable them to join in. In the past this has included blind, deaf children as well as children in the autistic spectrum.	The parking is a big draw for our customers – from a safety and convenience point of view. We also have a few users with additional needs and the parking enables them to partake.
Thursday	Pilates Nicole Gatter	Intermediate/Advanced. Improves health & well-being for all ages,	20	Ages 20 – 80+	£12 per session	Car park is very useful for clients who

Voluntary Sector Accommodation - Response to consultation

		Particularly those suffering from long-term back/neck pain & can also be successful in helping with chronic conditions such as MS, Asthma & Hyper Mobility, potentially reducing the demand on the NHS. A valuable service for the elderly, helping to remain active & improve strength, mobility, independence & building a network of friends. Pilates is excellent for both physical & mental wellbeing for the community				have mobility problems as space to park is hard to find outside and close to the community centre
Friday	Theatre Tots Laura Sydonie	Theatre tots offers drama session for early years children and their parents and carers. Following themes and using songs, dance and stories Theatre tots explores early imaginations. The storage in the hall makes it possible for us to store equipment which is a rare bonus for any users. The hall is very well kept with baby change, committee room, equipped	15 children and their carers	Ages 0 - 5	£6 per class  Theatre Tots offers siblings 10% discount and we are inclusive to children with additional needs. So if a child needs support we cover the cost to enable them to join in. In the past this has included blind, deaf children as well as children in the autistic spectrum.	The parking is a big draw for our customers – from a safety and convenience point of view. We also have a few users with additional needs and the parking enables them to partake.

Voluntary Sector Accommodation - Response to consultation

		kitchen, stair gates and small garden area.				
Friday	Mummy & Baby Yoga – New Born to pre-crawling.  Julie Adam	To help mums regain strength & muscle tone. Sensory work for your little one through laughter, song & play. Improve digestion for both Mummy and Baby. WE finish with a period of relaxation followed by a well earned cup of tea & the opportunity to meet the community of New Mums in the Blackheath, Lewisham, Hither Green & Lee area	15 – 20 Mummies and 15 -20 Babies (currently 20 in this group die to the new baby boom!)	Mummies ages 18 – 45. Babies range from 4 weeks to 9 months.  Mixed Ethnic group	£69 for 6 sessions used over a flexible 7 week course.  £11.50 per class  Concession rate: offered to low income households. £42 for the course. £6 per class  Free places available	Space for buggies or parking facilities needed for Mum's with back/weak abdominal muscles.
Friday	Gardening Project  The Local Community	Drop in for total beginners to the experienced. Help to grow a variety of flowers & vegetables for each season & share your expertise of gardening with others to pick up tips to help gain knowledge.	No regular attendees as yet		Free to attend	
Friday	Restorative Yoga  Julie Adam	These well supported poses allow you to linger quietly for a time & assist your parasympathetic and sympathetic nervous system to reduce stress levels & support the healing and nurturing process. WE finish with	10 – 12 students	Wide range of ages, from 16 – 70+  Mixed gender class	£20 which includes fresh soup, bread + butter after class.  Concession rate: £10  Free places available	Accessible parking facilities needed

Voluntary Sector Accommodation - Response to consultation

		soup & the opportunity to get to know you yoga community in the area. Suitable for everyone.				
Friday	Conquerors Covenant Saints Ministries – Faith Group  Victor Charles-Ayuto	In these days of financial stresses & deep depression, help & encouragement is one of the best things that we can do for each other. We seek fresh ideas on how to help our community to help each other. We seek fresh ideas on how to help our community to help families & individuals. A great deal of outreach happens to help people in a variety of ways.  <b>A Little about Us:</b> We are committed to helping each other grow in Our Christian faith and in our worship and service of God. We believe that people need Jesus and as a church we have found that faith in him makes a difference in	10 - 15	Wide range of ages	No Charge but requested donations from well wishers	The car park is essential for wheel chair users and makes getting into the hall a lot easier.

Voluntary Sector Accommodation - Response to consultation

		<p>our everyday lives.</p> <p><b>Our Vision:</b> To be a church that demonstrates the reality of God's love and power so that we can impact the community around us and the world.</p>				
Friday	<p>Sound Bath</p> <p>Nicola Kelly</p>	<p>A beautiful deep meditation experience that uses ancient instruments from around the world. This unique experience can help you release stress and feel more energised happier and uplifted.</p>	No regular attendees as yet		£10 per class	Car park is a bonus
Friday	<p>Sound Therapy</p> <p>Sarah Hanks</p>	<p>Suitable for everyone. A 2 hour session of sound therapy where people have the opportunity to relax. It is especially helpful to those who feel stressed and over whelmed and want to make a positive change in their mind set. Regular attenders report that it improves sleep, reduces anxiety and stress.</p>	20	<p>Wide range of ages, 18-70's. Mixed gender.</p>	<p>Concession is £15 (no free places as they are not viable)</p>	<p>Parking is a premium for all regular user groups of Brandram Hall</p>
Saturday	Community Yoga	<p>This class is for all &amp; focuses on improving</p>	8 – 16 students	<p>Wide range of ages from 16 –</p>	<p>£12 drop in fee. No pre-booking required</p>	<p>Accessible parking</p>



Voluntary Sector Accommodation - Response to consultation

	Julie Adam	flexibility & developing strength. We finish with a period of deep relaxation. Suitable for everyone! This lovely group ranges from 16 – 70+ years in age.		70+  Mixed gender class	Session rate: £7  Free places available	facilities needed
Saturday	Pregnancy Yoga  Julie Adam	Bring energy, peace & balance into your pregnancy & prepare for the birth of you baby. This lovely class offers you the opportunity to meet other pregnant ladies in your community & the support that this can offer!	14 – 16 students	Age ranges from 18 – 45 + Mixed ethnic group	£60 for 5 sessions with flexible 7 weeks to use.  Concession rate: £35 for 5 sessions with a flexible 7 weeks to use.	Accessible parking facilities needed as students pregnant students attend classes from 12/15 weeks and up to and including 41 + 6 weeks pregnant
Saturday	Active Birthing Workshop with partners  Julie Adam	These one-off two hour sessions are designed to help prepare you & your birthing partner for labour & the birth of your baby in a fun & informative way. Covering active birthing positions, breathing, visualization & massage techniques & ways your partner can support you through labour.	Maximum 5 couples	18 – 45 +  Mixed Ethnic group	£90 for a one-off two hour session  Concession rate: £35  Free places available	Accessible parking facilities needed as students attend from 32 weeks and up to and including 40 weeks pregnant
Saturday	Children's Parties / Events	This space is regularly used	Often full	All ages attend	In the past parties went on	The car park is

Voluntary Sector Accommodation - Response to consultation

		and is ideal for children's parties. People love the fact that the hall is not too big or too small and has a very welcoming feel because of this.	use of halls capacity	as children's parties brings families and friends together.	until late at weekends, but now parties stop at 6pm. This has been in place for the last year or so and has ensured better relationships with the neighbours living in close proximity to Brandram Hall.	a great help when bringing in anything from cars for the party or event.
Saturday	Charity fund raising events	This time is used (where diary permits) for fund raising events for charities, and have been to raise money for British Heart Foundation & Dementia UK, and have included events for parents with children to enjoy. Events such as painting competitions have taken place that provides some entertainment and a meeting place for local residents.		All ages.  A time for the community to help others less fortunate than themselves, providing a great community spirit.		The outside space provides extra possibilities for fund raising ideas.
Sunday	Conquerors Covenant Saints Minsistries  Victor Charles-Ayuto	In these days of financial stresses & deep depression, help & encouragement is one of the best things that we can do for each other. We seek fresh ideas on how to help our community to help each other. We seek fresh	20 - 25	Wide range of ages	No Charge but requested donations from well wishers	The car park is essential for wheel chair users and makes getting into the hall a lot easier.

Voluntary Sector Accommodation - Response to consultation

		<p>ideas on how to help our community to help families &amp; individuals. A great deal of outreach happens to help people in a variety of ways. <b>A Little about Us:</b> We are committed to helping each other grow in Our Christian faith and in our worship and service of God. We believe that people need Jesus and as a church we have found that faith in him makes a difference in our everyday lives.</p> <p><b>Our Vision:</b> To be a church that demonstrates the reality of God's love and power so that we can impact the community around us and the world.</p>				
Sunday	<p>Faith Group</p> <p>Andre Gabriel</p>	<p>This welcoming Faith Group has been meeting at this venue for 30 years. Regular members pay a small subscription to cover the hall hire costs.</p>	10 regular members	Mixed ages young to elderly	Guests are welcomed for free.	The car park is essential for wheel chair users and makes getting into the hall a lot easier.

Voluntary Sector Accommodation - Response to consultation

<p>Sunday</p>	<p>Tamil Community &amp; Youth Centre Arts &amp; Sports Activities</p> <p>Alfred Venthakone</p>	<p>We organise sports activities, poetry &amp; chess competitions every year. We fortnightly meet on Sundays to discuss issues that affect the community with a professional or experienced person present. Such as the importance of parents understanding their children in the newly adopted environment, women's education &amp; empowerment, parenting, physical &amp; mental health issues.</p>	<p>10 – 25 on normal days And More on special days</p>	<p>Parents and children</p>	<p>Members are not charged for attending sessions.</p> <p>But some senior members contribute towards hiring the hall on Sundays</p>	<p>Valuable outdoor sports activity space is available at Brandram Road Community Centre</p>
<p>Sunday</p>	<p>New Life World Apostolic Church</p> <p>Jacob Abraham</p>	<p>This is a multi-cultural Church that regularly uses the centre to serve the community. The Centre has been a conduit in helping us connect with local community, develop &amp; build positive relationships. Members greatly value the services, these include spreading the Gospel of JESUS CHRIST, Revival Concerts and opportunities</p>	<p>15 – 20 + some children (varies)</p>	<p>10 females &amp; 5 – 10 males</p> <p>Young to elderly</p>	<p>No charge</p>	<p>Some members use the car park which is so convenient</p>

Voluntary Sector Accommodation - Response to consultation

		for young people to learn & practice musical skills. We also organise and deliver Bible studies for all the community.				
Sunday	Chakradance Christine Wykes-Driver	Free style Dance Meditation to Music. CHAKRADANCE is a dance practice for body and soul. It's a powerful experience that will free and energize you. It combines spontaneous dance, guided imagery and music to promote that wonderful state of calm vitality known as "wellbeing".	No regular attendees as yet		£10 per class Concessions £5	Wheel chair users are welcome for this event and the use of the car park is very helpful

## **Champion Hall**

Thank you for your time recently. I have sent the template of usage back to Evette McDonald plus a copy in the post.

I would just like to add that from December we will have a recognised martial arts group using the hall also. I would like consideration to be given to Champion Hall as an important part of Sydenham life. Apart from the usage shown the hall is widely booked on a Saturday and Sunday, with Kumon teaching on a Saturday morning and Greater Grace Church on a Sunday with events in the afternoon and evening for birthdays/christenings etc.

We would like to look to paying a rental for use of the hall and would be grateful if this would be possible and, if it is, how much we would need to be.

Thank you for your help and if you need any further information please let me know.

Mo Sheahan

for Champion Hall

Community Centre: Champion Hall

Day	Group/ user	Type of session/ activity	Number of users/ attendees	Types of users	Session fees/ charges	Additional requirements/ user restrictions
<i>Example: Monday</i>	<i>Dance ltd</i>	<i>Line dancing class</i>	<i>15</i>	<i>Older people (aged 50+)</i>	<i>£5 per session</i>	<i>Some limited mobility users</i>
Sunday	Greater Grace Church	Faith Group	40-50	Varied ages and types from 4-80. Separate classes within the service for children	Donations	
Monday, Wednesday, Thursday, Friday	Angel face pre school	Nursery	20-30	Under 5 for pre school After school varies	A lot of funding but £30 for the day	
Monday, Wednesday	Sydenham Dance centre	Dance	20-30	25-70 years old	£7.50 for the evening	
Tuesday, Friday, Saturday	Kumon centre teaching		20-30	Mainly under 10s	In line with kumon prices	
Tuesday	Tea dance	Drop in	10	OAPs/ disabled but all welcome	£1.50	
Tuesday	Greater Grace prayer group	Prayer	20/30		Donations	
Thursday	Badminton	Sport	Approx 8-10			



## Evelyn Community Centre

From FORVIL

We are a service group that caters for the Vietnamese and Chinese community on the Evelyn estate and across London; we have over 100 users at present attending Evelyn. We operate 5 days a week Monday-Friday and hold a luncheon club for our community on a Thursday and Friday. On these days we are able to have many different services come and educate a lot of our users. Our concern is that if the centre was taken away from us, there would be know where for our elderly and other Vietnamese and Chinese user group go to access the support we provide. We are a community that learn and trust one another and have come to rely on us to help them with very pressing matters and private matters. Most of our service users trust us and come to our luncheon club not only to socialise but to find out life changing information they might otherwise not have been able to access. We work closely with several organisations in Lewisham and other boroughs and through this many of our users now have knowledge that could potentially, help them have a better quality of life. We have the local optician come in and check our member's eyes, we have Lewisham health team come and check members health i.e. blood pressure, heart, diabetes, cholesterol levels etc. We also have the local fire brigade come and give demonstrations on how to check their smoke alarms, and also ensure they know who to call in case of a fire. The local police also come in and educate user groups on how to report a crime and how to keep themselves safe. We have the local dieticians come and educate them on healthy lifestyles. We help our user groups with housing issues, employment issues and offer English language sessions. We have a keep fit class every Friday afternoon that is not only open to the Vietnamese and Chinese community but to all the community which is growing in numbers week by week and every other Thursday we offer classes for the community residents who's mobility is poor, to do chair aerobics. Many of our users rely on us to help them with their day to day living as without us they would have no one to turn to. We pride ourselves on being a central hub for our Evelyn community Vietnamese and Chinese residents who have over the years become reliant on use to give them the opportunity to not live isolated but be part of a group where they feel they belong to. We are working in a community centre with other user groups within the centre allowing us to branch out. The loss of this centre would deeply effect not only the users of our group but ourselves in being able to accommodate and facilitate the services we offer and provide.

To whom it concern,

I have been lead to believe Evelyn Community Centre is up for consideration in the redevelopment of a smaller centre and possibility of housing. You only have to look outside the centres doors to see the vast array of housing comprising of high rise, flats and houses. I was moved to Evelyn Community Centre nearly a year ago from another centre that was beyond economical repair which become too dangerous for user groups to use. Over this time at Evelyn my client list has grown. When this first occurred I was worried that I would lose my user group, but they faithfully moved with me. I run two classes a week on Monday and Wednesday evenings from 18:30-21:30. My target group is the youngsters and youths keeping them off the streets, and showing them a different way to channel their energy into a focused disciplined sport. Teaching self- defence through karate has been proven to help improve and develop confidence, co-ordination, concentration and discipline in both adults and children. I run classes for children and adults, and have enjoyed working within the community. Being moved once had a knock on effect as I did lose a small percentage of my students and have had to build it back up, but fortunately being moved to Evelyn Community Centre has had a positive impact on my services, giving me the opportunity to pass on not only a skill i learnt but a way of life.

Yours Sincerely

Felix Nelson

(Newcross Karate Academy)

Dear sir/madam

Background Information:

My name is Keith and I am the chair person for Evelyn Tenants and Residents Associations (E.T.R.A). I took this post on after the late Julia Donovan sadly passed away last year who we sadly miss; we are funded by Lewisham Tenets Levy (LTF).

I am involved with:

The Evelyn coordinating group

MET police safer neighbourhood team and local PCSO'S

The ASB team,

The scrutiny group along with Tepas

As well as many other departments within Lewisham and Lewisham Homes.

Our aims as a TRNA is to serve and help within the local community, with housing, block and estate issues, supporting tenants residents and lease holders with their issues and problems, also facilitated within the TRNA meetings. Sourcing information for all of the above, and pointing them to the right departments or services, and offering ongoing support where needed along with supporting the elderly Re:f housing and OT. Who we co-work with within the centre are all groups as required in a supporting role along with grant applications and more. I would like to point out that Sharrone Harvey has been very helpful and instrumental in ensuring that the centre is being used to its full potential along with moving three displaced user groups to within this centre increasing its usage providing more facilities for the local community. Due to a reduction of the number of caretakers from 7-3 workers myself and others on a voluntary basis help as we can, within and outside of the building and at times with some financial costs to ourselves i.e. cleaning materials and products, maintaining the cleanliness of the kitchen along with the cooker, cooker hood and other general hygiene matters within the kitchen and on occasions dust and mopping the main hall floors. If it was deemed that the centre was to go it would have a devastating impact on the community and the services it provides within that said community including childcare. It was suggested that a smaller building within a new development may be under consideration by yourselves, with the increase usage of the centre a smaller centre would not suit purpose as the church group regularly fills the hall to near capacity, similarly with the self defence group and other user groups within the centre. I thank you for your time and hope this will help you to allow all the groups and users of this community centre to continue helping and serving the community as it has done for many years.

Yours Sincerely

Keith chairperson of ETRA



BunnyHop Day Nursery, 1 Kingfisher Square Deptford London SE8 5TW

**Re: Voluntary Sector Accommodation- Response to the consultation on proposed closures and Redevelopment of community centres.**

Dear Mayor and Cabinet,

Background information: We are a private day nursery operating Monday-Friday 08:00-18:00 hours. We cater for children aged 2yrs -5yrs, 50 weeks of the year situated within Evelyn Community Centre. We have been serving the community for over 20 years, offering full-time and part-time spaces for children that have come from many multi-cultural backgrounds. At present we have 36 children and families attending BunnyHops, over half of our children are currently in receipt of the free 15 hours nursery place. This is a clear indicator that the need for a nursery is very high. We work alongside several other agencies within Lewisham borough, and continue our rapport with them on a daily basis. The community centre where we are situated is in the heart of a community, where several high rise housing, lower lever flats and houses are situated. 95% of our families live in the immediate area and many come from disadvantage backgrounds. We work alongside Local authorities where many of our parents have links with, such as social services as some of our children are on the 'at risk register', or family members having mental health issues, or children that are in care system. Due to the volume of high rise flats and houses we constantly have a waiting list as parents/carers are in desperate need for good quality child care. The impact of the centre closing would mean a huge chunk of a growing community gone, and children left without any form of childcare/education in the early years. By the nursery taking children from the age of 2 yrs.' We can identify early on of any additional needs a child might have. We currently have 12 children that have Special Educational Needs, and are now getting the correct help and support needed for them and their families. The government have brought forward plans to double free childcare for working parents, to support working families with the costs of childcare, and without us already offering affordable childcare, this would drastically decreases the numbers of parents actively looking for employment or are currently in higher education, as childcare is so sought after in this area. We are in a community centre that is used by so many different cultural groups on week days and weekends for private hire and for regular users. There are roughly eight user groups actively using the centre but working in partnership with one another.

Yours Sincerely

Natasha Ricketts (Manager)

RE: EVELYN COMMUNITY CENTRE CONSULTATION MEETING

MONDAY, 21<sup>ST</sup> SEPTEMBER 2015 – 5:00 TO 6:15 PM.

### **Manifesto of Mount Carmel Church**

The foundation of this church is built upon the inspiration of Jesus Christ, where a collective group of worshippers shares fellowship within Evelyn Community Centre.

Mount Carmel Church was fortunate to take up residency through Lewisham Council at Scotney Hall, New cross, Sharratt Street in the 1980's. The nature of Mount Carmel Church today and when it was based on Sharratt Street, Scotney Hall was to provide a place of worship for people within the community, offering support to all who may be facing difficulties within their life's, provide a place for children of all ages a warm and friendly Sunday school environment, to share creative activities with other children, to develop their understanding of good choices to make in life and support the importance for them to attend school.

The community did participate in much of the Church service and special occasions over the years where food was also provided as a sense of giving to all that came. Unfortunately, due to a major water leak, leaving the main hall in a bad disrepair state in November 2014, we were offered a short term Tenancy at Evelyn Community centre on the 2<sup>nd</sup> of December 2014.

The members of Mount Carmel Church embraced this change and were able to settle in Evelyn Community Hall very quickly. However, there are some underling matters to be resolved, but we have adapted to the current location and the community in like manner when located at Scotney Hall. People have visited from the community and commented on how they enjoyed the service and just wanted to come in and listen, which is always welcomed.

There are elderly members who are within the borough and the community area which find this location very accessible, where they are able to share a meal and have a sense of family unity as some live on their own.

#### **Mount Carmel Apostolic Church Objective:**

In a community where there are many families and people with many financial problems, fragile sense of well being, Mount Carmel offers a place for all to come and have rest from the many challenges people face individually or as a community and can help towards the progression of a peaceful well being.

#### **Mount Carmel Apostolic Church Aim:**

We have much passion to extend the foundation of Mount Carmel Church to more of the community and continue to co-operate with the other user groups within the centre, so that lives in the surrounding area can benefit from this good support network and contribute to the stability of the community.

#### **Mount Carmel Apostolic Church & Evelyn Community centre Future plans:**

Following the meeting on the 21<sup>st</sup> of September 2015, we welcome the idea to develop the community centre, as we appreciate the need for more housing within the Lewisham borough, but see the vital importance for the community centre to remain.

The centre most certainly could benefit from an upgrade to improve the lighting where currently two thirds of the lights are not in operation. The oven is in a hazardous disrepair state, lack of storage space for all user groups and general wear and tear throughout the hall.

Therefore, should the decision be made to redevelop the community centre with Housing , we would strongly request that the premises is not down sized, as with more housing this would result in more residents in need of the centre.

We anticipate that this manifesto will be taken into consideration when future plans for Evelyn Community centre is made.

## **Ewart Road Club House**

17<sup>th</sup> September 2015

Ms Liz Dart  
Lewisham Borough Council

Dear Ms Dart

Ewart Road Community Clubhouse

I am writing this letter in regards to the recent threat of closure and redevelopment of our estate clubhouse.

I am the Chair of Ewart Road Housing Co-operative Ltd and I am raising these concerns with you on behalf of the Management Committee and the residents of our estate.

We are deeply troubled and alarmed about the recent proposal by The London Borough of Lewisham to close our clubhouse with the aim of demolition and redevelopment of the land. The clubhouse is an integral part of our estate and our community and we simply cannot afford to lose it.

Residents, local faith groups, other charitable organisations, children's groups, sports and well-being as well as residents and the management committee use it.

We have some queries that I hope you are able to answer:

- ❖ It seems that no one has visited the site or discussed this properly with the co-op: has such a visit occurred?
- ❖ Planning permission was not given to the property next door, so we would question the probability of getting one for the clubhouse development you propose
- ❖ I am sure you are aware of the fact that we are a registered social landlord and that we have just signed a new 5-year agreement to manage the estate and clubhouse?
- ❖ In the event that our wishes to keep the clubhouse are overruled by LBL, the Council will still have to provide us with alternative accommodation: many of our residents are vulnerable and elderly and would find it very difficult to travel to meetings that are not on the estate.
- ❖ If new dwellings are built on the site, it states in your agenda from the meeting we attended at the town hall on Wednesday 15<sup>th</sup> July that Lewisham Homes are interested in managing any new development on our clubhouse land, (page 98 of your agenda). We would also question this decision, as we think it is completely inappropriate. We are more than qualified to manage properties on our own estate and have done so since we formed as a co-op in 1982.



- ❖ You also stated that one of the reasons for selling community buildings is due to the cost to the council of maintaining these buildings. Our clubhouse does not need your financial support: it generates income, has a surplus, is managed by a dedicated group of volunteers and is, in our opinion, self sufficient and not dependent on council funding.

To be quite frank, the co op feel that we have been side-lined and not consulted in a fully transparent way in terms of these decisions being made on our behalf that directly affect our residents and wider community, who use our clubhouse for social and community meetings, events and projects.

The loss of our clubhouse will actually undo many years of work in terms of community cohesion and tenant relations and we would urge the council to reconsider this idea, especially in view of the fact that it is a policy of The London Borough of Lewisham to promote diversity, community care, outreach and concern for those who are isolated, vulnerable and lonely, in particular the elderly. The Ewart Road Clubhouse is of paramount importance to people on the estate and the wider community that are come together in community spirit.

I would be obliged if you would give the time to answer these questions and concerns we have raised.

I look forward to your reply.

Yours sincerely

Brian Courtney

Chair of Management Committee

Ewart Road Housing Co-operative

Sir Steve Bullock  
Mayor of Lewisham  
Mayor's Cabinet

Dear Sir

Re: Ewart Road Housing Co-operative Community Clubhouse

I am the Chairperson of the Management Committee for Ewart Road Housing Co-operative Ltd, and I am writing to you on behalf of the Committee and the Co-operative. We have just been made aware that our Community Clubhouse is under threat from Housing Development.

I feel anger that this is even being contemplated. We are a committed group of people who have worked hard over the years to keep our estate well maintained and our residents happy. The clubhouse is the central meeting place for our committee and residents, the hub of our estate.

Whilst it is true that the clubhouse has not been used to its full potential recently, we have been lucky enough to get on board a young woman who has the energy, confidence and commitment to get the clubhouse running more like it used to be. Apart from our monthly and quarterly meetings, we have TMO Liaison meetings with the other co-operative in the borough, we hold table sales monthly and we have Bingo sessions starting on 23<sup>rd</sup> July, with coffee mornings starting on 11<sup>th</sup> August. We also have a few faith groups who use the space for their prayer meetings. These people also belong to the community. Our problem has been that people are unaware of our clubhouse or its location. This is about to change and we had already started working on a comprehensive plan for our community clubhouse when we heard about the council's latest plans.

We have met with a representative of Community Connections who gave us a lot of advice and is committed to supporting us in the future. She informed us that there is a need for our clubhouse as the Forest Hill and Catford areas do not have a community centre/clubhouse and she has given us connections to organisations that would be interested in our space. This makes it an asset to the community as this area will be non-profit making. Our next step once this side is set up would be to concentrate on the private sector to make the Clubhouse financially self-sufficient, so the upkeep of the clubhouse will come out of the profit and not be a burden on the council.

We are in the process of designing flyers and posters to be distributed ahead of the two events mentioned above and to advertise other events which we are in the process of arranging.

We are Registered Social Landlords. I want to know if you really can strip us of this asset? Is the council legally entitled to destroy part of our community? It is certainly not morally entitled.

Our members are working extremely hard to make our community clubhouse a success for the estate and the wider community, and will continue to do so. In the event that all this is of no avail, I would like to know what the council will provide us with as an alternative to our community centre. Also, is our estate office under threat as well?

Some of us will be attending your meeting on Wednesday evening and trust you will be able to read this letter and the accompanying draft Plan for our Community Clubhouse before the meeting. We are determined to keep our community clubhouse for the community and will work unceasingly to that end.

Yours faithfully

Brian Courtney  
Chair  
on behalf of Ewart Road Housing Co-operative Ltd  
and the Management Committee

(Enc)

## Honor Oak Community Centre

Community Centre: \_\_\_Honor Oak Centre\_\_\_\_\_

Day	Group/ user	Type of session/ activity	Number of users/ attendees	Types of users	Session fees/ charges	Additional requirements/ user restrictions
<i>Example: Monday</i>	<i>Dance ltd</i>	<i>Line dancing class</i>	<i>15</i>	<i>Older people (aged 50+)</i>	<i>£5 per session</i>	<i>Some limited mobility users</i>
Tuesdays	Mini Drama	Drama for kids	10	children 3-11	£5 per session	NA
	□					

Community Centre: \_\_\_Honor Oak Community Centre\_\_\_\_\_

Day	Group/ user	Type of session/ activity	Number of users/ attendees	Types of users	Session fees/ charges	Additional requirements/ user restrictions
<i>Example: Monday</i>	<i>Dance ltd</i>	<i>Line dancing class</i>	<i>15</i>	<i>Older people (aged 50+)</i>	<i>£5 per session</i>	<i>Some limited mobility users</i>
Friday	Grace Church Brockley	Toddler Group	Variable (15 – 40)	Parents and pre school children	£1 per session	We use the kitchen, crèche/lounge rooms and the outside area

Trustees

Honor Oak community Association (HOCA)

30 September 2015

Dear Ms

**Honor Oak Community Association (HOCA) - voluntary sector accommodation consultation response.**

HOCA welcomes the opportunity to respond this consultation on voluntary sector accommodation.

**Our aims**

The aims of HOCA are:

to promote the benefit of the inhabitants of the area of benefit without distinction of sex, sexual orientation, age, disability, nationality, race or of political, religious or other opinions,

by associating together the said inhabitants and the statutory authorities, voluntary and other organisations in a common effort to advance education and to provide facilities in the interests of social welfare for recreation and leisure-time occupation with the object of improving the conditions of life for the said inhabitants;

establish, or secure the establishment of, a Community Centre and to maintain and manage the same (whether alone or in co-operation with any statutory authority or other person or body) in furtherance of the Objects;

promote such other charitable purposes as may from time to time be determined. The Charity shall be non-party in politics and non-sectarian in religion. The area of benefit ("area of benefit") shall be Lewisham and the surrounding areas.

**Our views**

HOCA and its user groups /users do not support proposals to redevelop the current site of the community centre and youth club to instead provide housing with smaller and shared community space.

The plans for smaller and shared community space will mean that many of the activities currently being undertaken at the community centre will not be able to continue. The main hall in the community centre is our main source of income and if we lose this facility we will no longer be able to continue in our current capacity and also it will no longer be viable for a number of our user groups to continue to operate.

The community centre is very well used to the point that it is often difficult to schedule request to hold activities and events. It provides public space for the young and old and families to meet and undertake a variety of activities. One of the objectives of this consultation exercise was to address underutilisation of community centres. Honor Oak Community centre is very well used and is attended by various groups every day and night of the week. The taekwondo group has been operating from the community since 1981 (one year after the centre opened). This group is very popular and has been attended by generations of the same families.

We believe that any proposal for additional housing on Honor Oak Estate is not well thought out. The area is already very highly populated and really does not need additional people in the area. We all recognise that there is need for more housing in Lewisham but it is almost inconceivable that you would consider reducing the amount of community space in this very populated area and then increase the population. We hope that the two tragic killings on the estate in September will cause you to rethink this proposal.

Information on the user groups and the regular activities undertaken at the community centre is included in the response template and attached as a separate document. Where user groups/users have provided additional responses these are also attached.

The consultation was aimed at voluntary and community organisations that provide services in London Borough of Lewisham. However, the plans for redevelopment of the site for housing and reduced community space will impact on the residents on Honor Oak Estate and HOCA believe that it was a poor judgement on the part of Lewisham Council to exclude the residents from the consultation at this stage. For this reason we do Not believe that the consultation that has been undertaken thus far in relation to Honor Oak Community centre has been conducted appropriately.

On becoming aware of the threat to the Honor Oak Community Centre, a petition was started by HOCA and we currently have over one thousand signatures which we plan to seek permission to submit to the Mayor and Cabinet meeting in November.

### **Information on usage of the centre**

In an attempt to reach more members of the community we commissioned research on the relevance of the community centre, as although it is very well used, we are aware that many people in the community are not aware of the activities being run at the centre. This also provided information on the activities they would like held at the community centre and community space featured highly on their expectations.. *‘ 68% of respondents expect a community centre to offer services and activities which relate to ‘Social space’*

This may go some way to explain the success of our private hiring arrangements.

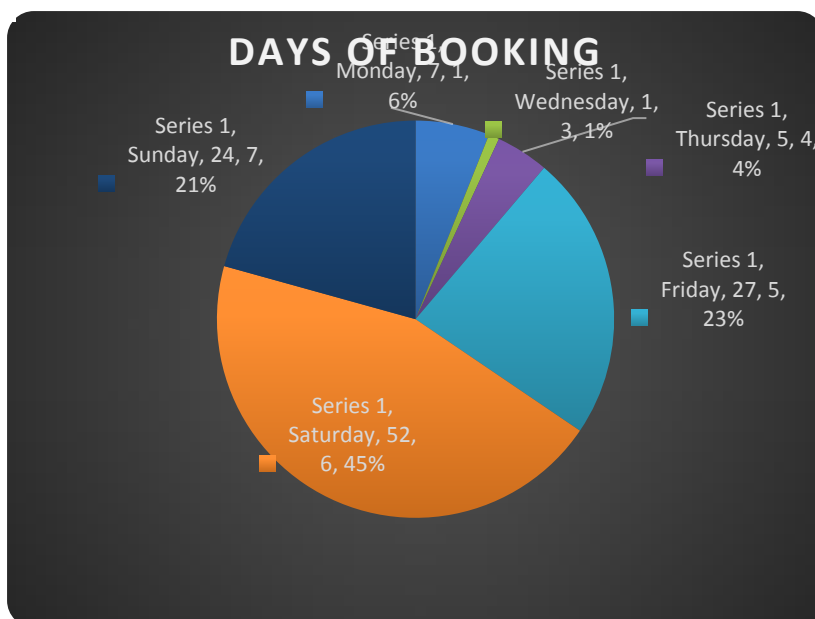
The below figures show private hire to April 2015 the forward bookings for both Saturdays and Sundays were continuing to strengthen. At that point, every Saturday and Sunday in May, apart from Sunday 31st was booked. At the time of writing this consultation response we had to turn people away in October as most Fridays and Saturdays are booked each week for private hire.

	May	Jun	Jul	Aug	Sep	Oct	Nov	Dec	Jan.	Feb.	Mar	Apr.	YTD
<i>Previous year</i>	8	7	11	9	5	9	12	6	4	2	8	5	86
Last 12 months	<b>9</b>	<b>8</b>	<b>10</b>	<b>7</b>	<b>5</b>	<b>6</b>	<b>5</b>	<b>7</b>	<b>5</b>	<b>7</b>	<b>8</b>	<b>12</b>	<b>89</b>

The table below was produced on 19 May 2015 and shows the events booked in the last 12 months. Honor Oak Community Centre is just a few minute's walk from Honor Oak Crematorium, Brenchley Gardens and therefore it is not surprising that the highest number of private hire bookings is for funeral receptions. Funerals, birthday parties, christenings and weddings account for over 75% of private hire bookings.

EVENT TYPE	NUMBER	%
Memorial dinner	1	1.04%
Birthday party	21	21.88%
Chld's party	1	1.04%
community fair	1	1.04%
Christening party	12	12.50%
Family reception	3	3.13%
Funeral	29	30.21%
Graduation party	1	1.04%
Jehova's witnesses	2	2.08%
Leaving party	1	1.04%
Naming ceremony	3	3.13%
Sound check	6	6.25%
Potter's house church	1	1.04%
squash party	1	1.04%
memorial	1	1.04%
Wedding reception	12	12.50%
<b>Total</b>	<b>96</b>	<b>100.00%</b>

The table below shows that Saturdays are most popular for private hire with 45% of bookings being made on Saturday. Fridays are very popular for funerals. There is little private hire undertaken on weekdays, which is usually reserved for community development activities/user group bookings



Some analysis was done on the private hirers of the centre over the two year period to 19 May 2015. Residents in Brockley postcode SE4 made the highest number of private hires. Over 67% of private hirers were from the borough of Lewisham. The community centre is located on the cusp with Southwark so it is not surprising that it attracts hires from this borough.

#### Where our hirers come from

Post codes	Hirers with that postcode*	Post codes	Hirers with that postcode*
SE4	41	SE23	8
SE15	17	SE8	6
SE14	13	BR4	5
SE6	12	SE9	5
SE13	8	SE16	4
SE22	8	SE18	4

99

32

*\*Where there were fewer than 4 hirings from any given postal area, numbers are not included*

#### Expression of Interest for Asset Transfer

As part of this consultation response HOCA would like to express an interest in transferring a community asset into our ownership. Our expression of interest is outlined below.



The community centre is central to creating a space for community activities for the local people and meets the needs of younger and older people and brings the different communities together. The attached document showing the user groups and activities they provide to the local community is evidence that the community centre has a track record of delivering recreational, social and educational activities/service to the local community. Over the next five years we plan to expand on the community development activities, with this in mind we have scheduled the organisation 'prison link' and 'MEND' to run courses/programmes at the community centre in October 2015.

The activities that are currently run at the centre attracts a diverse group of people and we want to further develop the services/activities offered at the community centre to support the local community and to change lives.

We have recently set up as a charitable incorporated organisation and have undergone lots of change in terms of board members and administrative /governance procedures. We are now moving forward and have 5 potential trustees/members attending our next meeting on 1st October, all of whom live on the Honor Oak Estate and keen to help promote and build the community centre as an asset of value in the community. They have all been sent our skills audit form for completion so that we can be sure to attract the right skills on the trustee board.

We currently have a part time admin worker and volunteer working in the office. Current trustees are also putting in a lot of time to ensure that we can effectively manage the centre while we build our membership and trustees. HOCA trustees/ workers are scheduled to attend free training courses provided by Voluntary Action Lewisham. We are also booked on National Training courses in November on charity fund raising and governance. This we believe will assist us in making applications from funders that we have already identified and help us to maximise opportunities to ensure sustainability of the community centre.

HOCA Trustees endeavour to be compliant with charity regulations and our governing documents and have already taken a difficult decision, against the wishes of a former trustee to ensure that we do not breach our governing document. We are also scheduled to have training on charity governance which will further assist us in the management of the community centre. Although current trustees have management and HR experience, financial management experience, and knowledge of equality, data protection and freedom of information legislation. We aim to get a good handle on charity regulations to ensure we run an effective and efficient business to meet the needs of the community and where the diversity of people's backgrounds is valued.

The repairs and maintenance cost to the centre in 2013/14 was £19,678. There were no additional actual costs incurred by the Lewisham Council in this respect. Our approved financial accounts to March 2015 can be made available on request.

Yours sincerely

Yvonne Peart, Wonyo Setufe, Dorcas Erekosima, Purazeni Chigarire

HOCA Trustees

Enclosed:

Letters/emails from:

Leon Onen (resident)

Suzy Moxhay (resident)

S Griffiths (user group)

Pastor David Brown (user group)

Christina Israel (user group)

Introduction letters:

MEND

Prison Link

Dear Mr Mayor

Subject: Re: Consultation with affected groups - redevelopment proposals for Honor Oak Community Centre.

I am very disappointed to hear that the Honor Oak community centre is scheduled to close. My family has been a regular user of the centre since we moved to Brockley/new cross 10 years ago. I have used the centre for sure start sessions with both children (and meet other parents for support there), my children have used the adventure playground and youth club and more recently I use the sports hall to play badminton – which has encouraged me to be more active improving my health.

I am also aware that the centre runs a food bank which is always very busy (I play badminton at the same time as they are open) and which meets a need that should not exist in the capital city of a wealthy country – but sadly does.

I understand that the plan is to build additional housing which I am sure is required, however, is it not possible to continue to provide facilities for these new residents as well as existing users on the centre by providing the same facilities that exist on the ground floor of any new building. My concern is – very much like the selling off of school playing fields – short term concerns are storing up more issues for the future – the population of the Lewisham district is growing but facilities for the local communities are shrinking.

Kind regards

Sian Griffiths

28<sup>th</sup> September 2015

Dear Sir,

**Ref: Honor Oak Community Centre, 50 Turnham Rd, London, SE4 2JD**

I am writing to argue against the closure of the youth centre situated at 50 Turnham Rd, London, SE4 2JD. It is my belief that the youth centre allows young people to socialise, make new friends and try a wide range of new activities. With the closure of the centre, youths are more likely to loiter around more, hence causing social problems. Recent research and statistics by The Home Office show under 18's commit a quarter of all crimes.

I am sure that you will agree with me when I say that in these current economic conditions, it is necessary to find ways to prevent youngsters from committing crimes. With the UK economy still struggling, not only is it essential to find ways to reduce crimes, but it is also essential to try and stabilise the economy for the future. What is really worrying in these times is that many people lack the appropriate skills needed to work in a team, communicate and invest their money and their ideas. This is, in my belief, a major factor preventing economic growth. The community centre can potentially be a place to address issues regarding employment, training, learning, and social interaction.

There has been several recent studies relating to the youths most likely to commit or attempt suicide, I will refer to the one carried out by Childline, an organisation which promotes the well-being of youngsters. They found that children who were unable to make any friends were the one's at risk of committing or attempting suicide.

Therefore, in my opinion I find it unbelievable that the council is taking away something necessary for youths to live a happy and successful life. I cannot understand why the council do not think about such aspects and the knock-on effect the closure will have to the community.

The closure of the youth centre could potentially have harmful effects both to the youths themselves, and to the social well-being of society.

Thank you for taking the time to read this letter

Yours Faithfully

Leon Onen

Subject: Re: Consultation with affected groups - redevelopment proposals for Honor Oak Community Centre.

Hi Yvonne,

First I want to thank you for the work you are doing in trying to save Honor Oak Community Centre. The long hours spent in meetings and diligent effort in addressing issues all in favour of the community is invaluable.

Our church, Living Water Christian Centre has written to the Mayor's cabinet when we discovered quite by accident as no one had said anything to us, that the centre was earmarked for possible closure. The reply from the Mayor's office mentioned that he would ensure that officers would take my concerns on board.

We use the centre weekly on some days and periodically on other days as follows:

Sundays: Church service for adults, teenagers and children (between 50 - 80 each Sunday)

Sundays: Sunday Club for children aged 5 - 11

Sundays: Youth alpha Course for 12 - 17 year olds

Wednesday - Food Service for the poor in the community and wider residents of Lewisham.

Thursday: Worship Team

Apart from the above, there are other outreaches we run and also training course at other sites due to unavailability of HOCC such as Men's Fellowship; Women's Meetings; Bible Studies, Counselling, Pre Marital Counselling Course for those engaged or hoping to be engaged. All of these are free to the public.

We are in the process of forming a dance group (children and adults) and also a wider Arts Ministry which again will be open to all who are interested. Closure of the centre would see all these and more service we offer interrupted. We have seen people come into our church from the community and embrace our teaching thus making a change in their lives and in the lives of others.

After nearly three years of operating our Food Service, we have received letters, cards and countless thank helping residents through a rough patch of their lives whether due to joblessness, benefit cut, family breakdown or one of five other reasons for their hardship. Since January this year alone to 16th September we have distributed over 6.5 tons of perishable food and given away 7,167 items of non perishable food over the same period. We have formed trusting relationships with members of the community. One of our

Food Service customer admitted to me that if it wasn't for the Food Service he would be stealing to make ends meet.

LWCC is at the heart of the community at Honor Oak. The recent murder of a 17 year old has brought us into a positive relationship with members of the family whom we did not know before this tragedy. We have assisted and contributed to their nine night function and The mother has asked Pastor David to assist in and take part in the funeral service. We are concerned for people and demonstrate this through practical love not just words. He has already been approached by people in the community to see what can be done to prevent this from happening again.

A new build of 57 new homes with 8 car parking spaces and a smaller hall for community use is not only inadequate to accommodate the current services offered by both the Youth Centre and User groups at the Community Centre, but also create problems in terms of the centre which is used for funerals and also wedding receptions. It would just not be able to sustain the demand currently placed on the Community Centre. There is no guarantee that our church would be there and even be able to accommodate our current services let alone the additional services we want to offer.

Our work as we see it is only just beginning. Whether we are able to remain at the heart of the community will depend on the Mayors decision in November this year. We hope that everything on Turnham Road remains as it is which is the desired outcome of the residents expressed in the public consultation held earlier this month to is of course hangs

Pastor David Brown

LWCC

**Subject:** Venue booking

Hi there,

We would be interested in booking the main hall at Honor Oak from Tuesday from 10:30-12:00 to deliver a MEND Mums programme – please see attached for information about the services we are commissioned to deliver across Lewisham.

Can you confirm if you have availability at that time and if so what the hire cost will be?

We would like to make a block booking from w/c 5<sup>th</sup> October for 10 weeks (excluding half term).

Look forward to hearing back from you.

Kind regards,

Julia

**Subject: Re: User Group Stats**

Dear Yvonne

I am sorry I have not responded before. Please find attached my Completed consultation template.

'I am saddened at the proposal to close the Community Centre. it is such a vital hub in the community. It is a large enough space for all kinds of lifetime celebrations and is actively used as such.

I believe it is also important to maintain it for generations to come.

The Over 55s Thursday Club which started at the beginning of 2014 has been Steadily growing with people returning who used the Centre many years ago.

There is such an incredible air of vitality when members of the community gather together in a safe, warm, welcoming and known environment'

Regards

Christina



**Subject:** criminal justice course

Dear sir or Madame

I am the CEO of a charity that helps prisoners resettle back into the community and helps them stop reoffending.

We also presently run a course that helps people get training to work in the criminal justice system. We have run this course since 2004 and made quite a good impact in the west mids.

On the last course there were 2 participants from south east London, who came each of the 8 sessions of the course, so they could start the type of work we do in Birmingham in London. With this in mind we are looking for a venue in your area to run the course which runs once a week for 8 weeks. We are a registered charity and are asking a donation of the use of your building (3 hours a week for 8 weeks) to make a difference in your community. Please see our web site for background info; [prisonlink.org.uk](http://prisonlink.org.uk)

Please let me know how we could move forward with this.

Ricky Dehaney

CEO

Subject: Fwd: Honor Oak Community Centre

Hi Rumbi,

Here's the email from Cllr Joan Millbank I mentioned..

It looks like she didn't read my original email properly because I said that I knew the council proposed to include some sort of community centre in the new development and I wasn't given incorrect information by HOCA.

I was thinking it would be good to get the email addresses of everyone who is concerned about the proposal so we can keep each other up to date with any news.

See you at the meeting tomorrow!

All the best,

Suzy

Subject: RE: Honor Oak Community Centre

Dear Ms Moxhay

Thank you for your email.

I note that my two colleagues have already replied to your email. They have said much of what I would have said so I will not repeat it.

I can appreciate why you are worried; you are no doubt responding to information being circulated by the trustees of the Honor Oak Community Association which runs the Centre on behalf of the Council telling residents that the current building is being demolished and replaced by housing only. This is untrue; the Association **knows** that new youth and community facilities will be provided. I don't know why they choice to only tell residents part of the proposal but it has not been very helpful. If you are able to come to their public meeting on September 4<sup>th</sup> perhaps you could ask them?

Please be advised there are no plans to close the Adventure Playground that your councillors are aware of. The Council is becoming increasingly hard pressed financially because of the Conservative government's attack of public authorities and public finances but here in Lewisham services for our children and young people remain a priority.

I have to say that I am a little bemused – and shocked - that as a Labour voter you are objecting to more housing. There's a massive housing crisis in London. People need decent quality, affordable, secure homes. That's what I have and I assume you have too. Others need the same.

Finally I can appreciate that building work will cause you some disturbance but it will be temporary inconvenience, and one which other residents have had over the years as new blocks like Edgehill Lodge have been built.

I do hope that we have been able to reassure you and I look forward to meeting you on September 4<sup>th</sup>.

Yours

Cllr Joan Millbank

Cabinet Member for the Third Sector and Community

**Subject:** Honor Oak Community Centre

Dear Ms Millbank,

Are you the right person to contact regarding the potential loss of the much valued Honor Oak Community Centre?

I was shocked and angered when I found out from my neighbour (no word from the council) about plans to replace Honor Oak Community Centre with social housing.

The Community Centre is directly opposite my flat on Turnham Road and so I am aware of just how valued and well used it is. It really is at the heart of our community. Turnham Road is a bit of an in-between place- it is not very near the centre of Brockley and it is away from the centre of Crofton Park.

Having the Community Centre there provides a central point to make those that live in the area connect with one another and feel like they are part of a community.

It is used all the time for various clubs- especially for young people, and many social events including wedding receptions and wakes. It is also much valued as a centre for religious events- I love hearing the Gospel singing on Sundays.

I have lived in other areas with community centres which are not so well used but this is certainly not the case with Honor Oak Community Centre.

Turnham Road is a very long road which is mainly residential/ social housing. There are a lot of young people with not much to do living here and the Community Centre is invaluable in giving them somewhere to go and clubs to join. If they do not have this I am sure it will lead to an increase in antisocial behaviour. I hear that the children's playground and youth club are also under threat which will make the situation even worse. There are many people living here with young families who use those facilities all the time.

Myself and all my neighbours are really anxious, angry and worried about these proposals and want to do everything in our power to save our Community Centre. What can we do to stop this?

I am very disappointed having voted for Labour to find that our local community amenities could just be wiped out like this. It makes me wonder why I voted for Labour at all. Aren't Labour supposed to value community amenities?

My neighbour told me that there is a plan to include some sort of community centre integrated into the new development but this is no good. To be used as it has for these sort of events and gatherings it needs to be a dedicated hall as it is now. A space in a residential development is not the same thing at all.

My other worry is about the building work. My bedroom window is directly opposite the community centre as is my flatmates'. We both work 12hour nightshifts from 7pm-7am. It will be absolute hell for us if there is such extended building work going on directly opposite us during the day when we need to sleep.

Please reply and let us know what we can do to oppose this plan. Everyone I have spoken to down Turnham Road is very angry about it.

Regards,

Suzanne Moxhay

Day	Group/ user	Type of session/ activity	Number of users/ attendees	Types of users	Session fees/ charges	Additional requirements/ user restrictions
Monday 10-30-11.30	Little Darlings	A group of local Childminders and children for play	No feedback received –  Approx 4 adults and 12 children	Adults and children  0 - 5		
Monday, 5.30 – 7.30	Parents as Partners	Group work programme of 16 weekly sessions, involving exercises, video, discussion	5 couples (10 people) plus children	Parents with communication and relationship difficulties	Free to users (funded through the Directorate of Work & Pensions)	We provide refreshments and childcare, so need access to a kitchen area and a room large enough for a crèche. For two of the sessions we separate the group by gender, so also need a second meeting room.
Tuesday 10:30-12:00	MEND	MEND Mums programme	10 weeks commencing 5 Oct 2015		No charge	
Tuesday 10.30 – 13.00	All in one	Children's group – soft play, gardening	No feedback received –  Approx 30 – 40	0 – 5 years		

			attendees			
Tuesday 6.30 pm	Slimming World	Weight loss /nutrition	No feedback received – however over 40 attendees			
Wednesday 10.30 – 11.30	Mini Drama	Teaching drama	No feedback received –	0- 5 years		
Monday 10-30-11.30	Little Darlings	A group of local Childminders and children for play	No feedback received –  Approx 4 adults and 12 children	Adults and children  0 - 5		
Weds 8-9	Honor Oak ladies badminton	Badminton	Usually 8-10 ladies turn up (usually depending on if they can get a babysitter) – the membership is 14. For most members this is the only sport they play	Ladies aged between 23 and 55 - when people drop out we advertise on the brockley blog for potential new members	£6 a month	We use the badminton nets supplied by the centre. There is a shortage of available courts in the area and many new members have been looking for somewhere to play for some time

Wednesday	( Honor Oak Badminton Society) Badminton	Badminton Social	players 4 - 8  ocasionally more	mixed group age/gender/ethnicity	£5.00including shuttles	Intermediate ability  No beginners
Wednesday 6pm – 9pm	LWCC Food Service	Food Bank	Between 25 to 40 users each week	age 18 to 60+ yrs mixed gender/ethnicity	No charge	Some limited mobility users Food Service for the poor in the community and wider residents of Lewisham. Referrals MIND
Thursday 10-30-11.30	Little Darlings -	A group of local childminders and children for play	No feedback received –	Adults and children  0 - 5		
Thursday 6- 7pm  7.30 – 8.30 pm	Yummi Yogi's	Yoga & Meditation classes	25	Children: 6-16 years old  Adults: 17 years +	£6 for Adults per session  £3 for Children per session	Some limited mobility users
Thursday	60 Up C.I.C. in partnership with HOCA	Social Group for the prevention of social isolation	37 Service users  Approx 12 per week.	Older people(over 55s)	£1 per session	Some with mobility issues
Thursday	Digital	Assisted digital	Re -starting with new facilitator on	Over 55s	No charge	



	Discovery	support	8 October 2015			
Thursday 6pm – 7pm	Martial Arts	Taekwondo	No feedback received – however well attended approx 20 users	Young people		
Thursday 7.30	Prison Link	Criminal justice course	8 weeks course from 8 October		No charge	
Alternative Thursday 7.30 – 9PM	LWCC Choir Practice		Up to 10 people		No charge	
Friday 10.00-11.30	Chatterbox - toddlers 'n parents group	Play and learn	No feedback received –	A group of local mums, dads and carers who meet with 0-5yr old children	No charge	
First Friday of the month	Potters House	Gospel social event	No feedback received –			
First Saturday of the month 9.00 – 10 am	Chatterbox Dad's	Play and learn	No feedback received –	A group of local, dads and carers who meet with 0-5yr old children	No charge	
Sunday 10-2pm	LWCC Church	Sunday service, Sunday club (5-11), youth alpha	50 - 80	0-60 +	No charge	

		course (12-17)				
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**Officer Comments:**

A number of responses refer to the closure of the Honor Oak community centre and youth centre. It is clear that the council's intentions have not been accurately communicated as at no time has the closure of the community centre and youth centre been proposed. The proposal is to redevelop the site and to build new youth and community facilities.

The size of any new youth and community centre will be the subject of detailed feasibility and design work. The information given so far is only a rough indication of what could be possible and will change subject to further consultation.

There is no intention to exclude residents from consultation in relation to future housing development. Consultation with residents is planned.

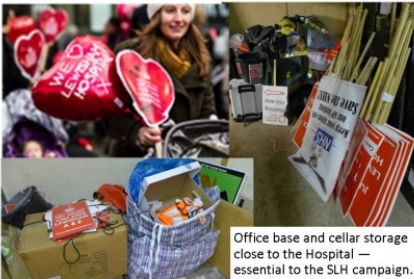
The council adopted an asset transfer framework in 2008 which was updated in July 2015. It lays out how the council considers proposals for community asset transfers. One of the key considerations at the beginning of that process is whether the asset is required for another priority use. In this case the proposal is that the site is required to be redeveloped for housing with the reprovision of community facilities and the asset would therefore not be available for a transfer.

# Saville Community Centre

## The Saville Centre, 436 Lewisham High Street—a highly visible and accessible community asset



The Saville Centre (and LPF) played an essential role in the Save Lewisham Hospital Campaign (and one which will be needed again). It was a drop off point for huge print deliveries and collecting point for leafleters. Above top right are the PLUS clients decorating display letters for a rally, and the "Sholley" march to the hospital (with Heidi Alexander) and "Buggy Army" that went to Westminster 14 February 2013 made their preparations and set out from here.



Office base and cellar storage close to the Hospital—essential to the SLH campaign.

The Saville is light and airy and a pleasure to work in. Right: sponsors and volunteers stuff 600 "Information Bags" for the annual Pensioners Day. Below: teams work on the bi-monthly mail-out to LPF members and over 150 community groups and LBL sheltered schemes.



The "Monday Project" has just been started up with significant legacy funding from an EU grant and a small contribution from the Rushey Green Assembly that was used to bring WiFi to the Saville Centre. Ukuleles, singing, knitting, the newly popular adult colouring and a "digital surgery" with potential for more work being developed with MyCompleteFocus, Community Connections and others to address the issues of digital exclusion among the elderly in a low-key and acceptable way.



Regular use by social groups and others



A traditional bingo session and the Saville Knitters have a giggle.



Volunteers in the kitchen.

Book sales held as fundraisers—assistance from Police Cadets and enjoyed by all ages.



Sorting for the book sale in the week before and the buzz of activity on the day itself.



The Saville garden in use for the bric a brac and toy stall, and the police cadets who are regular helpers.



Tea and fancy cakes make the book sales a nice day out—and at one the SLH campaign had a tiny table to collect signatures to the current petition.



Information hub: people call in off the main street to look at the leaflets and passers by study the windows.



One-off events—left a small group gossiping at the NPC Dignity Day, below a Hustings (with purpose-made bunting) and right a couple of volunteer parties, one with a student harpist recruited from Trinity.







Lewisham Pensioners Forum Fundraiser  
**Big Book Sale** 

With the generous and practical support of  
**Harradines** South London based removals & storage for over 40 years 020 3124 1811 

**Free Entry** Hardbacks: (mostly) 50p to £2  
 Paperbacks: 25p or five for £1


**Sunday 6 July - 11 to 3**  
**The Saville Centre**

436 Lewisham High Street, SE13 6LJ  
 (a couple of blocks south of the hospital—street parking on Sunday and on lots of bus routes from Catford or Lewisham)

**Come browse, come buy—a huge range of books sorted for easy searching...**

Fiction A-Z / Biography / History / Cookery / Self-Help  
 Science / Literature / Childcare / Sport / Politics / Economics  
 Travel / Memoirs / Film & TV / Music / Children's / etc., etc.

We plan to keep adding fresh stock during the day so please "bring" as well as "buy"

 Also: "pop-up cafe" with tea, coffee, squash and cake, plus toys, puzzles and bric-a-brac

For more information and to arrange collection if you have books to donate please phone 020 8690 7869

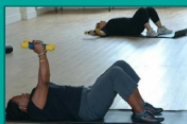


Older People's Information Network Directory for Lewisham—Second Edition 2014



The Positive Ageing Council  
 London Borough of Lewisham 

 Lewisham Pensioners Forum



A Partnership Project in Action—Weekly Digital Inclusion sessions at the Saville made possible with funding to install Wi-Fi from the Rushey Green Assembly

Voluntary Sector Accommodation - Response to consultation

As part of the further consultation on proposed closures and redevelopments of community centres, we would like to include information on current centre activities and users, along with your response in the report back to Safer Stronger Select Committee and Mayor and Cabinet.

**Community Centre: \_The Saville Centre – Lewisham Pensioners Forum**

Day	Group/ user	Type of session/ activity	Number of users/ attendees	Types of users	Session fees/ charges	Additional requirements/ user restrictions
<i>Example: Monday</i>	<i>Dance ltd</i>	<i>Line dancing class</i>	<i>15</i>	<i>Older people (aged 50+)</i>	<i>£5 per session</i>	<i>Some limited mobility users</i>
Monday Weekly	LPF	Monday Project - Varied: Ukelele, Singing, Art, Digital Exclusion "buddy" sessions, Knit and Knatter	Up to 30	People 55+	£1.00 am £1.00 pm	Former Saville Club lunch group members attending and arriving by Dial-a-ride, plus others
Tuesday Bi-monthly	LPF	Volunteers supporting the work of LPF – mail out and stuffing etc	Up to 10 –	People 55+		
Tuesday Bi Monthly	LPF Executive Trustees	Strategic and Governance of LPF	Up to 15	People 55+		
Tuesday or Wednesday Bi Monthly	LPF "Save Our NHS" Campaign Group meetings	Open to all older people – Information/ discussion and campaign on NHS and other health issues	Up to 30	People 55+	Attendees make a voluntary contribution of approx £1 to mailing costs, etc.	
Tuesday Occasionally – about twice a year when Civic	Pensioners Action Group	Interest and campaign group able to target issues of concern	Up to 60	People 55+		Majority BME membership LPF provides low level support to PAG with room hire and copying

## Voluntary Sector Accommodation - Response to consultation

- The Saville Centre has and will continue to support a range of partnership projects open to ALL older people in Lewisham, including:
  - What do you need to know about Will Writing – with Co-op Funeralcare
  - Understanding ‘Digital’ with a POP Up Techy Tea with Community Connections and MyCompleteFocus funded by the Positive Ageing Council
  - Liberteas – Marking 800 years of the Magna Carta as part of the Parliamentary Outreach Project
  - London Borough of Lewisham to consult with on the proposed changes to charging for adult social care
  - **‘Our Healthier South East London’, Presentation by the Chair and Chief Officer of the CCG on an ‘Issues Paper’** which sets out a range of challenges faced by the NHS in south east London.
  - **Save Lewisham Hospital Campaign – The Saville Centre and its facilities played an integral role in the day to day operations of the campaign to save Lewisham Hospital enabling the community and users of the building to get involved and have a voice (See Appendix 1)**
- **Making Good Use** of the Saville Centre - LPF fully accepts that the Council wants to ensure better use of its buildings. However, LPF feels strongly that a failure in recent years to make full use of the office space and hall will negatively impact on financial assumptions about income generation. There have been regular and constant enquiries to rent both office space and the hall and all have been signposted to the Council. For whatever reason the potential of the Saville has in recent years been untapped. LPF has supplied the Council with information to support this.
- Existing User Groups want to be a part of a community solution so that their members will, with their help, continue to be active members of Lewisham’s community. (See Appendix 2 Saville Centre In Use)

Dear Liz Dart

We are sorry that this email comes after the deadline for responses but we have only just become aware that the Saville Centre, which houses the offices of the Lewisham Pensioners Forum, may be under threat of closure.

We're deeply concerned for two main reasons.

The Saville Centre offers central and safe premises for the Lewisham Pensioners Forum. As a health campaign we are only too aware of the importance of such a secure and accessible place for older citizens to meet, discuss, find empowerment and a voice, all of which takes place in abundance at the Savile Centre. The contribution to the health and wellbeing of these Lewisham citizens is considerable.

Secondly, the Lewisham Pensioners Forum has provided assistance and facilities to our campaign which, together with the Council, fought successfully to keep Lewisham Hospital open. The Forum continues to be of assistance in many ways, particularly in terms of storage space, in our ongoing work to protect health services more broadly within the borough. The Pensioners Forum of course also have a very active and very intellectually engaged group working on the NHS,

For all of these reasons, we urge you not to close the Savile Centre.

With best wishes

Dr Louise Irvine  
Chair, Save Lewisham Hospital Campaign

Olivia O'Sullivan  
Secretary, Save Lewisham Hospital Campaign  
07956 590773



## Artful Dodgers' Response To The Proposed Closure Of The Saville Centre

30th September 2015

In 1998 the cardiac rehabilitation nurses at Lewisham Hospital set up a support group for people with various heart conditions. They named this group "The Artful Dodgers".

In about 2008 funding was withdrawn from the nurses and the Primary Care Trust took over the running of the group. This change resulted in a drop in attendance at our meetings.

Lewisham Hospital then increased the fees for the meeting room and the PCT moved our meetings to Lewisham Library. This resulted in another drop in attendance numbers.

After deciding that Lewisham Library did not meet our needs, the PCT then moved our meetings to the Saville Centre. Again, this move resulted in a drop in attendance numbers.

In 2011 the PCT'S support was withdrawn as a result of NHS reorganisation and the Artful Dodgers have been self-supporting since then. In accordance with British Heart Foundation guidelines, attendees are not expected to pay anything at their thereafter a voluntary donation of £3 is suggested. This helps the group to be more inclusive.

The group was very successful in helping me come to terms with my heart disease and combating my depression.

Various investigations have shown the effectiveness of support groups.

The Artful Dodgers do not receive any financial support other than voluntary donations and broke even, financially, over the past year.

It has been suggested that the Saville Centre will close. From past experience it is clear that a change in venue will result initially in a drop in attendance numbers.

It has been suggested that the group could move to tthe St Laurence Centre. This would result in an increase in rental cost from £29 to £50 per meeting. This increase in costs plus the decrease in attendees would be likely to result in the end of the group.

Another suggestion is that the group could move to Lewisham Irish Centre. Unfortunately this venue is not available at times convenient to the group.

It has also been suggested that the Artful Dodgers could move to the Leemore Centre. This is 200-300 metres walk from the nearest bus stops. This is largely uphill. On arrival at the Leemore Centre there are 7 steps or a steep ramp and then a door which is too heavy for most of our members to open. These access difficulties make this venue inappropriate for a group of people with heart problems.

The conclusion is that under the current circumstances the closure of the Saville Centre is likely to lead to the end of Lewisham's heart support group.

As part of the further consultation on proposed closures and redevelopments of community centres, we would like to include information on current centre activities and users, along with your response in the report back to Safer Stronger Select Committee and Mayor and Cabinet.

Community Centre:     Saville Centre    

Day	Group/ user	Type of session/ activity	Number of users/ attendees	Types of users	Session fees/ charges	Additional requirements/ user restrictions
<i>Example: Monday</i>	<i>Dance ltd</i>	<i>Line dancing class</i>	<i>15</i>	<i>Older people (aged 50+)</i>	<i>£5 per session</i>	<i>Some limited mobility users</i>
Tuesday	Artful Dodgers	Heart support group	10-20	Heart patients	Voluntary donation - £3 suggested	Some limited mobility users and limited vision users

Community Centre:     The Saville Centre    

Day	Group/ user	Type of session/ activity	Number of users/ attendees	Types of users	Session fees/ charges	Additional requirements/ user restrictions
<i>Example: Monday</i>	<i>Dance ltd</i>	<i>Line dancing class</i>	<i>15</i>	<i>Older people (aged 50+)</i>	<i>£5 per session</i>	<i>Some limited mobility users</i>
Monday	Iqra somali health and equational development	Information and Advice centre	5	Adults 18+	Free	
Tuesday	Iqra somali health and equational development	Information and advice centre	5	Adult (18+)	Free	

Saturday	Iqra somali health and equational development	Supplementary school	20	Young people (aged 5-16)	Free	
Sunday	Iqra somali health and equational development	Supplementary school	20	Young people (aged 5-16)	Free	

Our organisation aims to provide information and advice to disadvantaged Somali people residing in the Borough of Lewisham particularly struggling with poverty due to factors such as language barriers and cultural difference. In our advice centre, we offer information and advice regarding welfare rights, housing rights, utility debt, help with completing forms and translation service.

We also run a supplementary school on weekends whereby we aim to improve children's educational achievement by helping with their school work since most of these children do not have someone in their families to help them with their homework. Also, some of these children are new arrivals in the UK and we teach them main core curriculum subjects including Maths, science and cultural language in order to increase their level of educational attainment. We believe that if we provide children with the right educational support we improve their attainments in school and have the confidence to participate and integrate in society, ultimately preventing to join criminal gangs.

After summarizing our core aims and objectives, we strongly believe that Iqra is contributing to Lewisham Borough immensely by providing services for the Somali community while having a positive impact on young people's lives. We believe the proposed closure and redevelopment will adversely impact the services we provide because the current location of Iqra at Saville centre is an ideal place as it has an excellent transport connection and has great visibility which means that everyone can easily find us. More importantly, our organization has been using the Saville centre for since 2000 and people from the Somali community who live outside of Lewisham come to us for our services and if the Saville centre was to close then a lot people from the Somali community will be struggling with poverty as they will not have access to a culturally appropriate advice service delivered in their own language anywhere within easy travelling distance within and or outside Lewisham.

We strongly hope that you reconsider the proposed closure and redevelopment.

Abdiasis Basaweyne,

On behalf of Iqra trustees

Re: Closure of the Saville centre

We Action Family Centre (formally known as African Family Project) writing to express our support for the Saville centre which we understand is at risk of being closed.

Our organisation provides education, health and wellbeing information and support to families in Lewisham. We work with parents and their children to increase formal skills and develop social and emotional skills. The families we support have many problems including single parent families, low levels of spoken and written English, issues with crowded or unsafe accommodation, problems at school, deprivation due to low income or unemployment and risks from gang, knife and drug crime.

We are about to begin running services at the Saville centre but we only have an assurance that we can use it until April next year. By using the Saville centre we will be able to expand our services. At the moment we provide activities for 25 children on one day a week but because of the Saville centre we will be able to run activities for 75 children on three days of the week. We have a waiting list of families who will immediately be able to benefit from this expansion of our services.

We believe that in deciding what to do with the Saville centre you should take into account the costs that are saved to the council because of the work that community groups such as ours can do. Without our activities our children and young people would have nowhere to go and they would join in the street life that is such a danger to them. Social and personal problems would increase and all these problems will bring an increased financial cost to council services.

Our organisation depends on volunteers and on funding that we raise and the difficulty of finding affordable space for our work is having a big impact on us. We would be very grateful if the Saville Centre stays open beyond April next year. It would enable us to bring long term benefits to some of the most deprived families in Lewisham.

Regards

Jameela Osman

Chair of AFC

**Officer Comments:**

There are a number of alternative premises that could accommodate Saville Centre users including the Irish Centre, the Point community centre, Calabash Day Centre, the St Laurence Centre and the Leemore Community hub. We understand that not all of these premises will be suited to all current users of the Saville Centre but we will provide assistance and information to help groups relocate to other local facilities that may be available and meet their needs.

The council is responsive to all enquiries to rent/ hire out its assets including those relating to the Saville Centre. There are a number reasons why in some instances this may not have resulted in full use of the office space and hall at the Saville Centre. These include not always having the right space and/ or times available for enquirers; some organisations withdrawing their interest for various reasons and the use of the Saville centre being earmarked predominantly for older people's services and activities. Nevertheless, none of these reasons negate the need for the council to rationalise its assets at this time.

## **Scotney Hall Community Centre**

30<sup>th</sup> September 2015

### Scotney Hall – Listed Asset of Community Value

I am writing regarding the management of Scotney Hall. Our charities, Reconcilers Evangelical Ministries and REMEC are the resident occupiers of Scotney Hall since 2000.

Scotney Hall is a community hall situated in the middle of Sharratt Street and fronting the Windslade Estate, off Ilderton Road. Ilderton Road is off the Old Kent Road near the bridge and is North of the borough between Lewisham and Southwark boroughs. Although Old Kent Road is accessible by public transport with a number of buses passing by the end of the road and of course, Sharratt Street and the surrounding area have few facilities close by. The area was once part of the New Cross Gate NDC development which saw Scotney Hall thrive with active community involvement.

Unfortunately in the last three years, Scotney Hall has suffered from neglect, as the hall has been closed by the Council who have not repaired a leaking problem on the roof, which resulted in the flooding of the floor causing damage to the floor.

At a recent Mayor and Councillor meeting, Scotney Hall was listed an asset of community value that was earmarked for development into future housing stock. It was also stated that while plans are in place about the future of Scotney Hall, the Council should consider seriously the role that the community centre has played and continues to play in the community. One of the key roles is the provision of youth, social and educational facilities and it's historic role in combatting crime and anti-social behaviour. This report asks the Council to take into consideration that the Windslade estate relies mainly on Scotney hall as a community provision in a marginalised neighbourhood with few facilities and social provisions.

As the Council has listed Scotney Hall as an asset of community value, REMEC the occupiers of the property since 2000, would like the Council to enable the group to manage the property until final decisions about its future. We believe we should be able to bring it back to a useable state. The Hall has a long history of association with the estate and we believe that the community would benefit greatly if we are able to reinstate it to its full use. the full use of Scotney Hall - which in the past formerly housed many social provisions, from educational centre and youth club to music radio studio, and other provisions for the Windslade community.

Winslade Estate, where Scotney Hall is situated presently housing over 650 households and residents, the removal of a community facility would have a detrimental effect on people's lives. It would reverse the work that has taken place in previous years in partnership with the police, the youths and other community services.



We receive approximately 40 phone enquiries every month about the possible use of the hall. The constant use of the hall strengthens community cohesion which has been threatened since the recent closures. At this moment, we don't know what plans are in place to repair the building. However our occupation and use is affected by the disrepairs. As we have a duty of care to our volunteers and service users, we would like to see the building repaired as soon as possible. Alternatively, as the present occupiers, REMEC would like to ask the council to consider a basic repair of the hall – boiler/ leak/floor to bring it back to use or allow REMEC to carry out these repairs and to be reimbursed later, some part of it through rent.

### **Who uses Scotney Hall?**

REM EDUCATIONAL CENTRE (REMEC), a community voluntary sector group was set up by Reconcilers Evangelical Ministries, REM, in 2006. REMEC has been delivering youth services and activities in the community since 1991. REMEC is in the Winslade estate, off Sharratt Street, SE15 1NR. Situated North of the borough it straddles Lewisham and Southwark boroughs and was part of the New Cross Gate regeneration over a decade ago. REMEC spearheaded the campaign to save the estate's youth club which has had a historic presence spanning over forty years. The opportunity presented to youth by the youth club was pivotal in fighting youth crime and anti-social behaviour on the Estate. Ilderton Road is just off the Old Kent Road seemingly a 'busy' area but the Winslade estate is a fair distance to public amenities, including shops, libraries, recreational facilities etc. The estate has an elderly people's sheltered accommodation People Lewis Silken House next door to Scotney Hall and a day nursery. Apart from a small corner shop, Scotney Hall is the main facility on the estate and has been used by residents of the Winslade and nearby Tustin estates and residents from the surrounding neighbourhood.

### **Services and Activities:**

REMEC support the community, especially services geared towards children and young people.

Our projects have been frequently funded national and local funding bodies including The Big Lottery, BBC Children in Need, Community Chest Fund, NHS Health as well as by voluntary donation of faith groups and individuals.

#### **1. REMEC Saturday School and REMEC After School Homework Club**

Started in year 2000

Before it stopped in 2012, it had helped over five hundred children and young people

Teaching Maths, English, Science and ICT and preparing young people for GCSE and SATS

#### **2. The Homework Club has helped over 600 hundred children and young people, after school,**

teaching Maths, English, Science, and ICT and preparing young people for GCSE and SATS.

This project is still on-going helping children of the poor and the marginalised, majority of them Lewisham children and young people.

#### **3. REMEC Holiday & Summer Activities –**

This is still on going and has helped over 500 children and young people in North Lewisham since the year 2000. Every holiday, we provide activities that educate, occupy and help the

children and young people to socialise and have fun and live safely together. We have supported local schools as teachers have commented to parents on the progress and attainment of the children who attended the Saturday schools/homework clubs. Past students have successfully gained places in local apprenticeships, colleges and Universities including top ranking Universities.

#### 4. REMEC Youth Club

The REMEC Youth club started in 2006. It has been a great gathering for children and young people in this area of North Lewisham. It provides social, cultural, health and well-being facilities for this youth between the ages of 10 to 18 years. In recent years young people- many whose parents are unable to afford holidays, have relied on this provision especially during the summer period. Some activities have included, health awareness, relationships and sexual health, food and healthy eating, educational outings, museums, places of interest and sporting activities from ices skating to canoeing. REMEC Youth Club has recently engaged in some health awareness initiative sponsored by the Lewisham/Greenwich NHS Trust and REMEC was voted first among over 30 bidding organisations as a service of the highest value, both in its projects and presentation (2014).

Since it started the youth club has helped hundreds of children from the estate and other parts of the borough socialise, extend their education, stay out of crime and develop skills that have led them to further or higher education and enter employment.

We provide in-door and out-door sports & games and the youth club has also provided employment and training for adults in youth-work. Our current youth-worker leader started as a volunteer and has now become a qualified youth worker. She is among several that have gained Youth Work skills/qualification since joining the group.

#### 6. REMEC Online IT centre

REMEC has over 15 computers in its suite which we use to teach computer and information technology to the children and young people in the area. We have also given tailor made computer classes for the elderly, especially those at Lewis Silkin House, near Scotney Hall. We also serve as the only internet café in the whole of the WIndslade and Tustin area.

#### 7. Language classes – including English For Speakers of Other languages classes

In all these years and in all the activities above, REMEC has helped a lot of volunteers who have moved on in life to bigger and better jobs. This is in accordance with the Governments strategy to tackle unemployment and include marginalised groups into society. A recent example being a Polish lady who volunteered with REMEC as a book keeper improved her ESOL skills, completed a course in accounting while volunteering with REMEC and in the summer of 2015 secured a job in a top accountancy firm. Other volunteers went on to complete Teaching /childcare courses taking up work in these fields. Other volunteers now work in public sector, some have gone to university, others have graduated.

8. REMEC Media Training Group (audio, video and radio) We have facilities that are set up to train, not only young people but for everyone in the community to learn about the media, whether it be audio editing, video editing of broadcasting on radio. These are skills that are transferable and can be applied to other areas of work.

### **9. Reconcilers Songwriting Academy**

The aim of our song-writing programme is to train and prepare individuals who have identified music as a gift. Students who undertake this course receive instructions in the following areas.

The theoretical and practical aspects of music (The building blocks of music)

The task of organising musical events

As well as practise writing their own songs

Pre Recording audios and demos

Editing techniques

Access to professional musicians

As well as the learning in the activity, individuals are supported to work together, interact with the whole group, solve problems together, communicate in a number of different ways and develop their confidence and self-esteem. These skills support our service users to increase their social mobility, develop employability skills, thus creating confident, informed and communicative individuals who can actively resolve any problems and issues in order to become contributory members of the community. These activities help break down the sense of loneliness and isolation and create opportunity for interactions that encourages friendliness and community cohesiveness.

### **OTHER ACTIVITIES OF COMMUNITY VALUE (present and potential)**

Previous users of Scotney Hall have all been included

1. 2. Karate Club

3. Windslade Estate Tenants and Residents Association 4. Women and Toddler Group

Mount Carmel Apostolic Church – faith group

5. Community Counselling & Advice

6. Security Certificate Training

7. Training Resources & facilities (generally)

8. Election (Polling Station)

Other regular community activities include

9. Birthday Parties

10. Renting the Kitchen for Caterers or trainers

11. Christening or naming ceremonies

12. Wedding receptions

13. Funeral receptions

14. MP/Councillors surgery

The estate would be at a great loss if it was deprived of the use of Scotney Hall which even geographically stands in a very prominent position at the entrance of the estate. In a neighbourhood which is already marginalised its loss would lead to the loss of social cohesion, increased crime and an increase in anti-social behaviour or even depression.

We feel that the Council would greatly reduce its cost by allowing us to manage this building and we can assure you that we would be able to restore it to its former use and manage it to full capacity.

Kind Regards  
VincentOAOnwukanjo  
Dr Vincent Onwukanjo  
Director, REMEC

## **Sedgehill Community Centre**

Hello Liz

Thank you for meeting with us the other day.

Further to our email sent to you on 1 June 2015, of which a copy can be re forwarded to you, if need be.

We would like to reiterate that we have worked extremely hard with the local community to include not only local residents but also local professionals i.e. Health Visitors, Children's centres, Lewisham Early Years department, Social Services, GP's, Speech & Language, Family Support agencies and schools, to mention a few, to run a reliable, professional and successful breakfast, full day, after school and play scheme facility from Sedgehill community centre for 21 years and would endeavour to continue this for many years to come. We pride ourselves on having built an excellent working relationships with these agencies and being a very reliable tenant to Lewisham Council ourselves.

At present we cater for approximately 100 families per day. These families are either accessing the 2 or 3 year education grant and are studying or working and on whom, the effects of Happy Days having to close for even 1 day would have a completely devastating effect. Indeed, when Sedgehill is not available to us on Polling Day each year, our parents are aggrieved, as they are fully reliant upon us.

The area where the community centre is based is very convenient for all our families as there is ample parking and it is conveniently located for older siblings attend the local surrounding schools.

With the new build in mind we would request that you would seriously consider making provisions for us to be able to continue running our services for the local community.

In view of the scale of the site, we would like to put forward purchasing or leasing a set area, ie existing car park area, for Happy Days or Lewisham council to build. We would be happy to have this conversation with you at your earliest convenience.

On a separate concern, will you please give us reassurance that you will provide us with facilities to continue with our services once Sedgehill is shut down and building works commence.

Please feel free to contact Paul Yiannakou, 2 year grant manager in Lewisham early years dept, as a reference for us.

We look forward to your response

Kind regards

Mrs Julie St Hilaire

Senior Manager

## **Venner Road Community Centre**

### **Voluntary Sector Accommodation Proposal Response by Venner Road Hall Community Association**

Thank you for meeting with the Association's representatives on July 8 and September 18, 2015. We are grateful for the clarifications you have put forward regarding the Council's proposals in connection with the Borough's community centres.

The Venner Road Hall Community Association's Premises Management Committee has consulted widely with the User Groups and community residents and the unanimous feeling is that the halls, at the very least, Venner Road Hall, should still be available for use by the community. Provisions proposed by the council falls short of the needs of the community.

Venner Road hall is widely used by the local community, in providing affordable premises for various elderly groups, residents and community groups, church groups, education, extensive childcare, weekend children's parties and the provision of employment for local residents.

Essentially the premises is not been sold to raise funds for the council. The council is proposing to change its use by marketing it as a nursery. As the council is aware the premises is used mainly as a childcare centre.

At both meetings we asked that if the exercise is purely financial, then the council should indicate the level of income it hopes to realise by marketing the hall as nursery. This is because the PMC and the principal users of the hall would like to propose that they be given the opportunity to continue to use the hall under a leasing arrangement which will give the council the income it desires and more importantly keeping the premises for use by the community.

You agreed at our meeting in July that this was a feasible proposal and that you will get back to us about what income the council will be expecting. As we did not get the information you promised, we raised the issue at the last meeting on 18<sup>th</sup> September 2015. We also asked whether as current users we will be given the first option or whether it will be put to public tender straight away.

We were pleased when both you and Councillor Best confirmed that we will be given the chance to consider an arrangement to pay rent to the council subject to valuation.

In your letter of 28<sup>th</sup> September, you stated that it was taking longer than you anticipated to get the rent valuation. Therefore as you suggested, we are making our initial response to the consultation with in principle proposal of taking on a lease for Venner Road Hall subject to the rent valuation being provided.

Once the figures are available we will be in a better position to make a more meaningful proposal and we welcome the opportunity you have afforded us to update our response before the final report goes to Mayor and Cabinet on 11<sup>th</sup> November.

I look forward to receiving the information about the rent valuation.

Yours sincerely

Tony Mensah  
Chair – Venner Road hall Community Association

## **Wesley Halls Community Centre**

REPORT regarding the Downham (Wesley Halls) Community Centre to be presented to the Mayor and cabinet as part of their community assets review.

Downham (Wesley Halls) Community Centre is one of Lewisham's community assets that have been earmarked for redevelopment or disposal. It would seem that since our space has been included into the development proposal there is a view that some of our current space can be reallocated for the use of community housing, leaving us with less space. We would like to offer our thoughts on the proposal as we understand them.

Our view is that the existing halls should be retained and the housing development should be built adjacent to with an L-shape design fronting onto Bankfoot and Downham Way. Ideally this would be for specialist accommodation housing adults with disabilities or elderly people so that they could use the community space during the day.

1. Downham (Wesley Halls) Community Association is a registered charity number 275373. The association manages and develops the programme at the community centre. It is managed by seven trustees who also liaise and work in partnership with local providers such as the Goldsmiths community association, Ringway Community Association, Adult Learning Lewisham, The Irish Centre, Lewisham Mencap, Lewisham Disability Coalition, London Probation and local primary schools. Unfortunately, despite our suggestions to Phoenix that they work in partnership with us; to-date they have dismissed our offer.
2. Downham is one of the most deprived wards in Lewisham, it has a large proportion of aging population, with higher levels of poverty, lower average incomes, more people living with disabilities and more people with caring responsibilities than most of the rest of the borough as evidenced by the returns of the 2011 census.
3. Over a thousand people attend the centre weekly to partake in activities for their mental and physical wellbeing. That number does not include those who attend the centre for one-off events and social gatherings.
4. The Downham (Wesley Halls) Community Association is generally self-financing supported by a subsidised rent grant from the LBL.
5. There are three large halls within the centre. A sports hall, a hall with a stage and a hall that has direct access to a kitchen. Therefore the premises can be used for wide range of activities and events such as sport, performing arts, crafts, lunch clubs and as function rooms.
6. Phoenix Community Housing state that their vision is "to work together to build a better future for our Phoenix community" therefore they develop services for people who live in their social housing. So far we have had very little contact from Phoenix to discuss what is being proposed. However, we have had experiences where Phoenix ignored our provision and our invites to cooperate with our association, and we have witnessed on two occasions that when Phoenix provide activities they offer them at no cost to Phoenix residents whilst non-Phoenix local people have to pay. Our association works with all local people for the benefit of all members of the local community to improve people's lives – rather than just for the benefit to people from within a particular housing association. We recognise the needs of everyone within our local community and work in partnership with other local providers.

7. Area 3 of Lewisham has no council led youth service provision. At our community centre we have an extensive programme for young people.
8. Downham (Wesley Halls) Community Centre is an intrinsic part of the Downham Estate and is a local landmark. It is an attractive and distinctive building that was built in 1929-30 at the same time as the estate. It was originally built as a Wesleyan Church and during the 2<sup>nd</sup> world war it served as a mortuary. After the war the Wesleyan Church joined with the United Church and they did not require the building anymore therefore they sold the site to the Greater London Council.
9. When the GLC was abolished the building was transferred to Lewisham Council. Lewisham Council wanted to demolish the church to make way for housing but local people proved that there were as many empty houses within the locality as the Council were proposing to build. Cllr Norman Smith and Cllr Tom Bradley led a campaign to develop the church into a community centre. The Inner London Education Authority invested financially in the building thus enabling it to be used for the current purposes. In 1978 the church started to be used by the Lewisham Youth Service who established a boys club. Many developments followed throughout the following years and it is now a thriving community centre for local people regardless of their faiths, gender, sexuality, ethnicity, ages and social standing.
10. The association meets all of Lewisham's core sustainability strategy principles.
11. The building is fit for purpose and has full disability access. It is secure, with secure door entry and CCTV. The external grounds are fenced off from the road thus providing a secure environment for children and vulnerable adults.
12. By being located centrally it enables local people to walk, cycle or travel by public transport to the centre.
13. We ensure an effective protection of the environment (solar panels, various electrical devices to reduce the energy costs)
14. We endeavour to maintain a stable level of economic growth and employment. We employ one full-time worker and four part-time workers.
15. The Centre is open seven days a week and up to 13 hours a day. From time-to-time we also hold all-night sittings, which is an awareness campaign for young people organised by SHELTER to fundraise for homeless people.
16. The function rooms are let out with self-catering facilities thus minimising the cost of hire for local people.
17. There are no other local centres or halls that can accommodate large events at a cost affordable to Downham families. Our halls are available for hire as function rooms and they are regularly used by local people for wedding receptions, funeral wakes, children's parties, exhibitions, training seminars, traveller's forums and faith gatherings.
18. The fact that there are three halls of varying sizes means we are able to offer a varied programme of activities (not available elsewhere) for people's physical and mental well-being.
19. We are currently working on a business plan to establish a Community-Heart provision for people with disabilities called Wider Horizons. This will commence in December 2015.
20. As requested we attach a timetable of regular activities within our centre. This timetable, does not, however, take account of one-off lettings for private functions such as wedding receptions, funeral wakes, children's parties, exhibitions, pantomimes, training seminars and faith gatherings and graduations.
21. We have no objection to Phoenix housing being built on the land behind our Centre and between the large hall and Downham Way but would argue strongly that the loss of the existing buildings and its grounds would be detrimental to the local area and its people.

Lastly, can you please let us have answers to the following questions?



Questions:

- a. How would the local council benefit by redeveloping what the community association has already in place?
- b. How would the local people benefit by the centre being rebuilt?
- c. What studies and costings have to date been undertaken?
- d. When was the decision taken that the land should be taken over by Phoenix?
- e. Currently the land and the building belong to all Lewisham people – what would the benefit be for transferring its assets to Phoenix (a private organisation) whose sole purpose is to manage and develop provision for social housing.
- f. If it is not broken why fix it?

Kristina Green

Chair of the Management Committee

### Downham (Wesley Halls) Community Centre regular programme

Day	Group/ user	Type of session/activity	# of users/ attendees	Types of users	Session fees/ charges	Notes
Monday	ALL Yoga	Fitness/Education	10	Mainstream	£ 40.00	
	London Probation	Payback to Community	3	Adults and Young People	£ -	
	Parent & Toddler Group	Learn through play	24	Parents/Carers with Young People	£ 9.00	
	Wider Horizons	Community Hub	25	PWLD	tbd	Start Dec 2015
Tuesday	ALL Dance Experience - PWLD	Education	12	PWLD	£ 40.00	
	ALL Parent and Toddler Yoga	Education	14	Parents/Carers with Young People	£ 40.00	
	ALL Personal skills - Sports Fitness - PWLD	Education	13	PWLD	£ 40.00	
	Cooper School of Dance	Education	50	Children	£ 79.56	
	Millinery	Education	9	Seniors	£ 8.46	
	Shekinah House of Praise Ministry	Faith worship	63	Mainstream + Young People	£ 36.25	
	Tai Kwan Do	Fitness/Education	23	Adults	£ 29.38	
	Wider Horizons	Community Hub	25	PWLD	tbd	Start Dec 2015

Wednesday	ALL Performance - Music of the World - PWLD	Education	13	PWLD	£ 40.00	
	ALL Performance arts - Drumming workshop - PWLD	Education	15	PWLD	£ 40.00	
	ALL Personal skills - Music - PWLD (High Dependency)	Education	12	PWLD (High Dependency)	£ 40.00	
	ALL Pilates - Intermediate	Education	19	Adults	£ 30.00	
	Cheerleading	Fitness/Education	35	Young People	£ 40.00	
	Martial Arts	Fitness/Education	25	Adults and Young People	£ 17.63	
	Youth Soccer	Fitness/Education	12	Young People	£ 26.00	
	Wider Horizons	Community Hub	25	PWLD	TBA	Start Dec 2015
Thursday	ALL Creative 3D toys	Education	10	Young People	£ 40.00	
	ALL Painting & Drawing - PWLD	Education	16	PWLD (Mental Health)	£ 40.00	
	ALL Personal skills - Shortmat Bowls - PWLD	Education	15	PWLD	£ 40.00	
	Cheerleading	Fitness/Education	37	Young People	£ 40.00	
	Elderly Health Group	Fitness/Education	9	Seniors	£ 9.50	
	Lewisham Disability Coalition Advice & Support Group	Welfare Advice	11	Disabled	£ 45.00	

	London Probation	Payback to Community	13	Adults and Young People	£ -	
	Martial Arts	Fitness/Education	35	Young People	£ 23.50	
	Parent & Toddler Group	Learn through play	22	Parents/Carers with Young People	£ 9.00	
	Wider Horizons	Community Hub	25	PWLD	tbd	Start Dec 2015
Friday	Welcome Lunch Club - pool, darts and board games	Social Gathering	39	Mainstream + PWLD	£ -	
	Table Sale/Market	Community Activity	tbd	All	tbd	Start Oct 2015
	Wider Horizons	Community Hub	25	PWLD	tbd	Start Dec 2015
Saturday	7th Day Adventists	Faith worship	92	Mainstream + Young People	£ 112.00	
	Downham Community Choir	Faith worship education	14	Mainstream + Young People	£ 15.00	
	Lewisham Sports Club - PWLD	Fitness/Education	35	PWLD	£ 30.00	
	Phoenix Exercise Class	Fitness/Education	14	Mainstream + Young People	tbd	
	Yoga	Fitness/Education	11	Mainstream + Young People	£ 9.00	
Sunday	7th Day Adventists	Faith worship	117	Mainstream + Young People	£ 42.00	
	Ju Jitsu	Fitness/Education	25	Parents/Carers with Young People	£ 37.50	

Martial Arts	Fitness/Education	29	Parents/Carers with Young People	£ 29.38	
Sacred Africa Church	Faith worship	35	Mainstream + Young People	£ 84.00	
Shekinah House of Praise Ministry	Faith worship	79	Mainstream + Young People	£ 100.00	
Tai Kwan Do	Fitness/Education	25	Mainstream	£ 29.38	

### **Officer Comments:**

By redeveloping the Wesley Halls site, the size of the new community facility could be maximised along with the number of new homes provided. The new facilities and homes can be designed to complement each other and provide a sustainable community focussed development for the long term benefit of local residents.

Only an initial feasibility/capacity study has been conducted which has enabled high level financial appraisal of a number development options.

The decision was made to work with Phoenix Housing as they are a local housing provider with a reputation for working with the community on projects such as these and those identified below.

### **Response from Phoenix Community Housing:**

Phoenix Community Housing provides a range of activities and events for all residents that live in the neighbourhoods where they have housing. Phoenix Community Link Events, which are held three times a year and are open to all residents living in Downham Whitefoot and Bellingham, allowing residents to come together, to identify what the key issues are in the neighbourhoods and establish Community Action Plans. Through Phoenix £100,000 Community Chest funding, organisations and individuals are encouraged to bid to deliver projects that will improve residents lives or the neighbourhoods. Through the Phoenix Job Club and Roots into Work programme over 70 residents were supported. Some of the key residents projects that have been delivered by Phoenix:

Space Invaders – reduced flytipping on vacant site by working with residents to develop these sites into colourful flowerbeds and seating area's.

Summer Fun - These events are held annually in Downham and across the Phoenix area 3 days per week in the School holidays all residents living in the neighbourhoods are invited to attend these.

Phoenix Festival - Over 6,000 residents per year attend this free fun and informative event.

Job Club – held weekly in the Green Man to enable them to gain employment and 300 were provided with training




## Woodpecker Community Centre

Milton Court TRA

### Submission on Woodpecker Community Centre Issue.

Milton Court TRA (MCTRA) on behalf of the Community of Milton Court Estate, wish to make a very strong submission regarding London Borough of Lewisham's proposal to close Woodpecker Community Centre, at 101 Woodpecker Road, London SE14.

Firstly, the community at large are dismayed about the news of the demolition of the Centre an icon of the Estate more than 30 years now. Madam, you're tearing out the heart of the Estate from itself. This is a very deprived community. It beggars' believe that you're demolishing the only Centre for social events/activities - How cruel it would be to the residents in the estate.

		
Woodpecker Community Centre	Disused Pub (abandoned for 20yrs)	5 Desmond Street, SE14 (Unused for 15yrs)
<b>SITE-ONE</b>	<b>SITE-TWO</b>	<b>SITE-THREE</b>
There are three sites in Milton Court Estate, depicted above as (Site1), (Site2) and (Site3). Originally, Lewisham Council was not aware of the abandoned sites(2&3) until MCTRA told them.		
Since Lewisham Council wanted to demolished site(1) for housing; it could be reprieved/spared from closure while sites(2&3) are developed for housing. This is fair and it makes a lot of sense.		

Following from 7 September, 2015 consultation meeting between Lewisham Council Officers, and MCTRA and the Community, we say the criteria(s) employed by the Council were very vague, irrational and subjective without a proper yardstick (threshold) set to prove beyond all reasonable doubt that Woodpecker Community Centre should be closed.

### **1. Lewisham Council Set of Criteria**

The Head of Culture and Community Development, Liz Dart of Lewisham Council set out her criteria for closing the Centre as below:

- (a). Reduction of funding from the Central Government, UK.
- (b). Lewisham Council want spaces to provide affordable homes for the inhabitants in Lewisham. (There are three sites(1,2&3) pictures shown above; leave site(1) and build on sites(2&3))
- (c). Under usage of the Community Centre (no figures of expected usage threshold was ever given to qualify the word "under usage" by Lewisham Council).
- (d). Realized Revenue was very low (again no budgeted amount was mentioned to qualify the "low revenue in take").
- (e). Other amenities within the Estate (in Milton Court Estate, Woodpecker Community Centre is the only accessible Council's or public provided centre and affordable to all deprived people living in this ward).

## **2. MCTRA Cross Examining Lewisham Council Official**

In his inquisition of Liz Dart's consultation and explanations given earlier, the MCTRA Chair politely demanded answers to many questions and follow up questions regarding the Woodpecker Community Centre and the Community wellbeing taken into consideration thus:

**A. When did London Borough of Lewisham decided to closed the Woodpecker Community Centre?** (Liz answer - "in May 2015").

**B. If LBL is short of funds hence, closing Woodpecker Community Centre, Can the MCTRA and Other users takeover the Centre and run it to the benefit of the Milton Court Estate and sundries?** (Liz answer - "No!"). **Why?** (Liz answer - "No! No by shaking off her head with light laughter!").

**C. Can LBL build on both 5 Desmond Street SE14 (abandoned for over 15years) and the Pub opposite the Woodpecker Community Centre (abandoned for 20years) instead of closing the Centre?** (Liz answer - "No! However, LBL Development Manager is aware of the two sites and they are going to take the 'Pub' back from the owner for non-usage as contracted for a long time for re-development").

**D. When did LBL gave occupancy to 5 Desmond Street, SE14 this year (2015)?** (Liz answer - "It was on and about July 2015 it become occupied").

**E. If you know about the closure of Woodpecker Community Centre in May 2015, why did Lewisham Council rented/leased 5 Desmond Street, SE14 in the months of July, after your decision on the Centre's faith?** (Liz answer - "5 Desmond Street, SE14 refurbishment cost a lot of money!").

**F. What are you going to do to the School situated in Woodpecker Community Centre as they have nowhere to go to - Do you think about the disadvantage children wellbeing in the first instant?** (Liz answer - "As a private school or organization, they have to find somewhere else").

**G. Do you know that 5 Desmond Street, SE14 is a storey building which could have housed the said 'School at Woodpecker Community Centre' upstairs while the Community used the Ground floor for their events/activities before you lent it?** (Liz answer - "The Development Manager is looking into the possibility of *5 Desmond Street and the Pub* being developed into affordable housing and the Centre too").

**H. Why do Lewisham Council want to leave the Milton Court Estate over 1000 homes without a public space or a facility to all residents in this troubled Estate?** (Liz answer - "We need more affordable houses in the Borough of Lewisham").

**I. Can the Council build houses without proper public amenities for the residents? There a lot of empty spaces to build on in the park (Fordham)?** (Liz answer - "Not the parks! The day I embark on such exercise my job will be on a chop")

**J. MCTRA can get funding from Europe and other Agencies to upgrade and convert the Centre into a storey building allowing the School to move upstairs while the Ground floor is used by**



**the community activities with full marketing strategy for surplus revenue. Do you agree to this offer to keep the Centre opened?** (Liz answer -"Sorry, No! It has low usage").

**K. What is the threshold figure used by LBL to determine "low usage" ?** (Liz answer - "You said the school does not make other activities possible when in session"). **[With due respect - This answer does not say what constituted "low usage" of Woodpecker Community Centre. The Council and (Liz Dart) based their decisions on subjective opinions rather than factual and objective reasoning.]**

### **3. The Case for Woodpecker Community Centre to be Reprived from Demolition**

After close review of the Lewisham Council's consultation criteria(s) (**see Section 1 (items (a) - (e); page 1 above)**) put to the Milton Court Community on the 7 September, 2015 by Liz Dart (Head of Culture and Community Development Directorate) was revealing and ambiguous. MCTRA cross examination (**see Section 2 (items (A) - (K); page 2&3 above)**) of the Head of Culture and Community Development Directorate, Liz Dart and the replies given thereafter confirmed our fears that decisions to close Woodpecker Community Centre was in a bit of a rush.

The criteria(s) were very simplistic without any historical data or set of thresholds to qualify a success or failure for the Centre to meet/improve their performances over years. No threshold figures for so-called "low usage of the Centre (**see criteria Section 1 item (c); page 1 above)**" was given. MCTRA tried in their cross-examination (**see Section 2 items (K); page 3 above)**" to the Council Officials did not explain or present further evidence to prove that indeed Woodpecker Community Centre is "under used".

It should also, be noted that the Community is not the people running the Centre but, the Lewisham Council. They are the body who make the bookings. There are greater demand for the Woodpecker Community Centre usage, if there is a room during the day time. The Community sort alternative places like "Deptford Green School" and others as far as Peckham, Old Kent Road, Camberwell Green and many such halls for hire to hold their burial activities; due to lack of proper usage/booking planning by the Centre management. Therefore, the fault is the Lewisham Council not the Community. *However, many residents cannot get enough of the Centre usage in the day hence Council's expressed "under used" terminology is not justified to close Woodpecker Community Centre.*

In the same token "revenue in take from the Centre is low" (**see criteria Section 1 item (d); page 1 above)**" purported by the Council was as a result of lower booking by the Centre management and lack of appraisal on targeted marketing acumen. From the MCTRA cross-examination (**see Section 2 item (J); page 2 above)** was in evident that Lewisham Council major aim is to demolish the Centre for housing but, no other suggestion will do. An offer to sort funding from Europe and Grants from other Agencies to keep the Centre viable was rejected. The fact that the ideas to closed all but, just few Community Centre opened in London Borough of Lewisham at first glance without consultation and proper risk assessments say it all. As for Woodpecker Community Centre our position is "Extraordinary" for the fact that this Centre is unique to the Community wellbeing and cohesion (*the only one public free space accessible to all people both fable and strong and affordable in money wise*) proved our case for a reprieve.

**The Woodpecker Community Centre serves the community well based on the pledges and covenant made between Lewisham Council and Senior Citizens to keep the property as Community Centre. This covenant has never been broken for over 30 years by successive Council Officers, Mayors and Cabinets - It should not be the Honourable Liz Dart to force the hands of Mr. Mayor and Cabinet of 2015 to sweep the covenant aside. What a dangerous precedent to set for this new generation and your office to the Community at large.**

The houses to be built would not be social housing. These will be in excess of £400,000 per apartment of one bed room or more which are **neither** built for the homeless **nor** the deprived residents in the Estate, Said MCTRA Vice (Stella). However, **(site2&3; page1 above)** can be developed into housing while leave **(site1)**, the Centre open for the Community use.

MCTRA think there is a need (obligatory) for Lewisham Council to provide their residents of over 7,000 to 10,000 people living in an Estate, a public free space to hold their social events/activities at affordable price. Madam, this will increase safer and stronger community bounds which the Council and Mr. Mayor advocated for in his term in office. We humbly requested that Woodpecker community Centre is considered in a different circumstances; being a more deprived place and problematic compared to all others centre.

An able body person may take less than 10 minutes to walk from Moon Shot to Woodpecker Community Centre, however, Milton Court Estate residents are full of **senior citizens** who are over 80 years and some with mobility problems. Seniors of upper ages cannot walk from Milton Court Estate with their disabilities status to the Moon Shot? Some people may never attempt it at all.

#### **4. Conclusions**

Finally, we have made our submission to Lewisham Council to reconsider Woodpecker Community Centre from closing and demolition. Because, its usage have been hampered by its unavailability to the public for the day time activities. This supposed to be righted if the Council had relocated the school to *5 Desmond Street when in May 2015*, when they were looking into Centre closure in Lewisham. Simple intervention like this could tremendously impacted on the Centre to increase bookings and revenue for the Council. **Whose fault is it?** Certainly, the Community has no hands in it. Now the school has nowhere to go. The pupils are left in state of uncertain future.

As opinions may vary on the reprieve of Woodpecker Community Centre, the reality of the world always dictate good decisions which seem beneficial to everybody and those people coming after us. It could be noted that Moon Shot is outside the Milton Court Estate. This poses danger to those impaired and hard hearing or with sight problems among other disabilities to cross the very busy road to get to Moon shot in the dark for meetings/activities.

The responses to cross examination questions **(see Section 2 (items (A) - (I); page 2 above))** speaks volume. Lewisham Council has tactically blocked all options and remedies to keep Woodpecker Community Centre closed. Even the obligatory precedence to have **assets transfer** of the Centre to the MCTRA (Community and Other Users) was changed by the Lewisham Council prior to Liz Dart consultation with the MCTRA and Other Users on 7 September 2015. This changes was communicated to Justus (MCTRA) after he proposed to Lewisham Council to have the Community run the Centre. Please, think about **Senior Citizens covenant** and helpless school pupils using the Centre. Think about **Community cohesion and public free space accessible to all**. Think about the 7,000 to 10,000 people in an Estate without public amenity if

the Centre is closed. **Think about Voters using the Centre to keep Councillors and Mayors elected.**

More importantly the integrity and fairness of the Council Officers, Councillors and Mr. Mayor and Cabinet deliberating fairly with a plausible verdicts worthy of their good offices and public acceptance.

The first (primary) and (last) duties of people holding public office is to play fair and do not be manipulative of the systems and instruments available to them to do their work. They should not obstruct the progress of the Community, they are put in charge to develop safer and stronger communities. Such Officials should not seek the interest of individuals or cooperation against the community which they are members too.

This is a very sad day, if Woodpecker Community Centre is closed due to unfounded criteria (Section(1)) above. Replies to MCTRA cross examination (Section (2)) above refers have shown that Lewisham Council has made their mind up before the consultation process.

The Community are ever hopeful that Lewisham Council and Mr. Mayor and Cabinet including the Safer and Stronger Community Committee with their infinite wisdoms shall review Woodpecker Community Centre issue carefully with a favourable outcomes. **Keep Woodpecker Community Centre open!**

Your Voters are watching and waiting for the outcome before **they act** because, they do not want to cause no shame/bother to either the Officers, Councillors and Mr. Mayor and Cabinet in protest. The Centre is the only [**life and Soul**] the Council has left in the Estate for the Community use. Responsibility is yours. I thank God. I have done my duty in calm and civilized manner. Therefore, I committed this submission unto your hands for your consideration.

Thank you.

Justus Mugbeh

**MCTRA Chair, London**  
**30 September, 2015**

<b>Private Bookings 2014-15</b>			
<b>Hirer Name</b>	<b>Booking Date</b>	<b>Purpose of Booking</b>	<b>Comment</b>
Adekemi Awotungase	12 April 2014	Cancelled	Booking cancelled by office
Mrs Ufuoma Awarieta	17 May 2014	Memorial Service	
Mrs Vivian Esoko	20 September 2014	Cancelled	email chase for deposit payment 02/06/14. Booking cancelled (16/06/14) as hirer
Tessa Gooding	07 July 2014	Residents Meeting	
Dolly Coker	13 September 2014	80th Birthday	
Nicole Richards	05 October 2014	Birthday Party	
Sade Dairo	15 November 2014	Birthday Party	
Candy Brooks	06 December 2014	Cancelled	booking cancelled by hirer - no refund due as nothing paid
Milton Court TRA	27 November 2014	AGM Milton Court Meeting	
Tina Ngozi Enahoro	21 March 2015	Birthday Party	
Milton Court TRA	13 December 2014	Christmas Party	
Andrew Atkinson	28 February 2015	Birthday Party	
<b>Private Bookings 2015-16</b>			
<b>Hirer Name</b>	<b>Booking Date</b>	<b>Purpose of Booking</b>	<b>Comment</b>
Tina Enahoro	23 March 2015	Birthday Party	
Justus Mugbeh, Milton court TRA	18 May 2015	TRA Meeting	
Mary Adeagbo	15 August 2015	Christening Party	
	Cancelled Bookings		
	Paid Bookings		

**WOODPECKER REGULAR USERS 2014-16**

<b>Centre Name</b>	<b>Name of Organisation/Group</b>	<b>Facility Used</b>	<b>Activity</b>	<b>Contact Name 1</b>	<b>Contact Name 2</b>	<b>Contact Name 2</b>
Woodpecker Community Centre	Christ Above All Gospel Church	Main Hall	Church Group	Ms	Mary	Adeagbo
Woodpecker Community Centre	Kings Kid Christian School	Project Rooms 1 & 2 & Man Hall	Christian School	Ms	Mary	Okenwa
Woodpecker Community Centre	Unity in Our Community	Main Hall	Information & Awareness session	Mr	Emmanuel	Kormi
Woodpecker Community Centre	Lewisham Vietnamese Women & Families Association	Main Hall	Supplementary school	Ms	Phung	Nguyen

**WOODPECKER REGULAR USERS ADDITIONAL 2014-16**

<b>Centre Name</b>	<b>Name of Organistiaon/Group</b>	<b>Date of Booking</b>	<b>Purpose of Booking</b>	<b>Contact Name 1</b>	<b>Contact Name 2</b>	
Woodpecker Community Centre	Kings Kid Christian School	01/08/2014 - 29/08/2015	Summer Playscheme	Ms	Mary	Okenwa
Woodpecker Community Centre	Kings Kid Christian School	Dates to be confirmed	Summer Playscheme	Ms	Mary	Okenwa

**Officer Comments:**

The other sites mentioned will be looked at as part of the feasibility study for new housing on the Milton Court Estate.

The centre is mainly used by a private, fee paying school that caters for twenty pupils. The centre is also used by Christ Above All Gospel Church. In terms of casual hires for events and meetings there were 2 meetings of the TRA, 1 other residents meeting and 6 private hires during the financial year 2014/15 and there have been 3 bookings to date in 2015/16.

In addition to the community centre the council also owns and manages a youth centre located opposite the Woodpecker Community Centre. This building is available for community hire outside of youth club operating hours. There is also St Michaels Community Centre which is 300ft away from the Woodpecker Community Centre that is not owned or operated by Lewisham but which has a wide range of community facilities. In addition the council owns and operates the Moonshot Centre which is close to the Milton Court Estate and only 1 mile from the Woodpecker Community Centre.

The council is not aware of any covenants on the title deeds for the Woodpecker Community Centre.

Consideration is being given to allowing the private school to remain in the centre until the site is needed for development, subject to suitable terms being negotiated.

The council adopted an asset transfer framework in 2008 which was updated in July 2015. It lays out how the council considers proposals for community asset transfers. One of the key considerations at the beginning of that process is whether the asset is required for another priority use. In this case the proposal is that the site is required for housing and the asset would therefore not be available for a transfer.

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## Saville Community Centre

Voluntary Sector Accommodation - Response to consultation

As part of the further consultation on proposed closures and redevelopments of community centres, we would like to include information on current centre activities and users, along with your response in the report back to Safer Stronger Select Committee and Mayor and Cabinet.

Community Centre: The Saville Centre – Lewisham Pensioners Forum

Day	Group/ user	Type of session/ activity	Number of users/ attendees	Types of users	Session fees/ charges	Additional requirements/ user restrictions
<i>Example: Monday</i>	<i>Dance ltd</i>	<i>Line dancing class</i>	<i>15</i>	<i>Older people (aged 50+)</i>	<i>£5 per session</i>	<i>Some limited mobility users</i>
Monday Weekly	LPF	Monday Project - Varied: Ukelele, Singing, Art, Digital Exclusion "buddy" sessions, Knit and Knatter	Up to 30	People 55+	£1.00 am £1.00 pm	Former Saville Club lunch group members attending and arriving by Dial-a-ride, plus others
Tuesday Bi-monthly	LPF	Volunteers supporting the work of LPF – mail out and stuffing etc	Up to 10 –	People 55+		
Tuesday Bi Monthly	LPF Executive Trustees	Strategic and Governance of LPF	Up to 15	People 55+		
Tuesday or Wednesday Bi Monthly	LPF "Save Our NHS" Campaign Group meetings	Open to all older people – Information/ discussion and campaign on NHS and other health issues	Up to 30	People 55+	Attendees make a voluntary contribution of approx £1 to mailing costs, etc.	
Tuesday Occasionally – about twice a year when Civic	Pensioners Action Group	Interest and campaign group able to target issues of concern	Up to 60	People 55+		Majority BME membership LPF provides low level support to PAG with room hire and copying



Voluntary Sector Accommodation - Response to consultation

Suite unavailable (this appears to be becoming a more frequent occurrence)		to Black and Minority Elders because of its membership base				
Thursday Weekly	Saville Lunch Club	Socialising, lunch, bingo	Up to 24	Age range between 70-95		Group for less mobile older people including members relocated from St Andrews and St Laurence Lunch Clubs. Many arrive by Dial a Ride.
Sunday – twice a year 2012-2014 (on hold in 2015)	Forum Fundraising Booksale	Fundraiser for Forum – essential non restricted funds.	Up to 150	Primarily students and 30-40, with a significant number of families with children	Free entry (unlike many other book-sales)	This would be impossible without the use of cellar storage. The book-sales also offer a service to our members who are many of them down-sizing and are pleased to donate, especially as the Forum arranges collection by staff or volunteers.
Mondays to Thursdays	LPF	Open Office	1 to 2 staff and a regular and constant flow of older people dropping in.	50+	Obviously no charge – facilitates sign-posting and can lead to low-level assistance.	The location of the office on a main thoroughfare at ground level with windows where information can be displayed is key to this provision. See one of the comments in Appendix 3
Mondays to Thursdays	General	Open hall with booklet and information stand	Monitored by LPF staff and users groups	All ages	Drop in to review leaflets – and much LBL information	As above

Lewisham Pensioners Forum would also like to register the following:-

- The Saville Centre has a longstanding reputation as a community facility, its central location supported by excellent transport links and good mobility standards means that it has for over 50 years provided an attractive place for older people to come together in a user-friendly environment to enjoy social gatherings, events, activities and public meetings. Utilisation of the Saville Centre has been supported by a variety of voluntary sector groups and volunteers who have a shared vision of furthering the wellbeing and social interests of groups and individuals who share characteristics protected by the Equalities Act 2010.
- The Council has confirmed that The Saville Centre satisfies the definition of an asset of community value because the current use of the building furthers the social the social wellbeing of the social interests of the local community and that it is realistic to think that there can continue to be a main use for the building which will further the social wellbeing or social interests of the local community.
- Application to register the Saville Centre as a Community Asset was approved on July 27th 2015.
- The Saville Centre has for over 50 years provided a welcoming centre of activity for older people and the wider community. A non forum member recently coming into the office to purchase tickets for Pensioners Day told us how she and her husband had celebrated their wedding at the Saville in 1963 – one of the first mixed marriages in the borough.
- The Saville Centre is perfectly located between Lewisham and Catford Town Centres and the Hospital offering a visible window of advertisement for passing pedestrians telling them what is taking place in the Saville and elsewhere. The presence of the LPF office in the front of the building supports and sustains a welcome and informed response to requests for help and advice from older people, enhanced by the handing out of the Directory of Information for Older People, funded by the Positive Ageing Council and used by professionals, individuals, carers and family members. (See Appendix 1)
- The Saville Centre supports Digital Inclusion projects for older people – As part of its digital inclusion work LPF was awarded funding from the 2014/2015 Rushey Green to install WiFi at the Saville Centre and in partnership with the Community Interest Company MyCompleteFocus the building has held weekly tutored and drop in digital sessions for older people supported by a variety of voluntary IT buddies. (See Appendix 1)
- The Saville Centre supports Community Events including the really popular Book Sales where ALL the community are invited to donate and the ALL community are invited to buy – A MUCH LOOKED FORWARD COMMUNITY EVENT (See Appendix 1)

#### Voluntary Sector Accommodation - Response to consultation

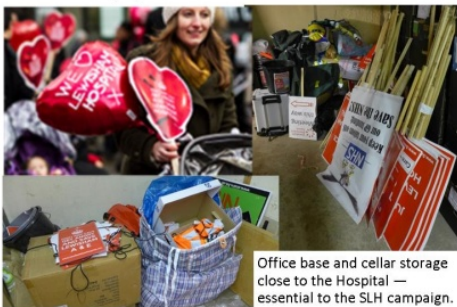
- The Saville Centre has and will continue to support a range of partnership projects open to ALL older people in Lewisham, including:
  - What do you need to know about Will Writing – with Co-op Funeralcare
  - Understanding 'Digital' with a POP Up Techy Tea with Community Connections and MyCompleteFocus funded by the Positive Ageing Council
  - Libertea – Marking 800 years of the Magna Carta as part of the Parliamentary Outreach Project
  - London Borough of Lewisham to consult with on the proposed changes to charging for adult social care
  - 'Our Healthier South East London', Presentation by the Chair and Chief Officer of the CCG on an *'Issues Paper'* which sets out a range of challenges faced by the NHS in south east London.
  - Save Lewisham Hospital Campaign – The Saville Centre and its facilities played an integral role in the day to day operations of the campaign to save Lewisham Hospital enabling the community and users of the building to get involved and have a voice (See Appendix 1)
  
- Making Good Use of the Saville Centre - LPF fully accepts that the Council wants to ensure better use of its buildings. However, LPF feels strongly that a failure in recent years to make full use of the office space and hall will negatively impact on financial assumptions about income generation. There have been regular and constant enquiries to rent both office space and the hall and all have been signposted to the Council. For whatever reason the potential of the Saville has in recent years been untapped. LPF has supplied the Council with information to support this.
  
- Existing User Groups want to be a part of a community solution so that their members will, with their help, continue to be active members of Lewisham's community. (See Appendix 2 Saville Centre In Use)



**The Saville Centre, 436 Lewisham High Street—a highly visible and accessible community asset**



The Saville Centre (and LPF) played an essential role in the Save Lewisham Hospital Campaign (and one which will be needed again). It was a drop off point for huge print deliveries and collecting point for leafleteers. Above top right are the PLUS clients decorating display letters for a rally, and the "Sholley" march to the hospital (with Heidi Alexander) and "Buggy Army" that went to Westminster 14 February 2013 made their preparations and set out from here.



Office base and cellar storage close to the Hospital — essential to the SLH campaign.



Information hub: people call in off the main street to look at the leaflets and passers by study the windows.

The Saville is light and airy and a pleasure to work in. Right: sponsors and volunteers stuff 600 "Information Bags" for the annual Pensioners Day. Below: teams work on the bi-monthly mail-out to LPF members and over 150 community groups and LBL sheltered schemes.



The "Monday Project" has just been started up with significant legacy funding from an EU grant and a small contribution from the Rushey Green Assembly that was used to bring WiFi to the Saville Centre. Ukuleles, singing, knitting, the newly popular adult colouring and a "digital surgery" with potential for more work being developed with MyCompleteFocus, Community Connections and others to address the issues of digital exclusion among the elderly in a low-key and acceptable way.



One-off events—left a small group gossiping at the NPC Dignity Day, below a Hustings (with purpose-made bunting) and right a couple of volunteer parties, one with a student harpist recruited from Trinity.

Regular use by social groups and others



A traditional bingo session and the Saville Knitters have a giggle.



Volunteers in the kitchen.

Book sales held as fundraisers—assistance from Police Cadets and enjoyed by all ages.



Sorting for the book sale in the week before and the buzz of activity on the day itself.



The Saville garden in use for the bric a brac and toy stall, and the police cadets who are regular helpers.



Tea and fancy cakes make the book sales a nice day out—and at one the SLH campaign had a tiny table to collect signatures to the current petition.







Lewisham Pensioners Forum Fundraiser  
**Big Book Sale** 

With the generous and practical support of  
**Harradines** South London based removals & storage for over 40 years 020 3124 1811 

**Free Entry** Hardbacks: (mostly) 50p to £2  
 Paperbacks: 25p or five for £1  
**Sunday 6 July - 11 to 3**  
**The Saville Centre**

436 Lewisham High Street, SE13 6LJ  
 (a couple of blocks south of the hospital—street parking on Sunday and on lots of bus routes from Catford or Lewisham)  
**Come browse, come buy—a huge range**

**of books sorted for easy searching...**  
 Fiction A-Z / Biography / History / Cookery / Self-Help  
 Science / Literature / Childcare / Sport / Politics / Economics  
 Travel / Memoirs / Film & TV / Music / Children's / etc., etc.  
 We plan to keep adding fresh stock during the day so please "bring" as well as "buy"

 Also: "pop-up cafe" with tea, coffee, squash and cake, plus toys, puzzles and bric-a-brac  
 For more information and to arrange collection if you have books to donate please phone 020 8690 7869



**Older People's Information Network Directory for Lewisham—Second Edition 2014**



The Positive Ageing Council  
 London Borough of Lewisham 

 **Lewisham Pensioners Forum**



A Partnership Project in Action—Weekly Digital Inclusion sessions at the Saville made possible with funding to install Wi-Fi from the Rushey Green Assembly

Appendix 3 – The Forum and other users were asked to consider alternatives – the Leemore Centre, the Irish Centre and the St. Laurence Centre.

**A: Contrasting the Saville Centre with the Irish Centre and the Leemore.**

1. It is fantastically easy to reach by bus from all parts of the Borough – buses stop less than 80 yards away coming in one direction or the ones on the other side of the road can be reached via pedestrian refuges, and a little bit further away is the light controlled pedestrian crossing by the hospital. (So better and safer than either of the suggested alternatives.)
2. It is highly visible on a main road so the access “feels” safe – you’re walking in full view of a lot of passers-by. (Again both Leemore and the Irish Centre are situated on side streets.)
3. It has easy disabled access and is all on the ground floor level. (In contrast to the Leemore where currently all users except the daily mental health group are directed up a side entrance, along a narrow path with trip-hazards at ankle height, and then expected to summon an external lift.)
4. Unlike the Leemore, the Saville is small - so that one set of vulnerable users won’t feel threatened or overwhelmed by other clients and noise.
5. Unlike the Irish Centre, there is no barrier or sense of exclusion created by its name, and the unintended message that it is a space for the use of one specific community.
6. The Saville is easier than either the Leemore or Irish Centre to access by car/taxi/dial-a-ride. Simple directions to give (“a couple of blocks south of the hospital”) and user parking right in front of the building. The Leemore is really quite difficult to find (all no right turns, blocked off streets and roads going round right-angles so you lose all sense of direction) and there is no parking outside the Irish Club (one of the Forum staff got an automatic camera-generated ticket for pausing for five minutes to unload heavy speakers for the Black History Month event the Forum put on there last year).

**B. Unsolicited comments from visitors to the Saville Centre, calling into the office in passing**

“Vintage and gorgeous – look at the parquet floor, how marvellous!”

“Just coming from the hospital and walking up to Aldi’s”

Comment on the St. Lawrence Centre “So many other activities going on you feel like you are in a train station.”

**C. We asked the Cardiac Support Group (who have also responded separately) for their views**

St. Lawrence Centre

“out of way”

“other groups meeting”

Leemore Centre

“no-one knows it”

“out of way”

Irish Centre

“Few know it”

“Is it just for Irish?”

PLACE (site of former Ladywell Leisure)

“Will it be permanent?”

“Need access”

“Good position – High Street & Hospital –bus routes”

“But what will facilities be?”

[Forum staff also tried to get to the consultation on the use of the ground floor at PLACE but at first it was not open – no times given in Lewisham Life – and on the second occasion no-one was available for discussion. No response has been received to enquiries submitted via the website. In principle it could be an alternative to the Saville – has many of its advantages – but concern about how long what is there will be in situ. and it would not have the storage that is so crucial to some of the Forum’s activities and, in particular, the support given to the Save Lewisham Hospital Campaign.]

Saville Centre

“Central and accessible – but no convenient road crossing”

“Light and bright”

“Comfortable”

“Disability friendly”

“Suitable toilet & kitchen”

“Close to hospital – for heart patients”

“One large room – no other groups at same time”

“Exclusive – no nuisance from other rooms”

“On main road but quiet”

“Convenient for pick-ups”

“Seating outside in case of early arrival in pleasant grassy surrounds”

“Office of LPF for advice”

Dear Liz

That was a useful meeting this afternoon and it was good to meet people from other organisations, as well as to hear the Council's point of view. As we discussed sending in submissions from voluntary organisations and their members, the following is a copy of an email I recently sent to Cllr Walsh which sets out our position:

**PLUS** is a charity, founded in Lewisham in 1981 to support local adults with learning disabilities. As part of our work we run a drop-in session at the Saville Centre each Friday where people have the chance to maintain contact with friends, stay in touch with our support service and take part in social and creative activities. These sessions are valuable as a means of staying in contact with people with disabilities who do not receive statutory-funded services and also as an alternative social outlet for people who do. This service was previously funded by Lewisham Council as part of our community development work but is now paid for by PLUS out of our reserves.

Over the past three years, the Council has withdrawn all of its £240,000 annual community development funding to us but we have managed to continue to provide a reduced level of service based on the activities that are cheapest to run. We do this by drawing from reserves and by charging some users for attendance. This year, the Council has withdrawn a further £73,000, forcing us to close our Carers' Support Service, which provided valuable support for families in the Borough who are main carers for an adult with a learning disability. I understand your point about the pressures from central government but each step taken to reduce support for the most vulnerable is both an injustice and a step closer to crisis for each individual and their family.

We have a number of concerns about the proposal to close the Saville Centre and transfer activities to other venues, particularly the Lewisham Irish Centre and Leemore.

- One of the main reasons we are able to continue with our Friday drop-ins is the extremely reasonable price for hiring the Saville Centre, for which we pay around £30 a day. We also run a group at the Irish Centre which costs £25 an hour to hire. This is a rate which would be likely to make our Friday sessions non-viable.
- We are concerned at the negative impact of the loss of any community resource in the Borough at a time of population growth
- The loss of the Saville Centre would be damaging for Lewisham Pensioners Forum as it is part of LPF's identity which would be difficult to re-create elsewhere. Many of the people who use our service are of pension age and have good relationships with LPF.
- I doubt whether the Irish Centre has the capacity to take on all the bookings currently at the Saville Centre in addition to its existing commitments. I understand that the Saville Centre is currently in use five days a week.



- The name of the Irish Centre indicates that it is a resource for a particular group, rather than for everyone. This may off-putting for some people.

Best Regards,

**Colin Turnbull**  
**Deputy Chief Executive**



Every Friday



embrace the positive



**DROP-IN**

This group helps me to build relationships.



**Description:**

Come along to the drop in to meet your old friends, make new ones, play games, cards or listen to music in a friendly setting. While you are here, have a cup of tea and light snack. The drop in can also be a place to come if you need simple advice and we can signpost you to other services.

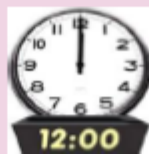
Entrance fee of £3



Start time:



End time:



There are light refreshments available, which you will need to bring some money for.

At The Saville Centre, 436 Lewisham High Street, SE13 6JL

Voluntary Sector Accommodation - Response to consultation

As part of the further consultation on proposed closures and redevelopments of community centres, we would like to include information on current centre activities and users, along with your response in the report back to Safer Stronger Select Committee and Mayor and Cabinet.

Community Centre: Saville Centre

Day	Group/ user	Type of session/ activity	Number of users/ attendees	Types of users	Session fees/ charges	Additional requirements/ user restrictions
<i>Example: Monday</i>	<i>Dance ltd</i>	<i>Line dancing class</i>	<i>15</i>	<i>Older people (aged 50+)</i>	<i>£5 per session</i>	<i>Some limited mobility users</i>
Friday morning	PLUS	Social Drop-in and craft workshop	12	Adults with learning disabilities.	£3	Limited mobility, visual impairment, health support needs.

# Agenda Item 8

Housing Select Committee			
Title	Select Committee work programme		
Contributor	Scrutiny Manager	Item	8
Class	Part 1 (open)	27 October 2015	

## 1. Purpose

- 1.1 To advise Members of the proposed work programme for the municipal year 2015/16, and to decide on the agenda items for the next meeting.

## 2. Summary

- 2.1 At the beginning of the municipal year, each select committee drew up a draft work programme for submission to the Business Panel for consideration.
- 2.2 The Business Panel considered the proposed work programmes of each of the select committees on 28 April 2015 and agreed a co-ordinated overview and scrutiny work programme. However, the work programme can be reviewed at each Select Committee meeting so that Members are able to include urgent, high priority items and remove items that are no longer a priority.

## 3. Recommendations

- 3.1 The Committee is asked to:
  - note the work plan attached at **Appendix B** and discuss any issues arising from the programme;
  - specify the information and analysis required in the report for each item on the agenda for the next meeting, based on desired outcomes, so that officers are clear on what they need to provide;
  - review all forthcoming key decisions, attached at **Appendix C**, and consider any items for further scrutiny.

## 4. The work programme

- 4.1 The work programme for 2015/16 was agreed at the Committee's meeting on 15 April 2015.
- 4.2 The Committee is asked to consider if any urgent issues have arisen that require scrutiny and if any existing items are no longer a priority and can be removed from the work programme. Before adding additional items, each item should be considered against agreed criteria. The flow chart attached at **Appendix A** may help Members decide if proposed additional items should be added to the work programme. The Committee's work programme needs to be achievable in terms of the amount of meeting time available. If the committee agrees to add additional item(s) because they are urgent and high priority, Members will need to consider

which medium/low priority item(s) should be removed in order to create sufficient capacity for the new item(s).

## 5. The next meeting

5.1 The following reports are scheduled for the meeting on 01 December 2015:

Agenda item	Review type	Link to Corporate Priority	Priority
<b>Affordability Review – Evidence Session 2</b>	In-depth review	Decent homes for all	High
<b>Housing-led Regeneration Opportunities/Housing and Development Companies</b>	Standard Item	Decent homes for all	High
<b>Lewisham Homes - Management Agreement: Update</b>	Standard Item	Decent homes for all	High
<b>Proposed rent and service charge increases</b>	Standard Item	Decent homes for all	High
<b>Private rented sector update/licensing scheme - Update</b>	Standard Item	Decent homes for all	High
<b>Key Housing Issues</b>	Standard Item	Decent homes for all	High

5.2 The Committee is asked to specify the information and analysis it would like to see in the reports for these item, based on the outcomes the committee would like to achieve, so that officers are clear on what they need to provide for the next meeting.

## 6. Financial Implications

6.1 There are no financial implications arising from this report.

## 7. Legal Implications

7.1 In accordance with the Council's Constitution, all scrutiny select committees must devise and submit a work programme to the Business Panel at the start of each municipal year.

## 8. Equalities Implications

8.1 The Equality Act 2010 brought together all previous equality legislation in England, Scotland and Wales. The Act included a new public sector equality duty, replacing the separate duties relating to race, disability and gender equality. The duty came into force on 6 April 2011. It covers the following nine protected characteristics: age,

disability, gender reassignment, marriage and civil partnership, pregnancy and maternity, race, religion or belief, sex and sexual orientation.

8.2 The Council must, in the exercise of its functions, have due regard to the need to:

- eliminate unlawful discrimination, harassment and victimisation and other conduct prohibited by the Act
- advance equality of opportunity between people who share a protected characteristic and those who do not.
- foster good relations between people who share a protected characteristic and those who do not.

8.3 There may be equalities implications arising from items on the work programme and all activities undertaken by the Select Committee will need to give due consideration to this.

## **9. Date of next meeting**

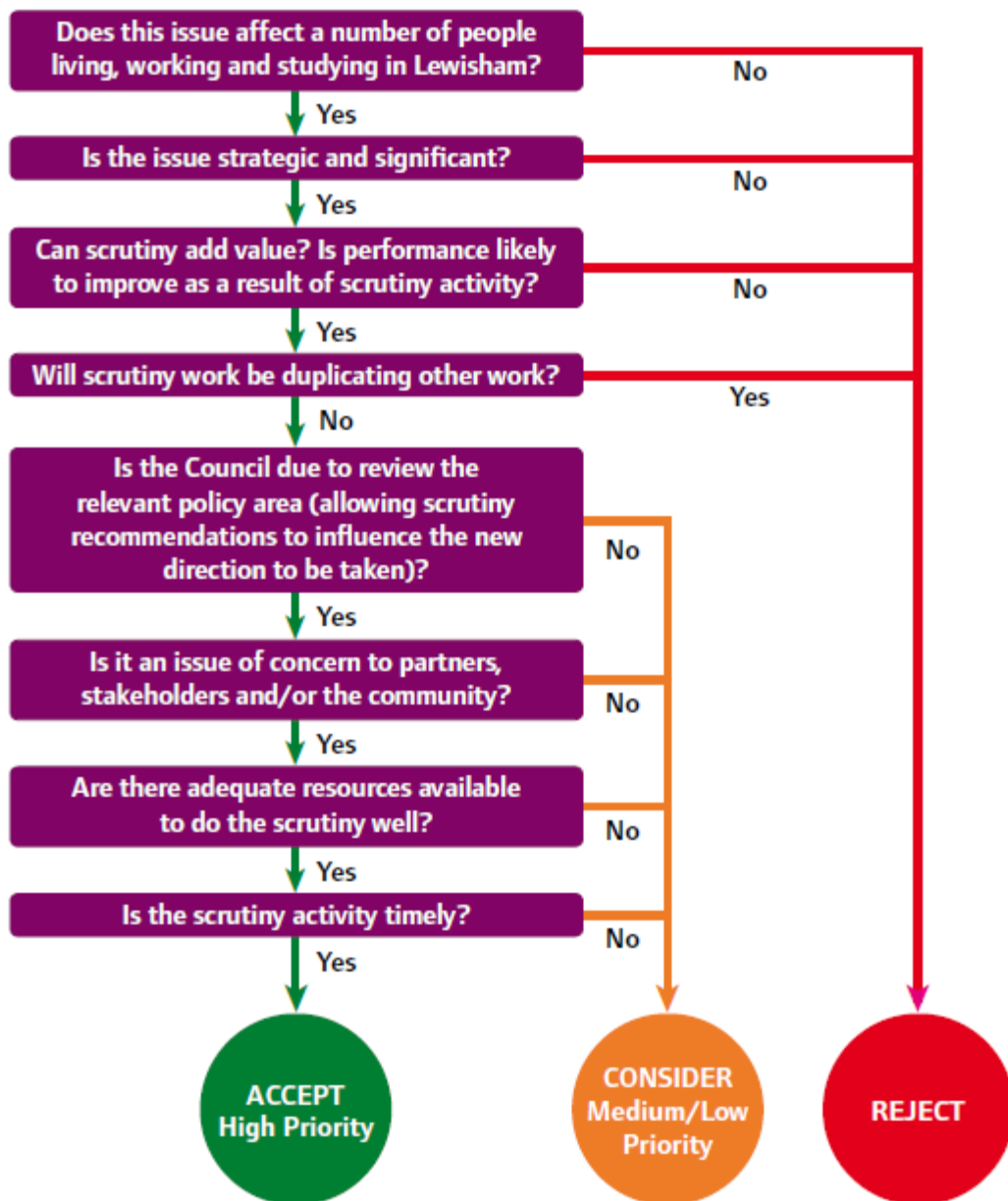
9.1 The date of the next meeting is Tuesday 01 December 2015.

### **Background Documents**

Lewisham Council's Constitution

Centre for Public Scrutiny: the Good Scrutiny Guide

## Scrutiny work programme – prioritisation process



Housing Select Committee work programme 2016/16

Work Item	Type of Item	Priority	Strategic priority	Delivery deadline	Programme of work							
					15-Apr	19-May	09-Jul	16-Sep	27-Oct	01-Dec	26-Jan	09-Mar
Lewisham Future Programme	Standard Item	High	CP6	Ongoing				Settings				
Election of the Chair and Vice-Chair	Constitutional req	High	CP6	Apr								
Select Committee work programme	Constitutional req	High	CP6	Ongoing	Setting the work programme							
Lewisham Homes	Performance monitoring	High	CP6	Jan			Annual report & business plan				Year end review	
Lewisham Homes - Management Agreement Changes including RP status	Standard Item	High	CP6	Sept						Update		
New Homes Programmes (New Build, Self Build, Empty Homes, Acquisitions programmes, Innovative methods for deliver housing etc.)	Standard Item	High	CP6	Mar-16								
Brockley PFI	Performance monitoring	High	CP6	Jan			Annual report & business plan				Year end review	
Communal Heating Systems Review - Report and Recommendations	In-depth review	High	CP6	Mar-16	Report				Response from Mayor and Cabinet			Update
Single Homeless Intervention and Prevention (SHIP)	Standard Item	Medium	CP6	July								
Affordability Review	In-depth review	High	CP6	Dec			Scoping Paper	Scoping Paper - Response	Evidence Session 1	Evidence Session 2	Report	
Lewisham's Housing Strategy (2015-2020) - Update	Policy development	High	CP6	Jan-16								
Private rented sector update/licensing scheme - Update	Standard Item	High	CP6	Mar-16								
Proposed rent and service charge increases	Standard Item	High	CP6	Dec								
Annual lettings plan	Standard Item	High	CP6	Mar-16								
Monitoring Homeless Discharge Update	Policy development	High	CP6	Mar-16								
Key Housing Issues	Standard Item	Medium	CP6	Ongoing			Government Housing Policy & Welfare Reform Changes - Update	Key Housing Issues (Post July 2015 Government Budget proposals)	Charging [a]			
Community Centres on Estates (*)	Standard Item	Medium	CP6, CP9	Oct								
Milford Towers	Standard Item	High	CP6	July								
Housing-Led Regeneration Opportunities	Standard Item	High	CP6	Dec								
Locational Priority Policy - temporary accommodation	Policy development	High	CP6	Oct								
Allocations Policy (inc. access to affordable housing)	Policy development	High	CP6	TBC								
Older peoples housing and supported housing	Standard Item	Medium	CP6	TBC								
Health and Housing - multi-agency approach to tackle health-related issues in relation to housing (*HCSC members to be invited*)	Standard Item	Medium	CP6, CP9	TBC								

	Item completed
	Item ongoing
	Item outstanding
	Proposed timeframe
	Item added

Meeting Dates:							
1)	Wed	15 April	5)	Tues	27-Oct		
2)	Tue	19-May	6)	Tues	1-Dec		
3)	Wed	8-July	7)	Tues	26-Jan		
4)	Wed	16-Sept	8)	Wed	9-March		



**Shaping Our Future: Lewisham's Sustainable  
Community Strategy 2008-2020**

	<b>Priority</b>	
1	Ambitious and achieving	SCS 1
2	Safer	SCS 2
3	Empowered and responsible	SCS 3
4	Clean, green and liveable	SCS 4
5	Healthy, active and enjoyable	SCS 5
6	Dynamic and prosperous	SCS 6

**Corporate Priorities**

	<b>Priority</b>	
1	Community Leadership	CP 1
2	Young people's achievement and involvement	CP 2
3	Clean, green and liveable	CP 3
4	Safety, security and a visible presence	CP 4
5	Strengthening the local economy	CP 5
6	Decent homes for all	CP 6
7	Protection of children	CP 7
8	Caring for adults and older people	CP 8
9	Active, healthy citizens	CP 9
10	Inspiring efficiency, effectiveness and equity	CP 10



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## FORWARD PLAN OF KEY DECISIONS

### Forward Plan November 2015 - February 2016

This Forward Plan sets out the key decisions the Council expects to take during the next four months.

Anyone wishing to make representations on a decision should submit them in writing as soon as possible to the relevant contact officer (shown as number (7) in the key overleaf). Any representations made less than 3 days before the meeting should be sent to Kevin Flaherty, the Local Democracy Officer, at the Council Offices or [kevin.flaherty@lewisham.gov.uk](mailto:kevin.flaherty@lewisham.gov.uk). However the deadline will be 4pm on the working day prior to the meeting.

A "key decision"\* means an executive decision which is likely to:

- (a) result in the Council incurring expenditure which is, or the making of savings which are, significant having regard to the Council's budget for the service or function to which the decision relates;
- (b) be significant in terms of its effects on communities living or working in an area comprising two or more wards.

**FORWARD PLAN – KEY DECISIONS**

Date included in forward plan	Description of matter under consideration	Date of Decision Decision maker	Responsible Officers / Portfolios	Consultation Details	Background papers / materials
August 2015	<b>Community Budget: Establishment of a joint committee between Lambeth, Lewisham and Southwark</b>	21/10/15 Mayor and Cabinet	Janet Senior, Executive Director for Resources & Regeneration and Councillor Alan Smith, Deputy Mayor		
September 2015	<b>Making of instrument of Government The Governing Body of te Leathersellers Federation of Schools</b>	21/10/15 Mayor and Cabinet	Sara Williams, Executive Director, Children and Young People and Councillor Paul Maslin, Cabinet Member for Children and Young People		
August 2015	<b>New Homes Better Places Programme Update</b>	21/10/15 Mayor and Cabinet	Kevin Sheehan, Executive Director for Customer Services and Councillor Damien Egan, Cabinet Member Housing		
February 2015	<b>Review of Licensing Policy</b>	21/10/15 Mayor and Cabinet	Aileen Buckton, Executive Director for Community Services and Councillor Rachel Onikosi, Cabinet Member Public Realm		
August 2015	<b>Lewisham River Corridor Improvement Plan Supplementary Planning Document</b>	21/10/15 Mayor and Cabinet	Janet Senior, Executive Director for Resources & Regeneration and Councillor Alan Smith, Deputy Mayor		
June 2015	<b>Homecare Contracts Extension</b>	21/10/15 Mayor and Cabinet	Aileen Buckton, Executive Director for		

<b>FORWARD PLAN – KEY DECISIONS</b>					
<b>Date included in forward plan</b>	<b>Description of matter under consideration</b>	<b>Date of Decision Decision maker</b>	<b>Responsible Officers / Portfolios</b>	<b>Consultation Details</b>	<b>Background papers / materials</b>
		(Contracts)	Community Services and Councillor Chris Best, Cabinet Member for Health, Wellbeing and Older People		
September 2015	<b>Beckenham Place Park Golf Course Contract Extension</b>	21/10/15 Mayor and Cabinet (Contracts)	Kevin Sheehan, Executive Director for Customer Services and Councillor Rachel Onikosi, Cabinet Member Public Realm		
August 2015	<b>Re-procurement of Sexual Health Services (GUM)</b>	21/10/15 Mayor and Cabinet (Contracts)	Aileen Buckton, Executive Director for Community Services and Councillor Chris Best, Cabinet Member for Health, Wellbeing and Older People		
November 2014	<b>Award of Highways Public Realm Contract Coulgate Street</b>	21/10/15 Mayor and Cabinet (Contracts)	Janet Senior, Executive Director for Resources & Regeneration and Councillor Alan Smith, Deputy Mayor		
September 2015	<b>Interim arrangements for Project Management Support to the School Places programme</b>	21/10/15 Mayor and Cabinet (Contracts)	Sara Williams, Executive Director, Children and Young People and Councillor Paul Maslin, Cabinet Member for Children and Young People		
June 2015	<b>Woodvale Contract award</b>	21/10/15	Kevin Sheehan,		

**FORWARD PLAN – KEY DECISIONS**

Date included in forward plan	Description of matter under consideration	Date of Decision Decision maker	Responsible Officers / Portfolios	Consultation Details	Background papers / materials
		Mayor and Cabinet (Contracts)	Executive Director for Customer Services and Councillor Damien Egan, Cabinet Member Housing		
August 2015	<b>Annual Complaints Report 2014/15</b>	11/11/15 Mayor and Cabinet	Janet Senior, Executive Director for Resources & Regeneration and Councillor Joe Dromey, Cabinet Member Policy & Performance		
August 2015	<b>Annual Parking Report</b>	11/11/15 Mayor and Cabinet	Janet Senior, Executive Director for Resources & Regeneration and Councillor Rachel Onikosi, Cabinet Member Public Realm		
	<b>Beckenham Place Park Consultation</b>	11/11/15 Mayor and Cabinet	Janet Senior, Executive Director for Resources & Regeneration and Councillor Rachel Onikosi, Cabinet Member Public Realm		
June 2015	<b>Capital and Revenue Budget Monitorig</b>	11/11/15 Mayor and Cabinet	Janet Senior, Executive Director for Resources & Regeneration and Councillor Kevin Bonavia, Cabinet Member Resources		
August 2015	<b>Children and Young People Plan</b>	11/11/15 Mayor and Cabinet	Sara Williams, Executive Director, Children and Young People and		

**FORWARD PLAN – KEY DECISIONS**

<b>Date included in forward plan</b>	<b>Description of matter under consideration</b>	<b>Date of Decision Decision maker</b>	<b>Responsible Officers / Portfolios</b>	<b>Consultation Details</b>	<b>Background papers / materials</b>
			Councillor Paul Maslin, Cabinet Member for Children and Young People		
August 2015	<b>Discharge into the Private Rented Sector</b>	11/11/15 Mayor and Cabinet	Kevin Sheehan, Executive Director for Customer Services and Councillor Damien Egan, Cabinet Member Housing		
September 2015	<b>Disposal of Land at corner of Deptford Church Street and Creekside</b>	11/11/15 Mayor and Cabinet	Janet Senior, Executive Director for Resources & Regeneration and Councillor Alan Smith, Deputy Mayor		
August 2015	<b>Heathside &amp; Lethbridge Housing Regeneration Scheme update Parts 1 &amp; 2</b>	11/11/15 Mayor and Cabinet	Kevin Sheehan, Executive Director for Customer Services and Councillor Damien Egan, Cabinet Member Housing		
August 2015	<b>Homelessness out of Borough Locational Priority Policy</b>	11/11/15 Mayor and Cabinet	Kevin Sheehan, Executive Director for Customer Services and Councillor Damien Egan, Cabinet Member Housing		
	<b>Horniman Museum Heritage Lottery Fund Proposal</b>	11/11/15 Mayor and Cabinet	Janet Senior, Executive Director for Resources & Regeneration and Councillor Kevin Bonavia, Cabinet Member Resources		



**FORWARD PLAN – KEY DECISIONS**

<b>Date included in forward plan</b>	<b>Description of matter under consideration</b>	<b>Date of Decision Decision maker</b>	<b>Responsible Officers / Portfolios</b>	<b>Consultation Details</b>	<b>Background papers / materials</b>
August 2015	<b>Housing-Led Regeneration Opportunities Parts 1 and 2</b>	11/11/15 Mayor and Cabinet	Kevin Sheehan, Executive Director for Customer Services and Councillor Damien Egan, Cabinet Member Housing		
September 2015	<b>National Non Domestic Rates - Discretionary Discount Scheme for Businesses Accredited to Living Wage</b>	11/11/15 Mayor and Cabinet	Kevin Sheehan, Executive Director for Customer Services and Councillor Kevin Bonavia, Cabinet Member Resources		
	<b>The 2020 Programme</b>	11/11/15 Mayor and Cabinet	Janet Senior, Executive Director for Resources & Regeneration and Councillor Kevin Bonavia, Cabinet Member Resources		
	<b>School Minor Capital Works Programme 2016</b>	11/11/15 Mayor and Cabinet	Sara Williams, Executive Director, Children and Young People and Councillor Paul Maslin, Cabinet Member for Children and Young People		
September 2015	<b>Sheltered Housing Investment and Improvement Update</b>	11/11/15 Mayor and Cabinet	Kevin Sheehan, Executive Director for Customer Services and Councillor Damien Egan, Cabinet Member Housing		
September 2015	<b>Voluntary Sector Accomodation Implementation</b>	11/11/15 Mayor and Cabinet	Aileen Buckton, Executive Director for		

**FORWARD PLAN – KEY DECISIONS**

Date included in forward plan	Description of matter under consideration	Date of Decision Decision maker	Responsible Officers / Portfolios	Consultation Details	Background papers / materials
	<b>Plan Consultation Parts 1 and 2</b>		Community Services and Councillor Joan Millbank, Cabinet Member Third Sector & Community		
	<b>Working Skills strategy</b>	11/11/15 Mayor and Cabinet	Janet Senior, Executive Director for Resources & Regeneration and Councillor Alan Smith, Deputy Mayor		
	<b>Annual Report on Energy Prices</b>	11/11/15 Mayor and Cabinet (Contracts)	Janet Senior, Executive Director for Resources & Regeneration and Councillor Kevin Bonavia, Cabinet Member Resources		
August 2015	<b>ICT Shared Service Update</b>	11/11/15 Mayor and Cabinet (Contracts)	Janet Senior, Executive Director for Resources & Regeneration and Councillor Kevin Bonavia, Cabinet Member Resources		
	<b>Award of Homecare Contracts</b>	11/11/15 Mayor and Cabinet (Contracts)	Aileen Buckton, Executive Director for Community Services and Councillor Chris Best, Cabinet Member for Health, Wellbeing and Older People		
	<b>Public Health Contracts for Health Checks and Sexual Health Promotion</b>	11/11/15 Mayor and Cabinet (Contracts)	Aileen Buckton, Executive Director for Community Services and		

**FORWARD PLAN – KEY DECISIONS**

Date included in forward plan	Description of matter under consideration	Date of Decision Decision maker	Responsible Officers / Portfolios	Consultation Details	Background papers / materials
			Councillor Chris Best, Cabinet Member for Health, Wellbeing and Older People		
August 2015	<b>Children and Young People Plan</b>	25/11/15 Council	Sara Williams, Executive Director, Children and Young People and Councillor Paul Maslin, Cabinet Member for Children and Young People		
August 2015	<b>Lewisham River Corridor Improvement Plan Supplementary Planning Document</b>	25/11/15 Council	Janet Senior, Executive Director for Resources & Regeneration and Councillor Alan Smith, Deputy Mayor		
February 2015	<b>Review of Licensing Policy</b>	25/11/15 Council	Aileen Buckton, Executive Director for Community Services and Councillor Rachel Onikosi, Cabinet Member Public Realm		
August 2015	<b>Copperas Street Depot - Disposal</b>	09/12/15 Mayor and Cabinet	Janet Senior, Executive Director for Resources & Regeneration and Councillor Alan Smith, Deputy Mayor		
June 2015	<b>Council Tax Reduction Scheme 2016-17</b>	09/12/15 Mayor and Cabinet	Kevin Sheehan, Executive Director for Customer Services and Councillor Kevin Bonavia,		

**FORWARD PLAN – KEY DECISIONS**

Date included in forward plan	Description of matter under consideration	Date of Decision Decision maker	Responsible Officers / Portfolios	Consultation Details	Background papers / materials
			Cabinet Member Resources		
August 2015	<b>Parks Events Policy 2016- 2020</b>	09/12/15 Mayor and Cabinet	Councillor Alan Smith, Deputy Mayor and Councillor Rachel Onikosi, Cabinet Member Public Realm		
	<b>Planning Service Annual Monitoring Report 2014-15</b>	09/12/15 Mayor and Cabinet	Janet Senior, Executive Director for Resources & Regeneration and Councillor Alan Smith, Deputy Mayor		
June 2015	<b>Revenue Budget Savings</b>	09/12/15 Mayor and Cabinet	Janet Senior, Executive Director for Resources & Regeneration and Councillor Kevin Bonavia, Cabinet Member Resources		
August 2015	<b>Section 75 arrangements for Children and Young People</b>	09/12/15 Mayor and Cabinet	Kath Nicholson, Head of Law and Councillor Paul Maslin, Cabinet Member for Children and Young People		
June 2014	<b>Surrey Canal Triangle (New Bermondsey) - Compulsory Purchase Order Resolution</b>	09/12/15 Mayor and Cabinet	Janet Senior, Executive Director for Resources & Regeneration and Councillor Alan Smith, Deputy Mayor		
	<b>Youth Service Mutual</b>	09/12/15 Mayor and Cabinet	Sara Williams, Executive Director, Children and		

**FORWARD PLAN – KEY DECISIONS**

Date included in forward plan	Description of matter under consideration	Date of Decision Decision maker	Responsible Officers / Portfolios	Consultation Details	Background papers / materials
			Young People and Councillor Paul Maslin, Cabinet Member for Children and Young People		
September 2015	<b>FM Contract Structure and Procurement approach</b>	09/12/15 Mayor and Cabinet (Contracts)	Janet Senior, Executive Director for Resources & Regeneration and Councillor Kevin Bonavia, Cabinet Member Resources		
September 2015	<b>FM Compliance Contracts Structure and Procurement approach</b>	09/12/15 Mayor and Cabinet (Contracts)	Janet Senior, Executive Director for Resources & Regeneration and Councillor Kevin Bonavia, Cabinet Member Resources		
September 2015	<b>Extension of Security (CIS Security Limited) &amp; PPM (Interserve Facilities Management) Contracts</b>	09/12/15 Mayor and Cabinet (Contracts)	Janet Senior, Executive Director for Resources & Regeneration and Councillor Kevin Bonavia, Cabinet Member Resources		
	<b>Prevention and Inclusion Contract</b>	09/12/15 Mayor and Cabinet (Contracts)	Aileen Buckton, Executive Director for Community Services and Councillor Janet Daby, Cabinet Member Community Safety		
	<b>Resouce Link Contract Extension</b>	15/12/15 Overview and	Janet Senior, Executive Director for Resources &		

**FORWARD PLAN – KEY DECISIONS**

Date included in forward plan	Description of matter under consideration	Date of Decision Decision maker	Responsible Officers / Portfolios	Consultation Details	Background papers / materials
		Scrutiny Business Panel	Regeneration and Councillor Kevin Bonavia, Cabinet Member Resources		
	<b>Setting the Council Tax Base, the NNDR Base and Discounts for Second Homes and Empty Homes</b>	13/01/16 Mayor and Cabinet	Janet Senior, Executive Director for Resources & Regeneration and Councillor Kevin Bonavia, Cabinet Member Resources		
August 2015	<b>Determination of the applications to establish a neighbourhood forum and to designate a neighbourhood area for Lee Green</b>	13/01/16 Mayor and Cabinet	Janet Senior, Executive Director for Resources & Regeneration and Councillor Alan Smith, Deputy Mayor		
August 2015	<b>Determination of the applications to establish a neighbourhood forum and to designate a neighbourhood area for Deptford</b>	13/01/16 Mayor and Cabinet	Janet Senior, Executive Director for Resources & Regeneration and Councillor Alan Smith, Deputy Mayor		
May 2015	<b>Formal Designation of Crystal Palace &amp; Upper Norwood Neighbourhood Forum and Area</b>	13/01/16 Mayor and Cabinet	Janet Senior, Executive Director for Resources & Regeneration and Councillor Alan Smith, Deputy Mayor		
September 2015	<b>Determined School Admissions Arrangements for 2017/18</b>	13/01/16 Mayor and Cabinet	Sara Williams, Executive Director, Children and Young People and Councillor Paul Maslin, Cabinet Member for Children and Young		

**FORWARD PLAN – KEY DECISIONS**

Date included in forward plan	Description of matter under consideration	Date of Decision Decision maker	Responsible Officers / Portfolios	Consultation Details	Background papers / materials
			People		
	<b>Award of Contracts Tier 4 Services and Day Programmes People with Substance Misuse Services</b>	13/01/16 Mayor and Cabinet (Contracts)	Aileen Buckton, Executive Director for Community Services and Councillor Janet Daby, Cabinet Member Community Safety		
	<b>Setting the Council Tax Base, the NNDR Base and Discounts for Second Homes and Empty Homes</b>	20/01/16 Council	Janet Senior, Executive Director for Resources & Regeneration and Councillor Kevin Bonavia, Cabinet Member Resources		
June 2015	<b>Council Tax Reduction Scheme 2016-17</b>	20/01/16 Council	Kevin Sheehan, Executive Director for Customer Services and Councillor Kevin Bonavia, Cabinet Member Resources		
June 2015	<b>Capital and Revenue Budget Monitoring</b>	10/02/16 Mayor and Cabinet	Janet Senior, Executive Director for Resources & Regeneration and Councillor Kevin Bonavia, Cabinet Member Resources		
August 2015	<b>Housing Allocations Policy</b>	02/03/16 Mayor and Cabinet	Kevin Sheehan, Executive Director for Customer Services and Councillor Damien Egan, Cabinet Member Housing		

**FORWARD PLAN – KEY DECISIONS**

<b>Date included in forward plan</b>	<b>Description of matter under consideration</b>	<b>Date of Decision Decision maker</b>	<b>Responsible Officers / Portfolios</b>	<b>Consultation Details</b>	<b>Background papers / materials</b>
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