

A new Housing Strategy for Haringey 2023 - 2028: Analysis and recommendations from Consultation

1. The draft Housing Strategy

Though fundamental conditions remain the same, the five years since Haringey's current Housing Strategy was adopted in 2017 has been a period of significant change.

The experience of living with Covid-19 has transformed society and brought the link between housing and health inequality into sharp relief. The 72 people killed in the catastrophic fire at Grenfell Tower showed the clear link between housing and systemic inequality, and the fire was a rallying moment for improving the safety of homes. In our present period of high inflation, falling productivity and falling wages, the disconnect between the cost of housing and most people's incomes has never been sharper. And the climate emergency means we must transform the way we think of housing.

The Council's Housing Strategy 2017 to 2022 was significantly amended by Cabinet in 2019 to reflect the priorities of a new administration.

Between March and July 2021, a new Strategic Housing Market Assessment (SHMA) was prepared as a key evidence base for both the new Housing Strategy and the emerging Local Plan.

The SHMA and a wide range of other evidence was reviewed alongside engagement with key stakeholders across the Council during the preparation of a draft Housing Strategy as the basis for consultation.

In March 2022, Cabinet approved the draft Housing Strategy for consultation

2. The consultation

Between 26 September and 16 December 2022 the Council carried out formal consultation on the draft Housing Strategy:

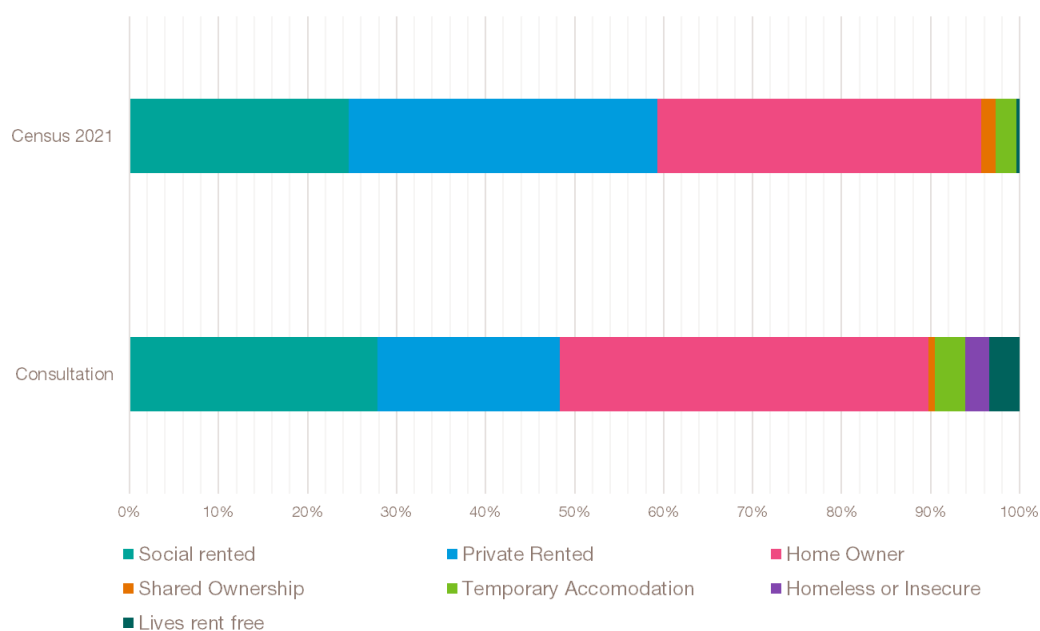
- An on-line consultation pack was publicised through Haringey People, social media, and posters in key venues around the borough including shops, Childrens Centres, and housing estates
- Printed consultation packs were made available and advertised in libraries
- Six in-person consultation events were advertised and held at libraries
- Street stalls in Tottenham and Wood Green were held over four days
- Consultation questions were targeted at key groups through digital programmatic advertising by the Council Advertising Network, with key messages on websites and social media channels appropriate for each of the audiences

3. Responses

706 responses were received between 26 September and 16 December:

- 176 completed consultation packs
- 530 responses through targeted questions

Responses broadly reflect the tenure and housing situation of Haringey's residents, though social housing tenants, homeowners, and homeless or insecurely housed people were disproportionately represented, and private renters were under-represented.



Only 57 respondents provided any Equalities Monitoring information. Of this small sample:

- Nearly two thirds were female
- Nearly two thirds were white compared to 57% of Haringey residents
- Older people were over-represented: 35-49 and 65+ age groups were over-represented; 25% of respondents were retired
- 40% had some form of disability compared to 20% of Haringey residents
- Almost all respondents had English as their main language
- 86% of respondents had Level 4 qualifications or higher compared to 39% across Haringey
- 20% of respondents were in receipt of some form of benefit

Only 8% of respondents completed the Equalities Monitoring information, so this small sample must be seen against the tenure information which reflects a much broader range of responses.

Eleven local organisations responded: two residents' groups, two community organisations, two local authority support providers, three ecological groups, a faith-based group and a business.

4. What our residents told us

4.1. What our residents told us about our proposed objectives

We grouped our Housing Strategy's proposals into four overarching objectives:

1. Delivering the new homes Haringey needs
2. Improving housing quality and resident services in the social housing sector
3. Improving the quality of the private rented sector
4. Preventing and alleviating homelessness

We proposed that five fundamental principles should run through each of those objectives and underpin all areas of the strategy:

- Communication and co-production: communicating clearly and respectfully with residents and putting them at the centre of the design of services and of homes.
- An active council, using all levers and powers at our disposal to tackle the housing crisis.
- Working across the council and in partnership: putting housing at the heart of what this council does, and taking a lead in bringing residents, community groups, voluntary and private sector organisations together to tackle the housing crisis.
- Creating and maintaining sustainable and healthy communities: working with residents to deliver new, better, and healthier homes and neighbourhoods, enhancing the places and sense of community that make them proud to call Haringey home.
- Responding to the climate emergency, delivering homes and neighbourhoods that are healthier and more resilient.

91% of respondents agreed with these objectives.

Just over half of those respondents thought we also needed additional objectives. Where respondents told us what they thought these additional objectives should be, most were already covered in the strategy. Some suggestions were for matters beyond our control – for the right to buy in housing associations, for rent control and security of tenure in the private sector, or the affordability of newbuild private homes – or beyond the scope of the housing strategy.

Other suggestions for additional objectives included:

“Protect Haringey from gentrification”

“Please add that all new housing will not rely on gas/oil and will incorporate green energy alternatives instead!”

“There needs to be more on the responsibilities that the LA has with regards to leaseholders

It would be good to add something about the importance of creating mixed communities - i.e. building council housing in the West of the borough as well as the East”

“The strategy gives little emphasis to owner-occupier homes. Priority is rightly given to homes to those on lower incomes, but the retrofit of owner-occupier homes is given a single line on page 29. Given the Council's decarbonisation targets, we would have expected to see more policy to promote retrofit by owner occupiers - whose homes contribute a high portion of the borough's carbon emissions from buildings.”

“Need council housing at council rent as per the formula not London affordable rent it is not affordable the manifesto commitment is for council housing at council rent”

“Please consider wildlife in your strategy. In particular include provision for swifts in any building works, Swifts are endangered, on the red list and are losing their nesting sites through 'improvements' to roofs.”

Recommended changes to draft strategy:

- Clarify our practical commitments to protecting the existing places and communities that make people proud to call Haringey, to building council homes across Haringey, and in particular to doing everything possible to prevent residents being ‘priced out’ of a changing borough

- Clarify our practical commitments to supporting the transition to green energy across all tenures in the borough’s housing stock and confirm that new Council homes will not use oil or gas
- Review commitments to leaseholders
- Strengthen the focus on supporting the retrofit of owner-occupier homes
- Clarify our commitment to letting Council homes developed under the GLA’s current grants programme at formula rent
- Clarify our commitment to supporting and enhancing biodiversity through planning powers and our own building programme

4.2. What our residents told us about Delivering the high quality and sustainable new homes that Haringey needs

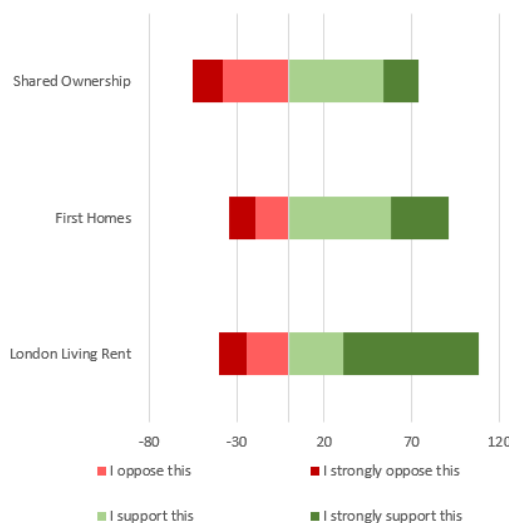
The draft Housing Strategy proposed to meet its first objective - delivering the high quality and sustainable new homes Haringey needs – through the use of planning powers, by building new Council homes, and by creating the right conditions for others to build new homes. The draft Housing Strategy set out the Council’s proposed approach to ensuring that these new homes are sustainable, high quality, and provide the right mix for our diverse community.

There is overwhelming support for proposals to use our planning powers to prioritise homes let through the housing register at social rent over other kinds of housing.

75.7% of respondents agreed that homes for social rent should be prioritised over other kinds of affordable housing – including 27% who think that homes for social rent are the only kinds of new home that should get built. Other kinds of affordable housing are viewed much less positively.

When other kinds of affordable housing are proposed, **there is clear preference for London Living Rent over Shared Ownership and Discounted Market Sale homes.** Asked which of these three tenures should be given first priority, 66% chose London Living Rent. 16% gave first priority to Discounted Market Sale homes and just 10% would like shared ownership homes prioritised.

Views on other affordable tenures



“Shared ownership is a risky form of ownership (it is really just a long-term rental) and often more expensive than just renting or having a mortgage.”

“Subsidised purchasing of houses only drives the price of housing up.”

“The problem is people in London can’t save for a deposit... If we owned our own house, at an affordable repayment plan then when we get our pay check we will be able to go out for dinner, for drinks, to activities for the kids. At the moment it just goes to trying to save what we can (almost always 0), and rent.”

“I strongly support London Living Rent homes, as there is a large group of people who will have no chance of accessing social housing through the housing register, but will still be struggling to afford PRS rents.”

“London Affordable Rent is not affordable, as demonstrated by Shelter in its report ‘Chart Area Crisis’”

Asked about each form of affordable tenure, again **London Living Rent was most popular and shared ownership least popular:**

- 73.2% supported or strongly supported London Living Rent; and 15% opposed it as a tenure.
- 51.7% supported or strongly supported First Homes; and 26.6% opposed or strongly opposed it.
- 21.4% supported or strongly supported shared ownership as a tenure; and 32.9% opposed or strongly opposed it.

Given a range of options for older people’s housing, most people want more affordable homes for older people to rent:

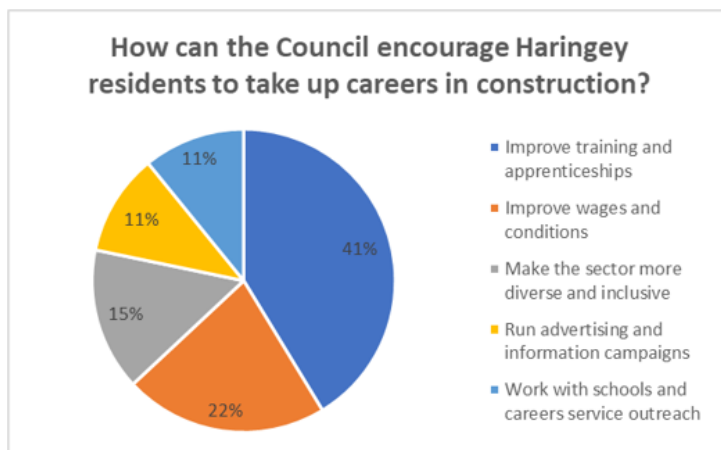
- 28% wanted traditional rented sheltered housing
- 22% wanted more assisted living (extra-care housing)
- 12% wanted multi-generation housing to rent

Other options - care homes, sheltered housing to buy, and independent housing specifically for older people either to rent or buy - were selected by fewer than 10% of respondents.

90% of respondents think community-led and self-build housing is a good idea. However, 66% think **the council should not sell or give land to groups wanting to develop community-led and self-build housing.**

The construction sector faces considerable skills and labour challenges. Around 22,800 extra workers will be needed for construction in Greater London alone by 2027. Asked what the Council could do to encourage careers in the local construction industry, 41% focused on training and apprenticeships, 21% on wages and conditions, and 15% on the need to encourage diversity in the industry.

How can we encourage more Haringey residents to take up careers in construction?



“Provide bursaries and stipends for young people keen to get qualifications.... eg heat source accreditations”

“Fairer pay bands”

“Support women to enter construction with flexible hours and access to develop literacy and numeracy skills alongside the apprenticeship”

“Run English courses alongside construction apprenticeships”

“Assist asylum seekers to apply for the right to work so that they can take up construction jobs”

“Train employers on equity, diversity and inclusion and making construction employment welcoming for everyone”

“Get Tottenham football stars to take part in a recruitment ad campaign about what a great contribution builders can make”

“Career days at school, work experience, get schools and communities involved in a local build...”

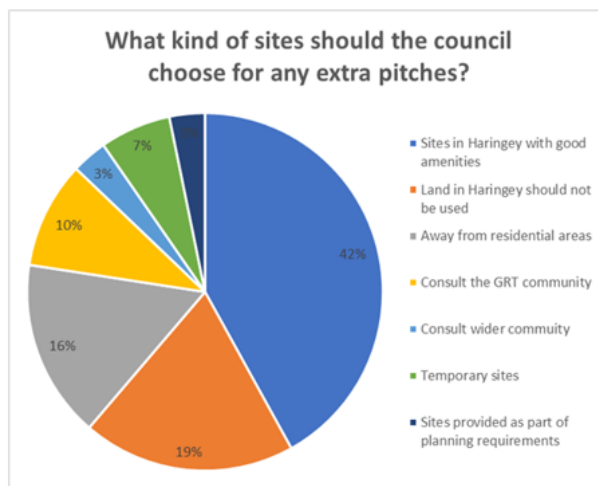
“Work with schools’ careers teams to bring in role models from business - e.g a solar panel installer, a building project manager etc”

Most people actively support the provision of extra pitches for overcrowded households in the local Gypsy, Roma, and traveller community. 58% actively support our proposals on this, and 24% oppose them.

Of those opposing additional sites, only 39% expressed negative views about the GRT community. In most cases, negative views focused on the community's perceived lack of integration. Other reasons given for opposition to additional sites focused on the loss of land for green space and for settled housing.

Asked to comment on the kind of sites that should be used to provide additional pitches, 42% stressed the need for good amenities and 10% said that sites should be chosen in consultation with the GRT community.

What kind of sites should the council choose for any extra pitches for Gypsy, Roma and Traveller households?



"A place that has enough space and where amenities can be built to support the site (water, waste) etc near to dentists, GPs, schools that actually have places available"

"A site chosen in consultation with the local community, so they accept it"

"Empty land that is not cut off from public amenities"

"Within walking distance from the nearest primary school"

"Not in Haringey if it is for non-permanent housing. We need council housing at council formula rent. Gypsy and Roma families would have an equal opportunity to bid for the housing with all the other overcrowded families in the Borough"

There is overwhelming support for our Council housing delivery programme as set out in the draft Strategy's proposals.

93% of respondents support building new council housing - 72% strongly support it.

Most people agreed that the council should prioritise building larger family-sized homes over building as many homes as possible. 32% strongly agreed and 19% agreed. 19% thought that it was more important to build as many new council homes of any size as possible. 30% were not sure.

Many respondents were interested in helping shape the delivery of new council homes, though the level of interest varied significantly depending on what that help would entail:

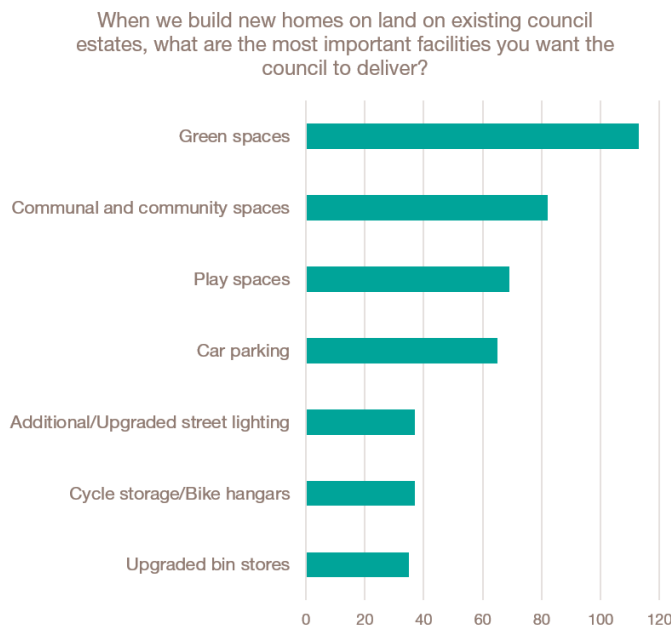
- 58% of respondents would like to help the council make sure new council homes are energy-efficient and green
- 51% would like to help the council design improvements in the neighbourhoods around new council homes
- 44% would like to shape the architecture, design, and look of new council homes
- 41% would like to help identify sites for new council homes
- 37% would like to help shape the internal fittings of new homes - kitchens, bathrooms, layout, etc

The most popular way to get involved was through questionnaires, with 90.5% saying they would like to do this. 86.9% of those who wanted to engage in this way preferred to do so online rather than in person.

79.5% would like to engage through Borough-wide working groups. Here, 80.6% preferred on-line to in-person groups.

72.3% of respondents saying they would like to engage through estate and neighbourhood working groups this. 56% would prefer to do so in person rather than online.

When new Council homes are built on existing estates, the most important new facilities to provide for new and existing residents were green spaces, communal and community spaces, and play spaces.



65% felt it was important or very important to retain existing car parking spaces on estates; only 11% felt it was not important.

Most comments about car parking spaces came from people who opposed retaining car parking spaces, and they talked about the environmental impact of private cars, the good public transport system, and the cost of driving. The comments in favour of retaining car parking spaces emphasised those respondents' views that some groups – families, disabled people, older people, and delivery drivers – need private cars. One respondent suggested providing space for shared EVs for estate residents.

75% agree with our proposal to only demolish existing council homes if the majority of current residents want it to happen and if more council homes of a better quality will be delivered on the site

66% said that if existing council homes are going to be demolished the council should make commitments to residents beyond those that already exist around the right to return. However, asked what those commitments should be, most either did not say or asked for existing commitments such as resident consultation and the Right of Return for secure tenants and resident leaseholders.

Most respondents supported or strongly supported building extra floors on some council blocks in order to provide more homes. 54% actively supported these proposals and 16% opposed them. Asked what the council should consider if new floors were added to

an existing block, the key factors for respondents were overwhelmingly safety, minimising disruption to existing residents, and improving the homes and environment for existing residents.

Recommended changes to draft strategy:

- Strengthen links between the housing strategy and Employment and Skills strategies (?)
- Use findings of consultation to inform approaches to delivery across a range of areas following from this area of the strategy, including Neighbourhood Improvement when delivering new Council homes, to co-production and consultation, and to building extra floors on existing council blocks

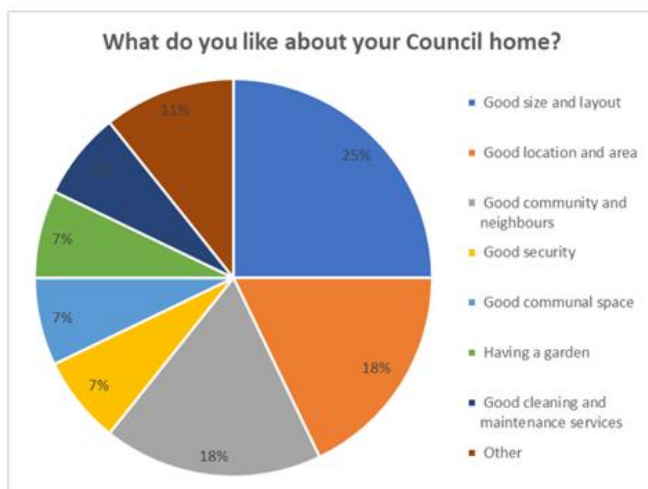
4.3. What our residents told us about Improving housing quality and resident services in the social housing sector

The draft Housing Strategy proposed to meet its second objective - improving housing quality and resident services in the social housing sector – by building on the 2020-2025 Asset Management Strategy to improve the quality of our existing council homes, by working with residents to design and improve the Council’s housing management services and by establishing a genuine partnership with all housing associations in Haringey.

The key messages from this consultation are that the Council’s housing management services are often not good enough, and that in many cases there are real problems with the quality of Council homes. This is in line with separate consultation with tenants and leaseholders conducted in late 2022.

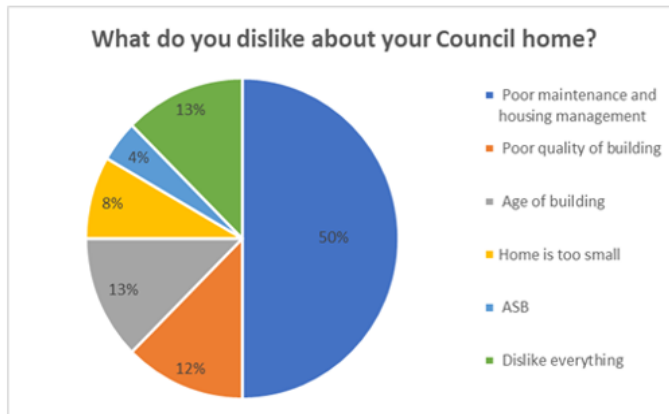
It is also in line with the findings of the Ombudsman, and with urgent failings identified against the framework of the Social Housing Regulator. All of this informs the Council’s recent adoption of a Housing Improvement Plan and will inform revisions to the Housing Strategy.

Asked what they liked about their Council home, tenants and leaseholders most commonly identified their neighbours and community, the size and layout of their home, and its location. This feedback is especially useful for the delivery of new Council homes.



- “Spacious living room”*
- “Room sizes and cupboard space”*
- “Near train station close to school, GPs, etc”*
- “Good community spirit”*
- “A diverse set of neighbours who are friendly and respectful”*
- “It’s secured and easy to manage”*
- “The green space outside”*
- “The refurbishment works that was carried out over the last few years”*
- “Communal areas cleaned well once a week!”*

Asked what they disliked about their home, **half of all respondents pointed to poor housing management services.**



"Arrangements for bulky refuse collection. Uncertainty about capital works programme. Difficulty with repairs service. Lack of response from council officers"

"Poor repair response from the council. Repair quality is also not as great as it once was"

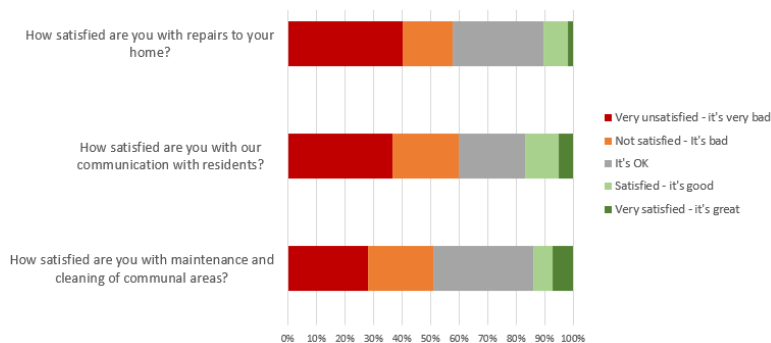
"Poor housing quality with damp/mould problems, pest issues, poor quality kitchen/bathroom fixtures and poor energy efficiency. Poor property safety as some homes do not have fire doors etc."

"Can hear noise through the walls, cladding"

"Bathroom and toilet is too small, dining room and living room is in the same room, kitchen connects to living and dining room. There's no storage room, no veranda"

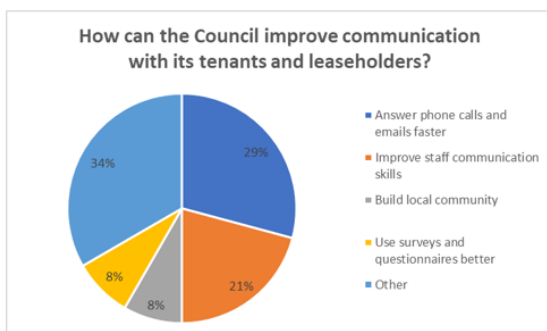
"It's a building from 50s, gets damp bcs the room is plan. They should demolish and make new like in Manor house"

Most Council tenants were dissatisfied – or very dissatisfied - with repairs, communication, and maintenance. Very few thought the Council is doing well in these areas.



Most residents think that to improve the way we communicate, we need most of all to get the basics right: answering phone calls and emails promptly, sharing information accurately, and training staff to respond professionally, sensitively, and supportively.

How can we improve our communication with our tenants and leaseholders?



"Reply to emails and enable us to get through on the phone"

"Real phone lines real online live agents to help with needs"

"People going on a counselling skills course"

"Supportive and professional repairs team who have knowledge about housing repairs"

"Local monthly newsletters which are tailored for our area"

"Surveys on repair outcomes and listening to tenant feedback"

"One dept doesn't know what others are doing and give out misinformation"

"Where there is a recognised residents' association have a time limit for officers to reply to the RA"

"Be honest - if you do not have the capacity to arrange visits/repairs then communicate a realistic timetable to residents rather than empty promises"

"Make information on the website accessible for all estate residents including private tenants"

46% were dissatisfied – or very dissatisfied – with the way anti-social behaviour is dealt with on their estate.

Suggestions about how the Council could improve its management of ASB included working better with the police, more residents' meetings, better CCTV, more secure entry systems, more youth facilities, more actions taken against tenants who display antisocial behaviour, and greater sanctions on tenants and private landlords for noise and crime.

42% of tenants and leaseholders responding to the consultation were unhappy with parking services on their estate; 21% were positive about parking services. Asked for ideas to improve services, respondents most commonly asked for better and more assertive management and cheaper parking permits. 4 say that permits are too expensive

Services specifically for leaseholders were viewed somewhat less negatively: 60% expressed satisfaction; 25% said services were bad or very bad. Only two responses suggested specific improvements:

“Don't treat leaseholders as an afterthought. It took ages to get your website to include information about parking, garages and bulky waste removal in the leaseholder section. Consult us early in the scoping of works for Major works programme and listen to what we report as problems.”

“Overall estimates/actuals information is superbly detailed which is no easy feat. Albeit when being billed, it would be better for this information to sit centrally on the housing online account with perhaps web chat features etc (I appreciate this is not an easy task)”

Fewer tenants were dissatisfied about the way we collect rent: 38% told us it was good or very good, 17% that it bad or very bad. Specific comments include:

“Go back to work the way it used to be there as a department in station road where you could go in and pay your rent this made sure the council had the rent straight into their account”

“Not sending aggressive letters when payments are missed but being supportive early on to ensure tenants remain on track when paying their rent”

71% agree that we should include private renters living on our estates when we work with residents to improve services

Asked whether there are other ways the council should support tenants, more than half talked about the need for more active resident engagement

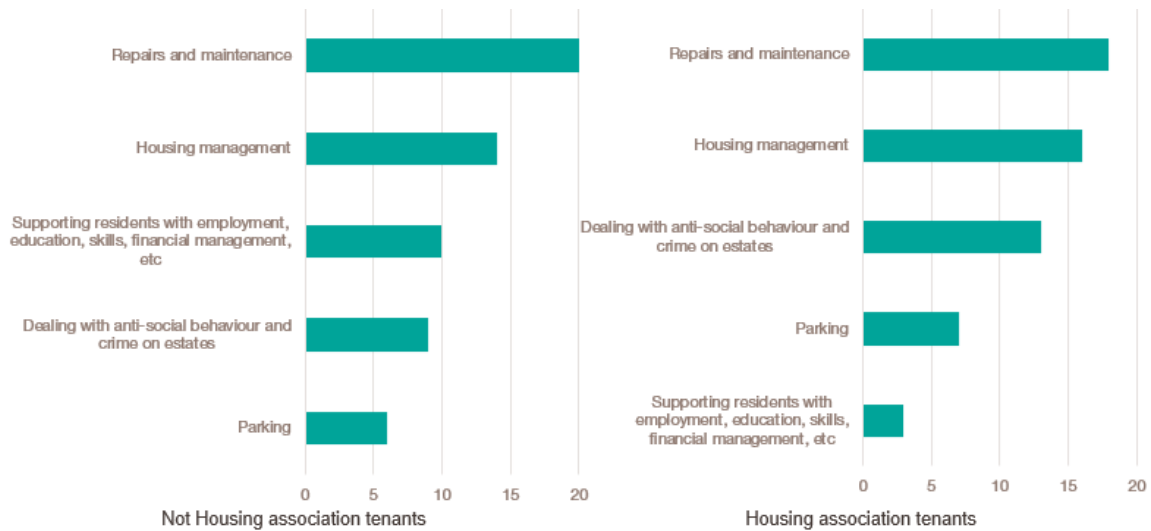
There was real appetite for resident coproduction of housing services:

- 57.2% of respondents wanted estate- and neighbourhood-based working groups – 75% of those wanted in-person working groups rather than on-line
- 28.6% wanted borough-wide working groups with a 2:1 preference for running them on-line
- 14.3% wanted to be involved through questionnaires

79% said that tenants should have choice over fittings and decorations before moving in – 11% that it doesn't matter much. Having choice over bathroom and kitchen fittings matters most to tenants, with choice about wall colours mattering least.

Our draft strategy proposed building more effective partnerships with Housing Associations to improve services and housing across the borough.

Residents most commonly thought that partnership working should focus on repairs, maintenance and housing management. The next most common response from Housing Association tenants was antisocial behavior; those who were not housing association tenants thought that the third most important focus for partnership working should be supporting residents.



Recommended changes to draft strategy:

- The Council needs urgently to focus on improving basic housing services and housing quality for its tenants and leaseholders: as such the Housing Improvement Plan adopted by Cabinet in April 2023 should form the basis of this area of the Housing Strategy
- Include a focus on building stronger communities on our estates: this is a factor many tenants value highly about their Council homes

In addition, use findings of consultation to inform approaches to housing management delivery across a range of areas following from this area of the strategy, including coproduction of services and the improvement of management services including around parking, ASB, and leaseholders; and to inform approaches to housing partnership with Housing Associations

4.4. What our residents told us about Improving the quality of the private rented sector

The draft Housing Strategy set out our expectations that all private landlords and their agents should provide renters with a home that is decent, safe, and secure, and should treat them fairly under the law. It proposed actions to try to ensure those expectations are met: by ensuring landlords and agents understand their obligations and supporting landlords who want to improve; by taking decisive action against those landlords and agents who refuse to meet these standards; and by helping renters to know their rights, and to be able to hold landlords

to account where those rights are not respected. Alongside that, we proposed to continue taking an active role in the provision of privately rented accommodation.

97% supported our approach to private renting as set out in the strategy.

A third of those who supported our approach felt there should be additional commitments. Asked what those additional commitments should be:

- 41% asked for commitments already in the draft housing strategy:
- 20% asked for rent control, longer-term letting agreements, the end of no-fault evictions, and better housing benefit levels.
- 15% saw the policy as hostile to landlords, objecting to the licensing scheme, fire safety requirements, and tenant behaviour
- Others suggested specific means of applying the strategy

75% agreed that the Council should support landlords to improve energy efficiency in the homes they let; 10% opposed it.

72% supported our proposal that the Council's first response when renters report poor conditions should be to work with their landlord, providing advice and guidance to ensure that they understand their responsibilities and that they can meet those responsibilities.

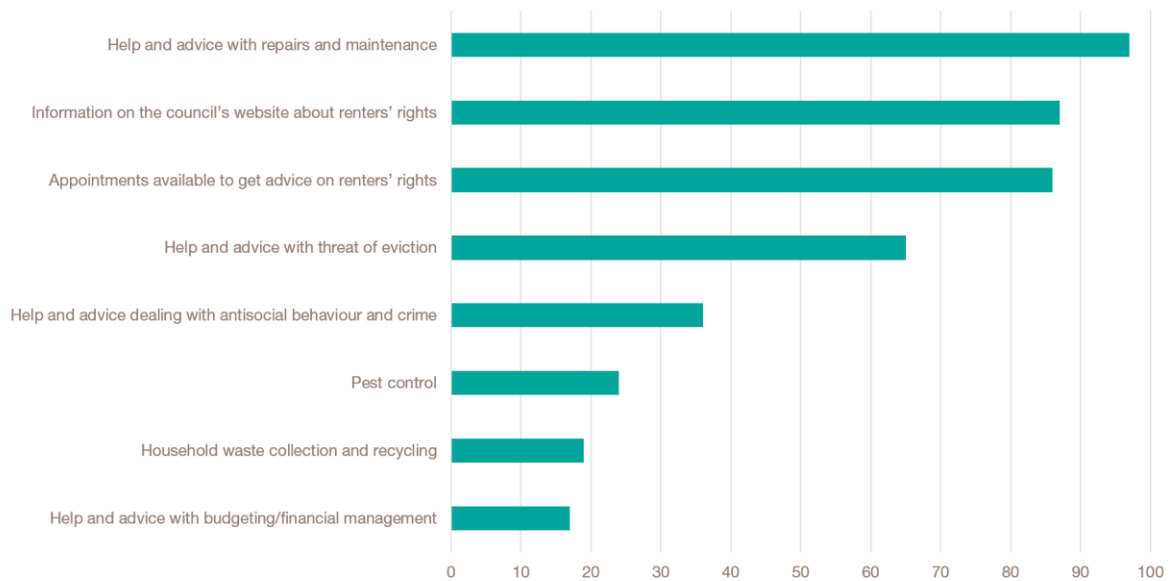
Comments from the minority who opposed this approach divided equally between calls for the Council to be more assertive with landlords and calls for the Council to be less punitive towards landlords.

Most private renters – 55% - do not feel confident asking the Council for help about problems in their home. Another 35% would feel confident asking for the Council's help but would not know how to.

Asked for reasons about their lack of confidence, renters typically raised the risk of retaliatory eviction and a lack of confidence that the Council would help.

Asked what kind of support and help they most needed from the Council, **private renters want us to prioritise help with repairs and maintenance and the threat of eviction; and to provide both information on the Council's website and appointments to get advice on rights.**

What support and help do you think private renters most need from the council?



78% agreed with the proposal to set up a Private Renting Forum to bring together Council services, local support services, advice agencies, and renters' groups. Fewer than 10% opposed it.

Ideas on how this forum would work included the need for a clear purpose, links to advice agencies such as Citizens Advice, training and support for renters participating, and good practice examples.

85% agreed with the proposal to promote private renters' rights using campaigns in the areas where lots of renters live, and to the groups most affected. Comments tended to stress that for this to be successful the Council should use a mixture of communications approaches.

97% actively supported our proposal to publicise our work against criminal landlords and agents. Nobody opposed it.

Most respondents felt that social media, billboards and posters would be the most effective way to publicise that enforcement work.

Only half of consultation responses were aware that the Council already requires landlords of shared flats and houses to have a licence.

Half the comments we received on landlord licensing were supportive; half were unsupportive. Most of the unsupportive comments came from landlords.

Landlords told us they wanted the Council to support them by making it easier to understand the requirements of being a landlord – including by providing information on new regulations – and through grants.

Recommended changes to draft strategy:

- Prioritise a communications campaign to publicise the work that the Council can do to support private renters and address the lack of confidence and knowledge felt by renters, and to publicise the HMO licensing schemes

In addition, use findings of consultation to inform delivery of services for private renters and landlords

4.5. What our residents told us about empty homes

87% agree that it is a good use of council resources to work towards bringing privately-owned empty homes back into use. Comments about this tended to emphasise the injustice of homes standing empty during a housing crisis:

- *“I feel so strongly about homelessness that it seems obscene to allow homes to stand empty”*
- *“Empty homes when people are homeless is morally wrong”*

Asked to choose between five statements on empty homes, respondents most commonly prioritised the statements that ‘Homes should not be empty when many people need somewhere to live’ followed by ‘Empty homes can attract crime and antisocial behaviour’. Only 12% supported the view that ‘People who own homes can do what they like with them’

89% agreed with our proposed approach to bringing empty homes back into use by first providing help and support to owners before considering using our enforcement powers.

No recommended changes to draft strategy, but use findings of consultation to inform delivery of services and messaging around empty homes

4.6. What our residents told us about preventing and alleviating homelessness

The draft Housing Strategy proposed to meet its fourth objective - preventing and alleviating homelessness – across three often interlinked areas of work. Firstly, we proposed to prevent homelessness by working in partnership, by working directly with those at risk of homelessness, and by intervening early with a personalised approach. Secondly, we proposed to ensure that we have a range of good accommodation options for people who are at risk of becoming homeless. Thirdly, we proposed to offer support to people who are, or who are at risk of becoming, street homeless.

96% agreed with our proposed approach to preventing and alleviating homelessness, though nearly half thought there was more we could do.

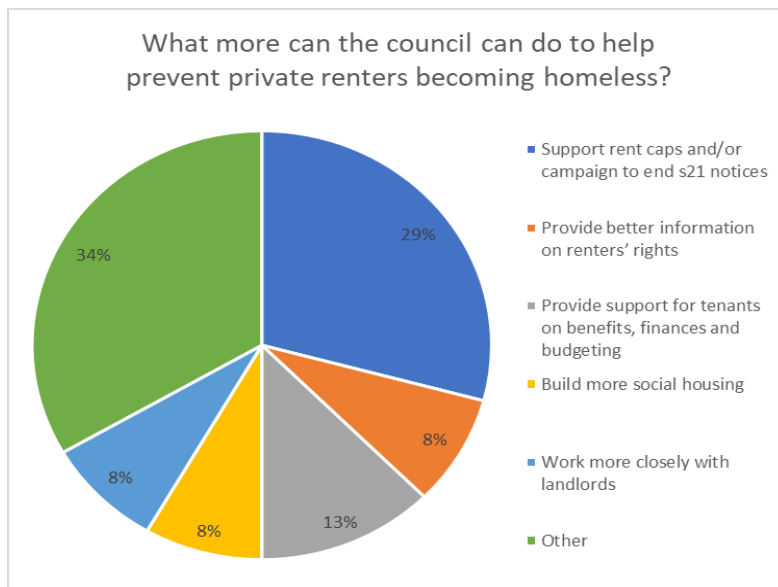
Asked to comment further on what else the Council could do, more than half gave statements in support of the strategy. Others expressed views on how important it is to end homelessness or gave accounts of their own situation. The few more critical comments, or specific suggestions, included:

- Pushing homeless people towards privately rented accommodation isn't a sustainable solution
- More help needs to be given to homeless people to navigate the homelessness process.

- publicise available facilities more widely. think about how to encourage us all to engage with street homeless people.
- The council should really listen to people who are at risk of homelessness about what their concerns and needs are.

Our consultation asked what more the Council could do to prevent people in specific housing tenures from becoming homeless.

To prevent private renters becoming homeless, residents most commonly thought the Council should actively support rent control and more secure tenures.



Illustrative comments included:

“Work with landlords who have tenants struggling with debt/eviction”

“Support the campaign to end s21 evictions”

“rent regulation”

“stop landlords being in full control of the housing system”

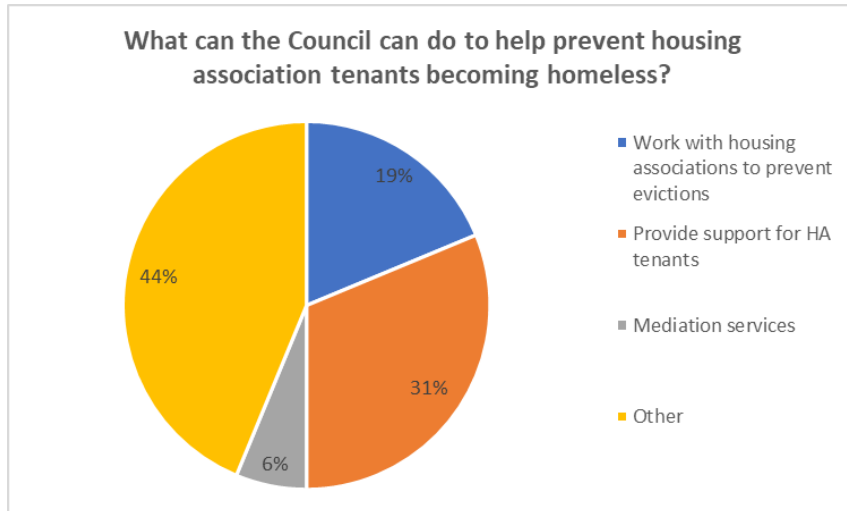
“Information about what kind the help is available”

“More help with rent payments DHP “

“Direct advice online on debt support”

“Do something about rogue landlords punish them and stop them from doing no fault evictions”

Most people thought that to prevent Housing Association tenants from becoming homeless, the Council should work with Housing Associations or support their tenants directly



Comments included:

“Work with housing associations more to prevent evictions”

“if housing within LBH, then would have to inform council of reasons and see if lawful and what is provided in interim or as alternatives”

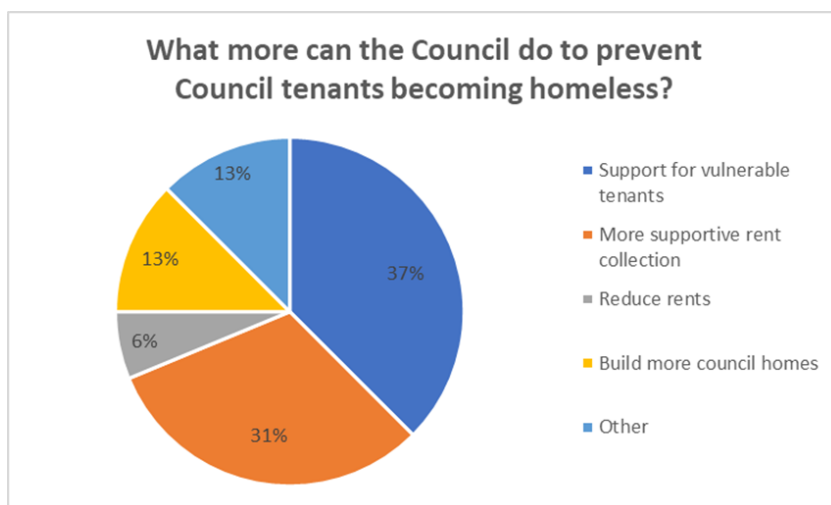
“Penalties on housing associations who fail to prevent the risk of homelessness created by their failure to resolve antisocial behaviour and harassment of their vulnerable tenants”

“Link into employment and skills training and/or childcare options to prevent debt”

“Early intervention”

“Need to work with vulnerable tenants to help them budget and maintain their tenancy”

Asked what more the Council can do to prevent Council tenants becoming homeless, two thirds of respondents asked for more support to be provided to tenants – and specifically for a more supportive approach to rent collection.



Specific comments included:

“Ensuring people with mental or physical health issues receive the support they need to keep their home.”

“Involve other services within the process, i.e. social workers etc. who can act as go-betweens”

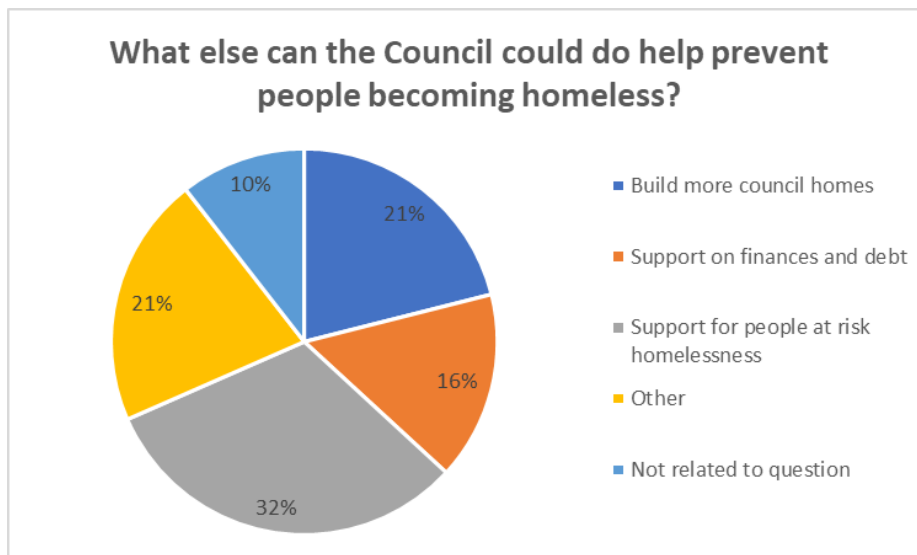
“Need to work with vulnerable tenants to help them budget and maintain their tenancy”

“Not pursuing eviction proceedings until all other options have been exhausted”

“Alternative methods or dispute resolution when concerned with debt recovery rather than an aggressive appointment of pay or be evicted.”

“Build more council homes with affordable rents”

21% thought that building new Council homes was the most important thing the Council could do to prevent people becoming homeless; 16% thought it was the provision of homelessness prevention support.



Comments included:

Build more council homes and supported housing across the borough”

“Make sure that people in financial difficulties get the help and support they need as early as possible by funding independent advice services”

“Take action to reduce violence against women and girls”

“Make sure that people with mental health issues, drug and alcohol issues or other problems have the support they need to maintain their tenancy”

“Publicise when households need to recognise risk of homelessness and where to get help”

“Provide support at centres as there is no dedicated office for housing or contact unless your a migrant care leaver or referred by prison etc”

94% support proposals to build and commission new supported accommodation for people who have experienced rough sleeping

All comments on the council providing supported accommodation for people who have slept rough were positive, including:

“Bridging services are important but must have a progression focussed to keep people moving forward”

“People sleep rough for all sorts of reasons and so a diverse accommodation and support is needed”

“It’s the right thing to do, often people need a transitional space with support prior to taking on their own home and getting back on their feet”

“They will need 24 hours support”

No recommended changes to draft strategy, but use findings of consultation to inform delivery of services and messaging around homelessness, to inform delivery of housing management and private renting services and to inform housing partnership with Housing Associations

4.7. What our residents told us about allocating social housing

Our draft strategy proposed to bring forward a new housing allocations policy to support the Council’s commitment to making the best and fairest use of social housing in the borough – ensuring that it goes to those who need it the most allocated quickly and effectively.

Residents most commonly think that the Council should prioritise vulnerable groups for social housing. We asked how the Council could ensure that homes for social rent are allocated as fairly as possible. The consultation tells us that:

- 30% think the Council should prioritise vulnerable groups
- 19% asked for the system to be fair and to be communicated clearly
- 7% asked for priority to be given to local people
- 7% asked for the banding system to be reviewed.

Specific comments included:

“Stop corruption and stop people getting rehoused through the backdoor scheme”

“Clear and accessible information about how homes are allocated including face to face help with making and updating applications”

“Independent living options for disabled residents is very overlooked ...”

“Ensure meaningful engagement of a range of residents in the development of the allocations policy”

“People feel forced into private accommodation which then takes them off the housing list and not able to qualify for social rent properties”

“Provide a % of home for singletons who have been raised in the borough from childhood and have connects here but are confined to live with their parents this stunting growth and ambition as private rents are too high when they are on minimum wage”

No recommended changes to draft strategy but use findings of consultation to inform further consultation on a review of the Council's Allocations Policy; and prioritise communications about the new Allocations Policy.

4.8. What else our residents told us about our draft Housing Strategy

Finally, we asked for any further comments on the draft housing strategy.

25% asked us to prioritise environmental concerns with comments including:

- *“Any new homes should not increase CO2 output - ie, no gas or oil”*
- *“Interim targets for the retrofit of social homes to 2035 should be given e.g by 2027, 2030, 2033”*
- *“How will council use area-based schemes to encourage retrofit by all tenures - leveraging funding like ECO+”*
- *“Maintenance and improvements of all properties but in particular council properties should take urban nesting birds into account such as swifts, house sparrows and starlings ...”*

15% said there needed to be more emphasis on housing for people with disabilities with specific comments including:

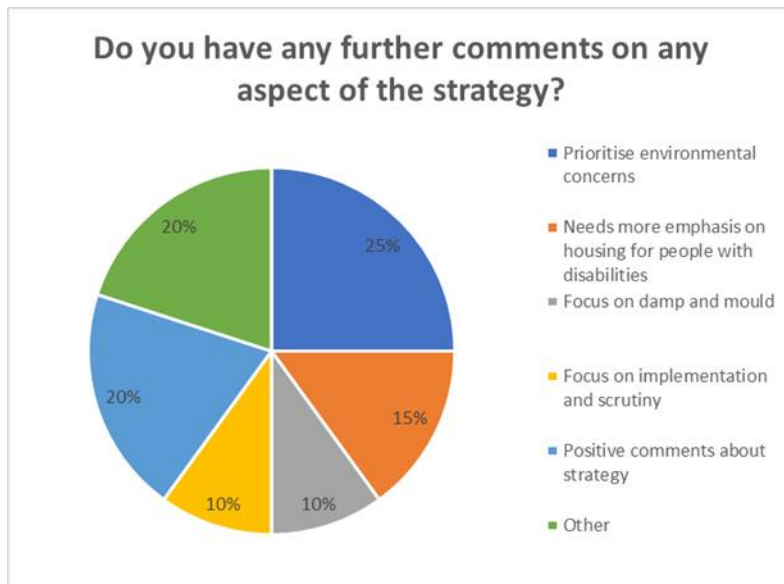
- *“The Council needs to prioritise Supported Living Housing for the Disabled. This group has been all but ignored in the strategy”*
- *“Housing for young adults with SEND is not considered with enough thought. There are hundreds of young adults with special needs that you are not considering”*

10% asked the Council to focus on damp and mould

10% asked the Council to focus on implementation of the strategy and scrutiny of its progress

20% made positive comments about the strategy including:

- *“The strategy is ambitious and has a good focus on housing need and equalities”*
- *“The draft Housing Strategy is much more collaborative with engaging and coproducing with residents, it would be good to see a case study or two where this has shaped a development, home, or specialist accommodation”*
- *“The Housing Consultation document is excellent but please recognise you cannot penalise Landlords in the current very unsatisfactory situation... I do not think Haringey can solve this problem alone”*



Recommended changes to draft strategy:

- Introduce more detail about sustainability and environmental commitments, in particular on gas and oil in new homes and on supporting retrofitting of owner-occupied homes
- Include commitments to Supported Living including for young adults with SEND
- Include commitment to a published implementation and monitoring plan
- Include illustrative case studies in final strategy

In addition, use findings of consultation to inform the delivery of green Council homes and the delivery of housing services across the Council including those supporting private landlords and those exercising planning powers around the delivery of new homes

5. Summary of proposed changes to the draft Housing Strategy

The consultation was broadly very supportive of the proposals in the draft Housing Strategy.

However, consultation responses about the quality of housing and services to its own tenants and leaseholders make it clear that the Council has been letting many of them down.

As such, the Housing Strategy needs urgently to focus on improving basic housing services and housing quality for Council tenants and leaseholders. The Housing Improvement Plan adopted by Cabinet in April 2023 will form the basis of this key area of the final Housing Strategy and aim to transform those services and the quality of our tenants' and leaseholders' homes.

In other areas, the hundreds of responses we received, and in particular the considered comments, will allow us to improve the strategy in the following ways:

- Clarify our practical commitments to protecting the existing places and communities that make people proud to call Haringey, to building council homes across Haringey, and in particular to doing everything possible to prevent residents being 'priced out' of a changing borough
- Strengthen links between the housing strategy and Employment and Skills strategies

- Include a focus on building stronger communities on our estates: this is a factor many tenants value highly about their Council homes
- Prioritise a communications campaign to publicise the work that the Council can do to support private renters and address the lack of confidence and knowledge felt by renters, and to publicise the HMO licensing schemes
- Introduce more detail about sustainability and environmental commitments, in particular on gas and oil in new homes and on supporting retrofitting of owner-occupied homes
- Include commitments to Supported Living including for young adults with SEND
- Include a commitment to a published implementation and monitoring plan
- Include illustrative case studies in the final Housing Strategy

In addition, we will use the findings of this consultation to inform and improve the delivery of housing services across the Council