

Housing Strategy Consultation

1. The Housing Strategy consultation gathered views from a range of sources;
 - A Housing Strategy Conference held at The Curve on 23 January 2017, attended by more than 80 people;
 - Written responses to the draft Housing Strategy;
 - Via the Council's website;
 - Via social media platforms Facebook and Twitter.

2. Written responses were received from;
 - Adult Social Care, SBC.
 - Public Health, SBC.
 - Radian Group.
 - Slough Children's Services Trust.
 - Slough Labour Party

3. The comments received have been collated and summarised in the table below.

Comments on Housing Strategy Consultation	
General	
Consider a housing provider protocol for a common approach to tenancy sustainment.	
Scale of recent rent/price increases has put many people on lower incomes under extreme pressure and problems affording rents/mortgages.	
Council should work to ensure correct match of accommodation for local demand/needs. General market is not supplying this. Instead marketing homes in London adds to local pressures.	
More affordable housing for those who are Slough residents, to be purchased as a home and not buy to let. I have lived in Slough all my life but cannot afford to buy my own home.	
Slough housing should be a priority for Slough residents and workers. With a qualification period.	
Slough is already overcrowded and need no new residents sort out the ones we have now before more are dumped on us.	
Slough Borough Council are accepting tenants from London as the rent is sky high there and housing them in Slough as the London councils are able to pay the rent in this area. Hence why they want to send people up north so Slough Council can ay the cheaper rents up there.	
Overall Strategy is well-written and very ambitious.	
Theme 1; New Housing Supply	
I object to the proposal to develop a garden suburb in South Bucks. It is unfair to people who chose to live in a semi-rural location.	
How will the whole infrastructure cope with the increased population?	
The council need to keep rents at social rents not market rents.	

What about shared ownership schemes in Slough for people who can't get on the Housing register? Buying on the open market is not an option but there are not enough shared ownership properties coming up.	
New Housing sometimes very costly for families with a single earner. They can't raise a deposit for a property they want to buy.	
While largely in agreement I object to the search for other land, eg garage areas where this would have a negative impact. The Council should provide new homes via larger complexes.	
Can the Council ensure it will not accept financial settlement instead of affordable accommodation?	
On smaller developments all developer contributions to be used to provide additional affordable accommodation.	
Provision of new affordable housing restricted to key workers is a retrograde step as for RPs this creates void periods. Better to address this through the Allocations policy.	
Unhelpful the SHMA does not differentiate between the need for "target" rent and "affordable" rent. As this is crucial in meeting housing need and overall scheme viability.	
Slough should develop a clear policy on provision of social rented/affordable rented housing as there is a direct correlation between delivering a small amount of social rented housing and more affordable rented.	
Not enough homes available at low (genuinely affordable) rents in Slough.	
May be an opportunity for Slough to attract grant on land disposals, SOAHP for non-S106 units which can deliver rent to buy units and there may be grant available for affordable rented and shared ownership and land led schemes.	
Establishment of subsidiary housing companies is a positive move but important they unlock sites that would otherwise not come forward.	
Need a proper definition of what percentage of income is "Affordable." 70%+ of market rent is o use as affordable either.	
Should be a reasonable ratio of housing costs to earnings.	
New supply generated by the Council should be at social rents levels or close to it, not at market rent.	
Rents should be benchmarked a proportion of the national minimum wage or average local earnings.	
Housing companies should be used to increase availability of social housing, not just add to those available at market rates.	
If green belt sites are to be released they should be designated for social/affordable homes.	
Council should commission more housebuilding. Small numbers proposed barely exceed Right to Buy sales.	
Infrastructure required to support new homes doesn't seem to be properly considered – schools, GPs surgeries, Parking. Planning must ensure development is sustainable in the long term.	
Important to bring empty homes and flats above shops into use.	
Saturation of new flats in former office blocks around Town Centre is not valuable new supply in addressing Slough's issues. Dormitory area around Slough station have no sense of community.	
Slough High St is dying. Slough needs housing for local families – with gardens, not more high-rise flats.	

Theme 2; Private Sector Homes	
There are units in Slough that the Borough Council has responsibility for maintaining that are in a shocking condition, eg XXXXXXX. Will the Council undertake to repair these long-standing issues that are affecting peoples' lives and health?	
Borough-wide Registration scheme is required but only effective with enforcement, tackling the worst/rogue landlords. Appears to be limited at the moment.	
Is there a "Rogue Landlords Hotline? If so it should be publicised.	
Good communications with landlords about their responsibilities is important. More and better communication may help them understand consequences of letting to other boroughs.	
Council should establish better working relationships with local estate agents to help prevent London Boroughs renting en bloc.	
Request all semi-independent accommodation for young people register as an HMO	
How will Housing work with the private rented sector to ensure it contributes to meeting the needs of vulnerable households?	
Theme 3; Council Homes	
People who were on the housing list and taken off because they were private renting should be given new housing first. People who have lived in Slough all their lives and paid into the system should come first	
There must be extra points for families with young children in social housing. They must not be on the register more than a year	
It's wonderful that the Council is being pro-active in its housing strategy but they need to work with, not against council tenants who are having their Housing benefit restricted.	
More council rented properties as private rented properties have families in one room with shared kitchen/bathroom.	
Council housing should be expanded with a legal protection that it should never be sold.	
I was second on the housing list whilst I was private renting. Then the new housing register came in and because I was adequately housed I was not allowed to re-join the list.	
I got taken off the list after 5 years. The reason was I was in the private sector renting and I was adequately housed for my needs. Maybe but the cost of private renting is excessive.	
You can start by putting local people in the houses instead of leaving families on the list from Britwell and putting people from Langley in the houses just built in Britwell.	
Houses for people who just arrive here.	
It's not fair with the people living in Slough for decades they should get first priority.	
Council houses should only be available to those born and bred in the town and private rentals should have the amount charged capped at the same price as council owned properties.	
Give priority for council homes to people who work unless they have a disability. Stop selling social housing.	
Increase resources for investigations into fraudulent tenancies and improper Right to Buy sales.	
New build proportions are too low for social/affordable homes. Local	

people will be priced out of forced out of Slough.	
Affordable rents should be pegged to average local income. And flexible to respond to circumstances, eg losing a job. Council should not be relying on Housing benefit or Universal Credit as an income stream.	
Concierge services in larger Council blocks would make them feel safer, more secure and desirable. They are scary places at present.	
Council Estate managers are moved around too often/too quickly. No continuity of service.	
Usually takes calls to several officers to get even simple things done. No one takes responsibility for solving anything and they all relentlessly pass the buck. Service charges are hefty for not much service.	
Massive changes in national housing policy make a 30 year Business Plan meaningless. Council should have a detailed 10 year plan for Housing with longer-term sketched out for flexibility.	
How can Housing make better use of communal facilities such as lounges for the benefit of the wider community – eg to reduce social isolation.	
More joint work with Public Health overcrowding and HMOs to improve physical and mental health, educational attainment and personal safety.	
BRE report has done a good job in identifying Slough housing stock. We can use this to direct health interventions.	
Theme 4; Homelessness and Housing Need	
This is excellent as I am a volunteer working with homeless people. At last some good news on the horizon.	
The Council should restrict the number of people taken into the Borough on behalf of London councils as this eats up homes locally.	
I think the housing crisis in Slough is awful. Stop letting people come to Slough when they are homeless for temporary accommodation and for social/council houses and help house the people who have lived in Slough all their lives.	
Residency test/proof of local connection an effective tool to make supply of social/affordable homes available to meet local need.	
There are more homeless in Slough than you are saying and actions speak louder than words.	
Council should be more pro-active in block-leasing new build accommodation for its own needs – seems limited at the moment.	
Slough staff esp. housing section are poorly trained and have no respect for people. No one likes to be homeless. The way they handle cases is unprofessional.	
I'm currently sofa surfing and desperate for accommodation. I'm single. No kids. Is there an age restriction?	
Can the Council ensure that the difficulties incoming homelessness may cause will not distract it from having an effective policy to house all in need in Slough?	
There is a view the council has reduced its provision (for homeless people) eg no longer using the Foyer and relying on the charity sector. The Council still has an obligation to lead.	
Will the Council adopt a policy of meeting the very basic needs of people to have warmth from the elements during the day?	
Integrated resource to work with individuals in sustaining them within their own home.	
Consider how to include care and support needs in development of	

Homelessness Prevention Plan.	
Health/Housing joint working to address health and care needs of vulnerable homeless people placed locally.	
Theme 5; Special Housing Needs and Vulnerable Groups	
Can we be confident the Housing Strategy will protect vulnerable people including those with mental health needs and problems with drugs and alcohol? In the past they have been regarded as unsuitable tenants.	
Not enough specialist accommodation available for vulnerable people or young people.	
Stock of accommodation for care leavers is important.	
Who will run the 3 "mixed-care" facilities? Quality management is important	
Quality, modern, older peoples' housing is required. particularly to encourage older people to downsize and liberate family homes. Quality is more important than a £1,000 cheque to incentivise moving.	
Proper strategy for older peoples' housing is required. Bill for care could be reduced with more fit-for-purpose accommodation.	
Ground-floor dwellings in Council flatted blocks should be reserved for those with mobility restrictions. Too many tenants with health/mobility problems are stuck on upper floors.	
Public Health can work with Housing to target low income families in supported housing to improve resilience and mental wellbeing as well as signpost to activities and interventions that enhance quality of life.	
Explore the provision of a 'training flat' to help young people develop their independence skills, and to prepare them for full independence in their own accommodation	
Commitment to work more closely with Health/CCG	
Commitment to explore how good practice examples from the "Healthy New Towns" initiative can be incorporated into new developments in Slough	
How to lever in alternative funding resources into the development more specialist supported housing provision including ensuring government grant opportunities are fully utilised in Slough.	
Ensure new housing design factors in long term sustainability by being flexible enough to meet future needs such as Lifetimes Homes Standards	
Include statement about exploring the incorporation of "age friendly" design principles in new housing developments	
Building sufficient accommodation suitable for wheelchair users or other people with disabilities including sensory needs.	
Incorporate Housing First approach to meeting future needs rather than larger hostel type developments especially for single homeless, people with mental health problems and vulnerable young people.	
Commitment to join up information and advice/housing options/prevention advice as effectively as possible to ensure peoples wider needs are met	
A statement on how housing will work in partnership/ integrate into the health/care and support offer	
Ways to ensure intelligence on all housing needs is fed into the JSNA to make future commissioning more effective.	

How the DFG can be the vehicle for better integrated working between housing/health and Care and ensure adaptations maintain people in their accommodation for longer.	
Statement of how housing can contribute to avoiding delays in hospital discharges.	
Develop improved information sharing agreement between ASC and Housing Services to help improve outcomes for at risk clients.	
It is essential to hold a longer term view on how to address the housing needs of older people for suitable housing; to emphasise “rightsizing” rather than “downsizing”, to create self-supporting communities rather than building houses, to focus on care and repair services and finally to ensure that all new homes are built to enable occupiers to age in place.	
A different “design logic” than in conventional senior housing is required, but offer the opportunity for a more meaningful housing offer, that is future-proof.	
Public Health can work with Housing and planning to ensure that the new housing stock is planned with this in mind.	
Older People in Private Rented Accommodation In the longer term, homeownership is likely to decline for future generations as the private rented sector continues to expand. Increasing numbers of older people find and will find themselves living in rented property.	
Proactive identification by environmental health of properties in a bad state of disrepair to protect older vulnerable tenants especially where it represents a health hazard	
Improve accessibility and heating standards, and offer better protection from bad landlords.	
Ensure private tenants have better access to DFGs and other forms of assistance that support independent living.	
Encourage institutional investors and housing associations to deliver higher quality private rented housing that is suitable for older people in terms of flexible tenancies, accessibility, regular maintenance, location and cost.	
Continue to support older tenants to find suitable alternative accommodation where their home has become unsuitable or a danger to their health and well-being.	
Work with partners to improve information and advice to vulnerable older people who are experiencing problems.	
Special attention should be given to regulated older tenants who are vulnerable to harassment and illegal eviction or who struggle to get repairs carried out. Public Health Yes- with a future commitment to produce a joined-up Older persons Strategy to address these wider issues.	