

Resident Questions for Housing Area Panel

Department	Housing
Date question raised	28/06/2022
Date of Area Panel	17/08/2022
Area in city	North
Star rating applied by residents	3 star – city wide issue
Deadline for officer response	25/07/2022
Name of officer responding	Diane Hughes
Officer job title	Regeneration Programme Manager Interim Head of Strategy & Supply
Title of Question:	Lack of Social Housing for Families
Issue:	There is not enough social housing (houses, rather than flats) for families in Brighton and Hove. The Council are failing to address this problem.
Background:	<p>There are 8,000 people on the Council housing waiting list (2,000 of whom are in temporary accommodation).</p> <p>There are not enough suitable houses being built and insufficient housing stock to accommodate people on the waiting list who have children (houses with gardens). There are flats being built, but these are not suitable for families (due to noise, lack of green/outdoor space).</p> <p>Where flats are being built, there are no green spaces and parks nearby for young families (e.g., Bates Estate – there are no play areas in the vicinity of the new builds). Because of lack of suitable housing for families, there is an added problem of schools in the local area struggling to fill up places.</p> <p>Because there is a lack of suitable housing for families in the city, people are being forced to move out of Brighton, away from family support and social networks, even if they have lived in the city all their lives.</p> <p>There are at least 3 Council houses in the Hollingdean area which are currently empty and would be suitable for families.</p> <p>Families are being housed in unsuitable Council properties – such as 1 or 2-bedroom flats.</p> <p>Council land is being sold off to private property developers, rather than being used to build housing stock that would be suitable for families and meeting the need for affordable and social housing.</p>

Action requested by residents:

- 1) How is the Council currently addressing the issue of lack of suitable social housing for families (houses, rather than flats)?
- 2) What is the Council's strategy and policy in rebuilding housing stock specifically to accommodate families? (Houses, rather than flats)
- 3) Why is the Council selling off land, where this could be used to build homes suitable for families, and meet the increasing demand for social housing?

Officer Response: Jo Thompson**Officer contact details:**

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Response:

Thank you for your questions. As of 11 July 2022, there were 4,661 households on the Housing Register with 24% of those households requiring a property size of three bedrooms or more.

The New Homes for Neighbourhoods programme builds a range of accommodation in line with the council's preferred housing mix which is supplied to all developers in the city. This is currently set at 30% one bedroom, 45% two bedroom and 25% three plus bedroom properties. Whilst we may not be able to deliver the mix on every site, we aim to achieve the overall percentage of 25% of family units across the entire new build programme to meet need.

Each new site coming forward will be reviewed to see what can be accommodated whether that is houses, flats or a mix of both. New Homes for Neighbourhoods have delivered a number of houses to date at Aldwick Mews, Flint Close, Pierre Close and Lynchet Close. A new scheme at Rotherfield Crescent will also deliver houses.

Where larger sized flats are provided, consideration is given to the available outside space e.g., balconies, communal gardens and local facilities such as schools, play areas. For example, the new development at Victoria Road, Portslade which is due for delivery later this year has 10 x 3 bed flats with private balconies, patios at ground floor and extensive communal gardens. It is also opposite Victoria Road Recreation Ground with play area, bowls and football pitches. The proposed housing scheme at Moulsecomb which will be considered by Planning Committee aims to have 54 x 3 bed (5-6 person) and 8 x 4 bed (7 person) flats with 3G sport pitches, skate park, public open space and associated infrastructure to support family living.

Housing Associations in the city also develop new housing and a number of houses are due to be provided at new developments in the city. Examples are at Swallows Rise, Portslade, St Aubyns, Rottingdean and Coombe Farm, Saltdean. Affordable rented homes will be allocated to applicants on the Housing Register and let through Homemove.

In addition to the new build schemes the council has a Transfer Incentive Scheme to encourage residents who are under occupying their home to move to smaller accommodation, thereby freeing up family sized homes for households on the Housing Register. In the case of Hawkrigde Court (on the Bates Estate), the decision was taken to actively encourage people currently under occupying family housing in the surrounding area to downsize into the one and two bedroom properties within the development, thus releasing those council homes for families. This was reflected in the Local Lettings Plan for this new build scheme. This approach will also be considered at other new build sites.

The council is committed to increasing the supply of social housing and has a target to deliver 800 additional council homes. All sites owned by the council are explored for their potential to accommodate housing development before being considered for anything else, including other uses or private sale. They are referred directly to the Estate Regeneration Team who manages the New Homes for Neighbourhoods programme for feasibility and assessment as potential housing sites.

Specific Action:

Action:

Response complete

Timeline:

Start date:

N/A

End date:

N/A

