

Appendix 2: Summary of Consultation Outcomes

Consultation Question	Summary of Responses	General Comments from Respondees	Harrow Response
<p>1. <i>Where do you live now?</i></p>	<p>Responded overall - 254</p> <p>Responded - 209</p> <p>27% of those who took part in the consultation events were Council tenants. Across Harrow as a whole, the proportion of households who are Council tenants is 5.2%. A high number of council tenants have responded due to the location of the consultation events which included road shows on many of Harrow's council owned housing estates. 7% of respondees were housing association tenants.</p> <p>The private rented sector response at 20% of the total is representative of the level seen across Harrow. 30% of respondees were private owners and 4% were leaseholders which is somewhat below the proportion of homeowners across the borough (around 70%). Again this is likely due to the targeted locations of the road show event.</p> <p>The remainder of the respondees were living with family and friends (11%) or in temporary private rent (1%).</p>		<p>The consultation approach has meant that we have had responses from residents living in a wide range of tenures. This includes households who are currently not living in social housing and who are therefore most affected by the proposed changes relating to rent levels and type of tenancy.</p>

<p>2. Do you think you will need to move home in the future?</p>	<p>Responded - 202</p> <p>57% of those who answered said yes, that it was likely they may need to move. Many were unsure of their housing options if they had to move, especially those in the private rented sector.</p> <p>The high number of people who said that they felt they would need to move again is likely to be due to the fact that the majority of those who responded were non home owners (around 70%).</p> <p>Almost 70% of 25-34 year olds said that they would need to move home again in the future making this age group the most likely to feel that they will move home. Only 31% of 55-64 year olds said yes to this question.</p>	<p><i>"I rent a room in a shared house...I am a single working woman who feels disenfranchised and does not vote... would like self contained flat with affordable rent. Does not understand why housing is not more accessible to single childless people."</i></p> <p><i>"If I was to increase my family size I'm not sure of my options".</i></p> <p><i>"I would like to move from private rent to shared ownership eventually"</i></p> <p><i>"Yes - I'm living with family as private rent was too high and too over-crowded. I work freelance so it is difficult to demonstrate a steady income and studio apartments are at least £690 per month in Harrow."</i></p> <p><i>"Yes, I might need to move to a smaller property because of health but I want to stay close to my family in Harrow."</i></p>	
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<p>3. Do you think we need more affordable housing for rent, especially family housing (3 bedrooms or more)?</p>	<p>Responded – 229</p> <p>87% of those who answered said that yes, Harrow does in their view need more affordable housing for rent.</p> <p>Many people were worried about the lack of larger affordable properties and the long wait for such properties especially on the council’s housing waiting list.</p> <p>Waiting times for larger 3 bed properties in Harrow can be as long as 6-12 years depending on the applicant’s circumstances and the availability of larger homes and many of those who responded were aware of the length of time they may have to wait for a suitably sized property.</p> <p>Within the age groups, 91% of the 65+ group said yes to this question while 81-82% of 25-54 year olds also said yes to this question.</p> <p>Across all tenures, 70% or more of respondees replied yes to this question.</p>	<p><i>“As long as they are affordable for working people”</i></p> <p><i>“(Yes)…provides a better alternative to the private rented sector”</i></p> <p><i>“I am currently in temporary accommodation (and have been for the last 10 years). I would hope to be re-housed permanently sometime in the future.”</i></p> <p><i>“Whenever I am able to get a higher paying job and save for a suitable deposit as buying a property is very expensive in harrow, renting and unemployment is high, wages are low. Council waiting list is long and I was taken off the waiting list 6 years ago as they did receive renew in post even though it was sent. Then told to re submit an application form. I became frustrated and did not resubmit as I gave up hope as I believed I would just have to start right at the beginning again. I’m just trying to have faith.”</i></p>	<p>Households from all tenures recognise the importance of having affordable housing for rent and this supports housing policies in the Core Strategy as well as options included in the Housing Changes Review.</p>
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<p>4. Should we help people to own their own homes through shared ownership?</p>	<p>Responded - 224</p> <p>78% of people who responded said yes.</p> <p>It is clear from the responses to this question that there is still considerable support for low cost home ownership in Harrow across all tenures.</p> <p>As a follow on from question 2 above, many people when asked if they thought they would have to move in the future replied saying that they would like to move into shared ownership housing once they have a sufficient deposit saved.</p> <p>While there appears to be a general knowledge of shared ownership, there was not much awareness of how the scheme worked in practice or the other products</p>	<p><i>"Yes, and (Harrow) should build three bedroom houses also as there is a demand for such"</i></p> <p><i>"Not sure if it is a good scheme financially for the buyer."</i></p> <p><i>"Yes I think this is a good idea as it ensures that there are a wider range of housing options which cover life changes."</i></p>	<p>Noted that there is more to do in publicising current schemes. The new web based targeted housing options advice scheme will assist with the promotion of shared ownership options.</p> <p>Noted that shared ownership is an option to be included within the range of affordable housing to be negotiated and developed.</p>

	<p>that may be available in Harrow.</p> <p>The age groups who supported people owning their homes most strongly were the 35-44 and 55+ groups.</p>		
<p>5. Should we encourage people to move out of Harrow in the long term if they will find more suitable and affordable housing?</p>	<p>Responded – 212</p> <p>57% of those who responded said that yes, we should encourage people to move for suitable accommodation.</p> <p>Many of the people who said yes to this question were keen to stress that nobody should be forced out of the borough but should be encouraged to explore the possibility that living outside Harrow would be the best option for their long term housing stability.</p> <p>When the analysis was split down by tenure, it was interesting to note that those in temporary accommodation were most supportive of this option although the response level was low from this tenure. Leaseholders were the least supportive overall. Around 50% or more of respondees from other tenures replied yes to this question.</p>	<p><i>“Yes but this should be by natural progression rather than by force”</i></p> <p><i>“Yes but this also depends on schooling. It is often hard for older children to settle if moved”</i></p> <p><i>“Yes but it also depends if they work and if they have children”</i></p> <p><i>“No – friends family etc... would be isolated”</i></p> <p><i>“Depends, not if disruptive to young children and only if practical for household.”</i></p> <p><i>“If they individual wants to, yes. People with longstanding links to Harrow should be given a choice.”</i></p>	<p>This option is proposed to be taken forward subject to further impact assessment. Agreed that the specific needs of households need to be taken into account when discussing options. There will be further consultation before recommendation is finalised.</p>
<p>6. There is limited funding to support new affordable housing development. If we want to continue</p>	<p>Responded – 124</p> <p>The response to this question was less clear cut. There was less support for</p>	<p><i>“Social rent levels might be increased in line with comparables in the private rented sector which might</i></p>	<p>We will undertake further work with housing associations to assess how much rents can be</p>

<p><i>building affordable housing there are some options to consider. Which option do you support?</i></p>	<p>developing new affordable housing at higher rent levels overall (26%) and most people favoured a hybrid approach of increasing rents by a small amount to ensure affordability (37%).</p> <p>36% of people who answered favoured building at current rent levels.</p> <p>Responses also depended on who you asked as can be seen from the equalities analysis e.g. existing Council tenants were less likely to agree to an increase in rents and more likely to suggest that we should continue building at current rent levels whilst those in the private rented and owner occupier tenures held the opposite opinion.</p>	<p><i>make increase fairer overall.”</i></p> <p><i>“Any rent increases should depend on household income changes.”</i></p> <p><i>“Rents should be increased for those who can afford it so long as the increased rent goes towards new affordable housing.”</i></p> <p><i>“Higher rents – the margin has to be felt by individuals.”</i></p>	<p>increased whilst ensuring affordability. There will be further consultation before recommendation is finalised.</p>
<p><i>7. The government is allowing councils to offer fixed term tenancies, generally 5 years (or 2 years in exceptional circumstances). Would it be fair to offer shorter tenancies to new tenants in Harrow so that we have more tenancies to go round?</i></p>	<p>Responded – 210</p> <p>69% said that they agreed that it would be fair if Harrow offered shorter term tenancies. 20% of respondents were of the opinion that this would not be fair in any situation.</p> <p>Many people also pointed out that reviews at the end of tenancies would have to be undertaken fairly to ensure community stability and that options which allowed people to stay in their homes such as charging higher rents where appropriate might be fair.</p>	<p><i>“Yes it would be fair to review tenancies periodically but it also depends on the individual circumstances of the household.”</i></p> <p><i>“There needs to be stability for young people.”</i></p> <p><i>“Look at the income of the family. Those working should be in a position to keep their employment should they be asked to move.”</i></p>	<p>This option is proposed to be taken forward subject to further impact assessment. Agreed that the Review process needs to ensure that the specific needs of households is taken into account and is open and transparent. There will be further consultation before recommendation is finalised.</p>

	When split by tenure, those currently in temporary accommodation were least supportive of these proposals, followed by council tenants while private renters were most supportive. 60% of respondees across each of the other tenures were supportive of these proposals	<i>"...memories, accomplishments, rebuilding families, building a life for some, might not be a good idea to cause upheaval in certain circumstances."</i>	
8. Should some groups (like older people or people with disabilities) whose circumstances are not likely to change always be offered much longer or lifetime tenancies?	<p>Responded – 214</p> <p>87% of those who responded to this question said that Harrow should continue to offer longer tenancies to certain groups such as older people and those with disabilities. Many people suggested that vulnerable groups including disabled and the elderly should be excluded from fixed term tenancies.</p> <p>Council tenants were most supportive of this proposal and the age groups 55-64 and 65+ were unsurprisingly the most supportive age groups with 57 out of 58 people in these groups responding with a 'yes'. Over 65% of respondees in each of the other tenures replied yes to this question.</p>	<p><i>"Yes, especially those with disabilities."</i></p> <p><i>"Yes, always in these circumstances."</i></p> <p><i>"10-20 years and then reassess."</i></p> <p><i>"No, review for all cases as needs change over time."</i></p> <p><i>"Yes, but each case on its own merits."</i></p> <p><i>"Yes and this could mean moving to different addresses depending on changing needs."</i></p> <p><i>"Yes if they are Harrow based residents."</i></p>	Noted and will be incorporated in actions outlined above.
9. Which people should we give priority for affordable housing to	<p>Responded – 212</p> <p>Many of the people we spoke with</p>	<i>"...should be allocated entirely on the basis of</i>	This option is proposed to be taken forward subject to further impact

<p><i>when making allocations?</i></p>	<p>suggested that priority should be given to people in low paid employment (56%) as well as households with a medical condition which requires the allocation of council housing (41%).</p> <p>Many people also stressed that the council should means test applicants and assess their rent payment records over the past number of years to ensure that those who receive the benefit of council housing respect what they have received.</p>	<p><i>need, not for political reasons”</i></p> <p><i>“People who have a good history of paying their rent themselves and being good neighbours”</i></p> <p><i>“People who contribute to their communities in the long terms should be recognised to a degree.”</i></p> <p><i>“The Housing Policy in England and Wales is completely warped. It should be skewed towards helping working families who have struggled to pay their own rents for years to remain in temporary accommodation. They have not constituted a burden to the Welfare Bill but have continued to be penalised by being banded as low priority. Many such families (as myself) do not consider Homeownership either because of difficulty obtaining mortgages or not being able to afford to buy a suitably sized family home. So social rental is the only viable option.”</i></p>	<p>assessment. There will be further consultation before recommendation is finalised.</p>
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<p>10. Do you think the council should continue to provide services to help all homeless people find a private rented home?</p>	<p>Responded – 157</p> <p>81% of people said yes to this question and it was generally considered that people should be presented with their options and rights.</p> <p>As can be seen from the general comments made in response to this question, some people felt that it was highly important that the council offered an options service as some people would not be in a position to help themselves.</p> <p>Existing Housing Association tenants were most supportive of continuing to provide the service while existing council tenants were the least supportive (less than 50% said yes).</p>	<p><i>“...should meet certain criteria (for help) e.g. character and willingness (to help themselves).”</i></p> <p><i>“It is important that people are presented with their options as not all people are willing or able to go out and find out their rights, so yes, the council should continue to help in this regard or there may be more people on the street.”</i></p> <p><i>“Should all be vetted from the start including previous tenancy history and behaviour, some people will not help themselves through disruption.”</i></p>	<p>Noted and it is proposed that this service is continued. Enhancements to existing face to face service are already underway through introduction of the web based Targeted Housing Options service.</p>
<p>11. Do you think we should encourage or enforce higher standards in the private rented sector?</p>	<p>Responded – 152</p> <p>85% of those who responded to this question supported Harrow in encouraging higher standards in the private rented sector.</p> <p>Many people who were living in the private rented sector at the time of the consultation indicated that at the lower end of the market landlords may be renting out below standard properties due to the high demand in this sector.</p>	<p><i>“Yes but there are limits to what the council can do with the private sector...?”</i></p> <p><i>“Yes I have looked at places which are expensive and very poor quality”</i></p> <p><i>“Standards in the private rented sector should be the same as that of the social sector.”</i></p>	<p>We propose to review how the Council can improve private rented sector housing standards.</p>

	Perhaps unsurprisingly, those living in private rented and temporary accommodation were most supportive of improving standards in the private rented sector.		
Questions to Council Tenants only:			
12. Do you think that the council should increase rents as much as possible every year on an annual basis to enable further investment in the housing stock?	<p>Responded – 86</p> <p>Around half (53% or 46 people) of those who responded to this proposal disagreed that rents should be increased as much as possible to enable reinvestment.</p> <p>35% of those who responded (30 people) agreed that rents should be increased to enable reinvestment and the remaining 12% were not sure.</p> <p>It should be noted that this question was only asked to existing council tenants.</p>	<p><i>“Not necessarily, rents should always be realistically affordable”</i></p> <p><i>“Increases should reflect increases in wages, not a comparison with other rents”</i></p> <p><i>“Doesn’t matter as Housing Benefit would take care of most increases?”</i></p> <p><i>“No, not when there is a recession going on.”</i></p> <p><i>“Maybe a little increase would be ok.”</i></p>	The responses to the questions to Council tenants only will be considered as the Council’s HRA Business Plan is taken forward under self financing for completion in April 2012. The Councils Tenant and Leaseholder Consultative Forum (TLCF) has already started considering spending priorities under self financing and will oversee completion of the Business Plan.
13. Which of the following would be your spending priority?	<p>Responded - 74</p> <p>Building new homes (26%/46 people) was the most popular choice as a spending priority while improving energy efficiency was another significant option.</p>	<i>“With inflation increasing, everything is therefore costing a lot more (plus energy costs rising), but salaries are not increasing. Therefore there is a lot less disposable income so rents</i>	

	<p>To a lesser extent, people said improving kitchens and bathrooms, open space and paying off council debts should be prioritised (12-13%).</p> <p>Only 7% suggested that the caretaking service should be improved.</p>	<i>should be kept as low as possible...</i>																			
Equalities:																					
Age Groups	<table border="1"> <tr><td>16-24</td><td>20.88%</td></tr> <tr><td>25-34</td><td>17.27%</td></tr> <tr><td>35-44</td><td>20.08%</td></tr> <tr><td>45-54</td><td>16.47%</td></tr> <tr><td>55-64</td><td>13.25%</td></tr> <tr><td>65+</td><td>9.24%</td></tr> <tr><td>Prefer not to</td><td>2.81%</td></tr> </table>	16-24	20.88%	25-34	17.27%	35-44	20.08%	45-54	16.47%	55-64	13.25%	65+	9.24%	Prefer not to	2.81%						
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Disabilities	<table border="1"> <tr><td>Communication</td><td>0.38%</td></tr> <tr><td>Learning</td><td>0.38%</td></tr> <tr><td>Mobility</td><td>3.85%</td></tr> <tr><td>Visual</td><td>0.00%</td></tr> <tr><td>Hearing</td><td>1.15%</td></tr> <tr><td>Physical</td><td>3.85%</td></tr> <tr><td>Mental Health</td><td>4.62%</td></tr> <tr><td>Other</td><td>0.77%</td></tr> <tr><td>[No Response]</td><td>85.00%</td></tr> </table>	Communication	0.38%	Learning	0.38%	Mobility	3.85%	Visual	0.00%	Hearing	1.15%	Physical	3.85%	Mental Health	4.62%	Other	0.77%	[No Response]	85.00%		
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Sex	<table border="1"> <tr> <td>Male</td> <td>34.10%</td> </tr> <tr> <td>Female</td> <td>49.71%</td> </tr> <tr> <td>Prefer not to</td> <td>16.18%</td> </tr> </table>	Male	34.10%	Female	49.71%	Prefer not to	16.18%										
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Tenure	<table border="1"> <tr> <td>Council tenants</td> <td>27%</td> </tr> <tr> <td>HA tenant</td> <td>7%</td> </tr> <tr> <td>Leaseholder</td> <td>4%</td> </tr> <tr> <td>Private Owner</td> <td>30%</td> </tr> <tr> <td>Private rent</td> <td>20%</td> </tr> <tr> <td>Private rent temp</td> <td>1%</td> </tr> <tr> <td>Living Family/friends</td> <td>11%</td> </tr> </table>	Council tenants	27%	HA tenant	7%	Leaseholder	4%	Private Owner	30%	Private rent	20%	Private rent temp	1%	Living Family/friends	11%		
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Ethnicity	Asian or Asian British - Afghan	2.8%		
	Asian or... - Bangladeshi	0.8%		
	Asian or... - Indian	9.6%		
	Asian or... - Pakistani	2.4%		
	Asian or... - Sinhalese	0.4%		
	Asian or... - Sri Lankan Tamil	1.6%		
	Asian or... - other	2.0%		
	Black or Black British - Carib	4.4%		
	Black or... - Ghanaian	0.8%		
	Black or... British - Nigerian	0.4%		
	Black or... British - Somali	1.2%		
	Black or... British - other	2.0%		
	Other Ethnic Group - Arab	0.0%		
	Other Ethnic Group - Chinese	0.4%		
	Other Ethnic Group - Iranian	0.4%		
	Other Ethnic Group - Iraqi	0.0%		
	Other Ethnic Group - Kurdish	0.0%		
	Other Ethnic Group - Lebanese	0.0%		
	Other Ethnic Group - other	0.4%		
	Mixed - White & African	0.0%		
	Mixed - White & Caribbean	1.2%		
	Mixed - White & Asian	0.0%		
	Mixed - other	0.4%		
	White - Albanian	0.0%		
	White - British	20.5%		
	White - Gypsy/Roma Traveller	0.0%		
	White - Irish	2.0%		
	White - Irish Traveller	0.0%		
	White - Polish	2.0%		
	White - Romanian	0.0%		
	White - Serbian	0.0%		
	White - other	1.6%		
	Prefer not to state	42.6%		