

16 SEPTEMBER 2020

NEW FOREST DISTRICT COUNCIL

HOUSING OVERVIEW AND SCRUTINY PANEL

Minutes of a meeting of the Housing Overview and Scrutiny Panel held on Wednesday, 16 September 2020

- * Cllr Steve Davies (Chairman)
- * Cllr Ann Sevier (Vice-Chairman)

Councillors:

- * Anne Corbridge
- Kate Crisell
- * Jack Davies
- * Andrew Gossage

Councillors:

- Joshua Kidd
- Ian Murray
- * Caroline Rackham
- * Christine Ward

*Present

In attendance:

Councillors:

Jill Cleary

Officers Attending:

Tim Davis, Kirsty Farmer, Richard Knott, Grainne O'Rourke, Daniel Reynafarje and Karen Wardle

Apologies:

Apologies for absence were received from Cllr Kidd.

55 MINUTES

That the minutes of the meeting held on 17 June 2020 be signed by the Chairman as a correct record.

56 DECLARATIONS OF INTEREST

No declarations of interest were made by members in connection with an agenda item.

57 PUBLIC PARTICIPATION

No issues were raised in the public participation period.

58 PRIVATE SECTOR HOUSING STRATEGY

The Panel considered the draft Private Sector Housing Strategy.

Five strategic priorities had been identified in the strategy which included, achieving high standards in the private rented sector, supporting safe and independent living, energy efficiency measures and tackling privately owned empty homes. Each

strategic priority identified a series of actions. The accompanying report included a proposal for an additional full-time post, for a Housing Adaptations Surveyor, which would help the Council to complete the actions in priority 2, to enable safe independent living.

In response to a member question regarding whether the strategy would help those looking to rent for the first time, it was noted that the Private Sector Housing team, worked closely with the Housing Options and homelessness officers who could offer interest free loans to those who did not have the upfront payment of a deposit or rent in advance. Relevant landlord checks (e.g. up to date gas certificate) would also be carried out to ensure that the property was safe. The finances of the proposed tenant are assessed to ensure that the property was affordable, in order to reduce the risk of future homeless and give reassurance to the landlord that the rent would be paid.

Members noted that owners of empty homes were encouraged to lease their property to the Council, typically for a period of three years. The Council would pay a monthly rent to the owner, manage the property and at the end of the lease the property would be returned in the same condition as it had been at the beginning of the lease.

Members asked whether officers had identified further properties within the District which required an HMO licence. It was noted that the coronavirus pandemic had impacted on progress, however, officers had re-commenced work with Hoteliers providing staff accommodation to establish the need for a licence and that they met the required standards.

Members noted that in relation to disabled facilities grants, Officers were working with Hampshire County Council and Occupational Therapy Services to obtain funding to meet the needs of the District Council in a timely manner post the lock down period.

The Panel suggested that a review of the progress on the strategy be presented in six months. It was noted that various policies would be presented to the Panel in due course to fulfil the objectives of the Private Sector Housing Strategy.

RESOLVED:

That the proposed draft Private Sector Housing Strategy be supported.

59 HOUSING DEVELOPMENT PLAN

The Panel received a presentation on the Housing Development Plan (attached as an Appendix to these minutes).

A Housing Development Plan would help the Council to frame their aims and objectives regarding development; it would establish the focus, scope and parameters for development activities, documenting the decision-making processes, risks and financial assumptions that underpin the development activities, etc.

The Council set out a commitment within the Housing Strategy to seek to provide 600 new council homes for the period to 2026 with social rent, affordable rent and shared ownership tenures.

Members received details of the following elements of the Housing Development Plan:

- National and local planning policies;
- The Housing Vision;
- Programme of housing delivery to date;
- Direction of Travel: key actions, policy pillars and principles, development priorities, procurement and delivery routes;
- Development Standards for the homes to be provided;
- Financial parameters and risk;
- Decision making process; and
- Governance and audit

Members acknowledged the work required in order to deliver at least 600 homes by 2026, recognising the time it took to deliver housing, particularly in the current economic climate. It was noted that there were market opportunities to work in partnership with developers, and that a range of different housing types could be considered. There were also opportunities to seek funding from Homes England for larger affordable housing developments. Officers were working to identify opportunities for housing development in order to meet the housing objective to deliver at least 600 affordable homes by 2026.

60 HOUSING STRATEGY / HRA PROPERTY DEVELOPMENT AND ACQUISITION UPDATE

The Panel received a presentation providing an update on property development and acquisition.

Longer term voids: Three general need properties at Jones Lane, Hythe would be returned to occupation very shortly. In addition, Tourlands, currently a four room hostel, in Lymington would be converted to provide six units of temporary accommodation. A bid had been submitted to MHCLG, and provided it was successful, the works would need to be completed by the end of March 2021.

Affordable Housing completions: 16 units of affordable housing had been completed this financial year. This included, two buy-backs, eight new build homes (Crow Lane, Ringwood), two conversions (Wilson Court) and four units at 129 Ashley Road, New Milton.

A further 56 affordable housing units were expected to be delivered in 2020/21. Within this figure, an additional 17 properties had been added to the programme since the last meeting in June, this proposed two Shared Ownership properties in Fawley. A building contractor framework had been introduced which anticipated to reduce the time for contractors to commence work and carry out the necessary works. Three schemes had also been submitted for a Homes England Grant.

The Panel were shown a video of two completed schemes carried out by the District Council at 129 Ashley Road, New Milton and 19-21 Jones Lane, Hythe. The scheme in New Milton had converted a property into four individual flats with a communal garden. The work at the three Jones Lane properties had involved resolving problems of damp, increasing the ceiling height in the first floor to make the space habitable as well as complete refurbishment.

61 HOMELESSNESS UPDATE

The Panel received a presentation providing an update on homelessness.

Since the last meeting of the Panel, the demand for temporary accommodation had reduced which had enabled a greater focus on moving people onto more permanent accommodation. Housing officers had been working with other Council departments to put a COVID-19 contingency plan in place and had set aside three properties to be available to those who needed to self-isolate. All hotels and external accommodation had appropriate covid secure risk assessments in place which had been reviewed by officers.

The number of new rough sleepers continued to rise, with up to 20 verified and unverified cases. In addition to this more single people had approached the Council with the threat of becoming homeless.

Two bids had been submitted to MHCLG for the following:

1. £256,592 towards temporary accommodation and move on costs for the period 1 July 2020 to 31 March 2021.
2. Tourlands Hostel, Lymington: Redesign to provide a six unit supported accommodation facility for rough sleepers. It was proposed that three en-suite bedsits be provided on the ground floor for those with high needs, with a shared kitchen and office. On the first floor three self-contained flats were proposed for semi-independent living. The bid also sought support for three years for a day-time support worker who would provide training and support to the residents.

The outcome of these bids was expected before the end October.

In August there had been 11 approaches for Temporary Accommodation and in the last six months there had been 120 approaches in total. At the current time 45 households were in external temporary accommodation.

Since March 2020, 80 applicants had moved on from emergency temporary accommodation, the majority of these had moved to the private rented sector. It was noted that officers regularly checked the welfare of any rough sleepers. In response to a question from members about approaches to the Council due to domestic violence over the coronavirus pandemic, it was noted that only a couple of cases had approached as a result of violent or abusive relationships.

62 PORTFOLIO HOLDER UPDATES

The Portfolio Holder for Housing Services reported that the housing team had been very busy and the updates had been provided at the meeting. She praised the hard work and dedication of the housing team.

63 WORK PROGRAMME**RESOLVED:**

That the Work Programme be noted.

64 DATES OF MEETINGS 2021/2022

RESOLVED:

That the following meeting dates for 2021/22 be approved:

- 16 June 2021
- 15 September 2021
- 19 January 2022
- 16 March 2022

CHAIRMAN

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Draft Housing Development Plan

Tim Davis
Service Manager
Housing Strategy and Development

Housing Overview & Scrutiny Panel
16th September 2020

Why have a Housing Development Plan?

- A business plan to frame our development aims and objectives
- To establish focus, scope and parameters for our development activities
- To document our primary evaluation and decision-making processes
- To document the physical standards and financial assumptions that underpin our development activities
- To recognise and to set out our development processes and procedures; our approach to risk and to risk mitigation
- Consistency of approach; clarity of purpose. A benchmark to measure against. A mandate to work within.
- A commitment in the Housing Strategy 2018



Foreword and Introduction

Foreword

- Housing Strategy vision & at least 600 over 8 years to 2026
- Corporate and political commitment
- Single largest providing of affordable housing
- Leadership: rising to the local expectations
- Optimising the ability to build and borrow
- The Park and the District working together



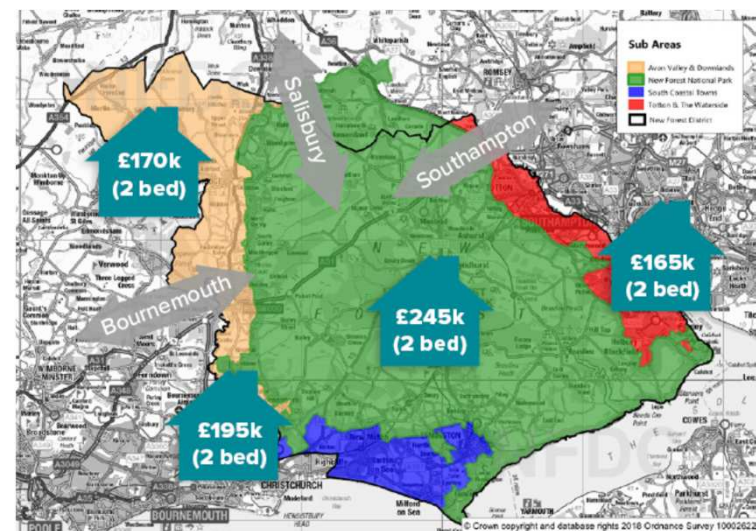
Introduction

- Quietly building before but now taking a leadership position
- Strength of the HRA & our capacity to invest circa £100m in new affordable housing
- Multiple fronts and activities – tenure, needs, working with the new HAP; tackling homelessness, temporary accommodation, home ownership.
- Increased diversification and risks – requires structure, planning, process & monitoring.

Setting the scene.....

Local policy context, housing requirements and housing need

- Alignment with national and local housing and planning policy and priorities
- The scale and nature of need and demand – market, affordable, Housing Registers.
- Influencing and optimising the newly adopted local plan
- The wider impact/importance to the towns and the rural areas of the New Forest



Where are we now?

Primary objectives

- The Housing Vision, the wider strategic housing objectives and the primary development objectives

⇒ *“We will seek to provide 600 new council homes for the period to 2026 with social rent, affordable rent and shared ownership tenures.”*

“By using reserves, receipts from the sale of council homes and new borrowing capacity, the council intends to maximise the delivery of affordable housing during the first ten years of the Local Plan period (to 2026). It will do so through the optimisation of planning policies, developing its own land, acquisitions from developers working in the district and working with other partners and stakeholders including the National Park Authority, town and parish council, Registered Providers, developers and communities.”

Where are we now?

Delivery to date

- The Housing Vision, the wider strategic housing objectives and the primary development objectives

NFDC Housing Strategy 2018 - 2020	Actual Programme	
	Yr 1 (18/19)	Yr 2 (19/20)
Buy-Backs: Acquisitions (Ex RTB)	15	15
<u>New Build</u>		
Crow Lane1, Ringwood (S106)	17	
Alexandra Rd, Lymington (S106)	17	
Compton & Sarum, Calmore: (NFDC land)		35
Stocklands, Totton: (NFDC land)		20
Crow Lane 2, Ringwood (S106)		15
Ocknell Grove, Hythe (Lease reversion)		3
Pentagon Court, Fawley (Lease reversion)	6	
Lawrence Hse, Hythe (stock conversion)	2	
Corbin Crt, Lymington (Stock conversion)		2
Overall property delivered	57	90

Where are we heading? (1)

Ongoing key actions to meet the primary objective

To optimize delivery by 2026 the following will be implemented and regularly reviewed for effectiveness:

- Making best use of NFDC resources and assets
- Positioning so that all arising housing development opportunities are known about, reviewed, and optimized to increase provision.
- Informing and align guidance on the type, tenure, size and mix of affordable housing
- The establishment of a diverse and resilient pipeline for 3-5+ years
- Scrutiny and viability appraisals on projects including cost benefit evaluation of alternatives
- Collaborative development partnership working across NFDC Finance, Planning, Housing Need, Housing Management Asset Teams
- Maintaining a strong housing needs intelligence and enabling base, capable of leading and informing development opportunities for all affordable housing types and tenures across the New Forest

Where are we heading? (2)

Policy pillars and principles

- Tenure types within the scope of development programme
 - Social Rent, Affordable Rent and Shared-Ownership
 - General Need and Temporary Accommodation
- Outcomes that fit the Housing Allocation Policy and Shared-Ownership Policy
- Affordable homes for those with a local connection

Development priorities

- The provision of Temporary and Emergency Accommodation schemes across the District to provide supported housing alternatives to 'Bed and Breakfast'.
- The delivery of larger scale affordable housing schemes through partnerships with developers, including S106 affordable homes required under planning
- Shared-ownership for those who need affordable housing but are unlikely to secure social housing
- The return to use of long-term NFDC void properties
- New-build schemes in rural as well as urban settlements
- The optimization of all NFDC land and property interests including existing stock suitable for conversion and underused garage forecourts which could lend themselves to redevelopment.
- Development projects in key locations that could 'unlock' under-occupied larger homes.

Where are we heading? (3)

Procurement and delivery routes

- Fitting into NFDC procurement rules and requirements
 - Building Contractors and Professional Consultants Frameworks
- Delivery contract methods
- Wayfarer – our route to Homes England Grant
- Delivery methods and position statement
 - Own assets
 - Planning and Local Plans (S106)
 - Purchasing properties ('Buy Backs')
 - Land assembly and land purchase
 - Joint Ventures
 - Land buying (banking, forward funding and options)

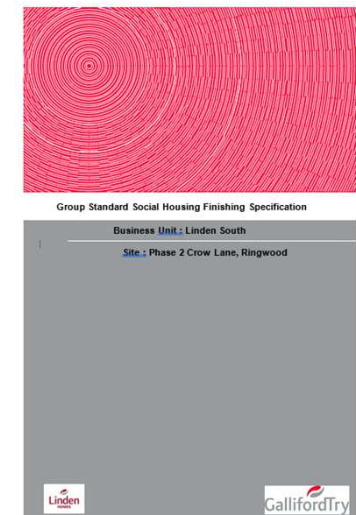
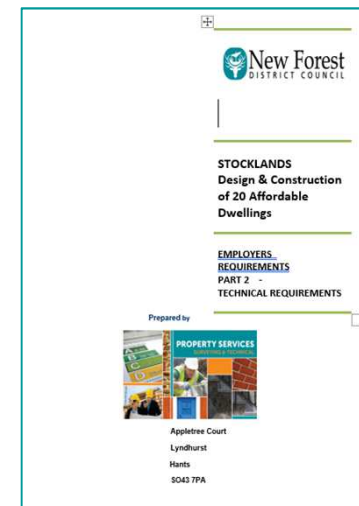
The homes we are providing

Development standards

- Position and mission statement on the homes we wish to build and the future legacy
- Driven to optimise, but always supporting and working within adopted local policy in the New Forest
- Working towards a NFDC design brief, specification and 'Employers Requirements'.
 - but the need to recognise the different scope for different procurement routes
- Environmental sustainability, modern methods of construction and Greener Housing
- Local procurement, local economy and local labour

4.5. Kitchen sink and taps

	RENTAL	SHARED OWNERSHIP
Sink	Leisure Tap centre single bowl, single drainer two tap holes LE95L/PTC in stainless steel, included with pack sink waste and pillar taps	Leisure Tap centre 1 bowl single tap hole LE95/TCAF35 in stainless steel, included with pack sink waste and monobloc tap
		
		Actual tap shown below 



What are our financial parameters?

Financing Development

- Our duties, obligations and monitoring under HRA rules
- Outline of the investment model and borrowing capacity
- Similarities and differences to a private sector developer/investor
- High level headline HRA figures that are in the public domain
- Development viability, appraisal and key assumptions
- Subsidy requirements – internal and external
- Taking ‘at risk’ and abortive costs into account
- Confidential appendix including detailed business and commercially sensitive information

What are the risks and how are we managing them?

Development risk

- Development and risk – the need for close control and monitoring
- Risk Management – steps for every scheme
- Risk escalation process – if things go wrong or risks worsen
- Responding to risks – avoidance, reduction, transfer, retention



How do we approach development decisions? (Processes)

Making decisions and consultation

- Technical. Sets out the decision-making process
- Defines what is meant by value for money and 'gateways'
- Key elements and approvals (PH role, HRA Development Panel)
- Key input from the Housing client and finance (first stage)
- Pre-development consultation
- Post development feedback with tenants
- Process for agreeing consultation approach
- Second stage consultation and reporting

Governance and audit

Governance, monitoring and review

- Define who is to be involved in governance
- Delegated authority details and principles
- The role of a project plan and sign-off
- Financial and performance monitoring
- Applying the Homes England Audit Checklist
- NFDC user involvement and scrutiny of development
- Annual review of HDP

Confidential Appendix

Confidential and commercially sensitive information and data

- All Housing Development operates within a highly competitive environment
 - Private Developers, Housing Associations
 - Competing for sites. Competing for S106
- Within the confines of FOI and public sector accountability, the Appendix will contain any commercially sensitive information that could result in a competitive disadvantage.

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Property Development and Acquisition update

September
2020

Minute Item 60



		Existing Housing Stock				
	Client group	2018/19	2019/20	2020/21	2021/22	2022/23
Long Term Voids						
Long term voids (general need)	GN			3	2	
Long term voids (temporary accommodation)	TA			4		

Existing New Forest District Council Stock

- Properties in need of extensive or structural repair and/or extension

	Client group	Existing Housing Stock				
		2018/19	2019/20	2020/21	2021/22	2022/23
Long Term Voids						
Long term voids (general need)	GN			3	2	
Long term voids (temporary accommodation)	TA			4		

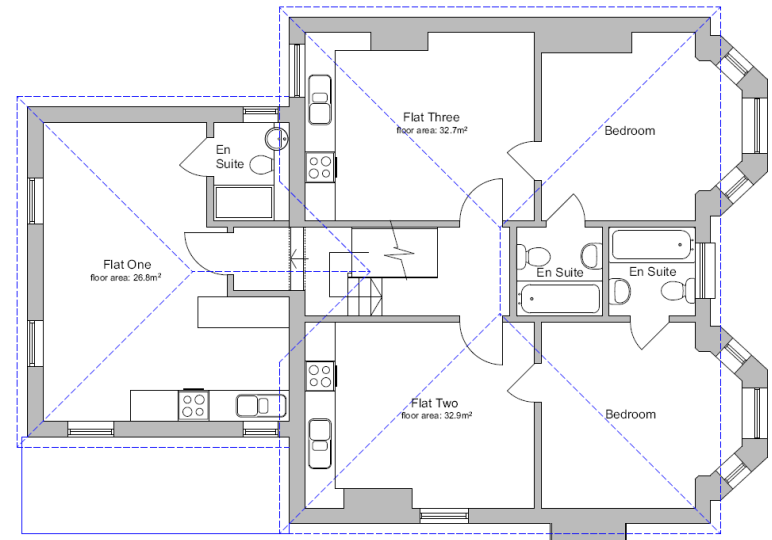
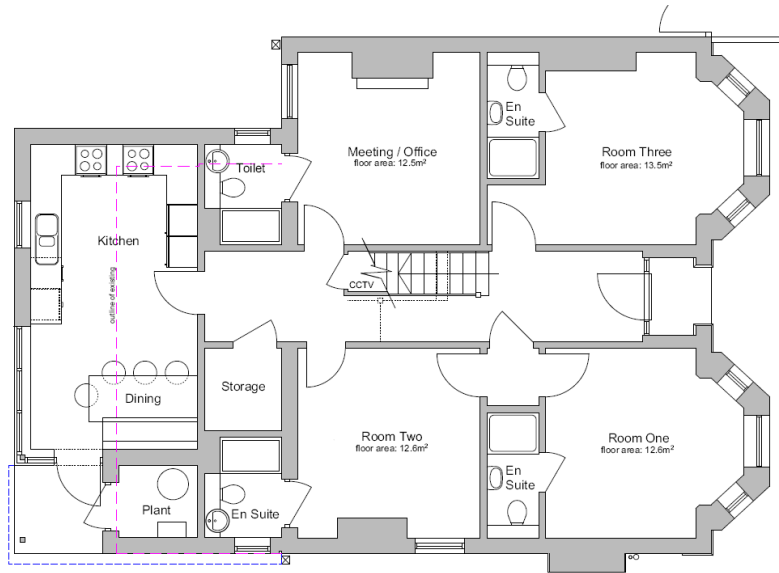
Tourlands, Emsworth Road, Lymington



		Existing Housing Stock				
	Client group					
Long Term Voids						
Long term voids (general need)	GN			3	2	
Long term voids (temporary accommodation)	TA				4	

Tourlands, Emsworth Road, Lymington

26



		Affordable housing completions				
		2018/19	2019/20	2020/21	2021/22	2022/23
In Contract (Full delivery expected)						
Buy-Back	GN	15	15	2		
New Build (planning-led, NFDC land, other land, off the shelf) (7)		34	70	8		
Property acquisitions and works (3)	TA	6	3	4		
NFDC Conversions (3)	GN	2	2	2		
	Sub total	57	90	16		

27

2 x Buy-Backs completed. 5 due to exchange shortly.
 8 x new-build completed (Crow Lane 2)
 2 x conversion completed (Wilson Court)

4 x Acquisition and works due to complete (129 Ashley Road)

		Affordable housing completions				
		2018/19	2019/20	2020/21	2021/22	2022/23
Predicted with delivery expectations (planning in place, no planning required or high planning confidence)						
Buy-Back	GN			13	15	15
New Build (planning-led, NFDC land, other land, off the shelf) (9)	GN			15	62	
Property acquisition and works (3)	TA			20		
NFDC conversion works (general need) (1)	GN			1		
NFDC conversion works (temporary accommodation/move on) (4)	TA			7	6	
	Sub total			56	83	15

17 additional homes added since June (due to complete during 2020/21)

- +2 homes at Tourlands (TA)
- +4 homes at Fawley (GN) (2 for shared-ownership)
- +11 homes at New Milton (GN)

Building Contractor Framework in place

- Contract start imminent for Blease Court & Heather Road

8 Buy-Backs to be identified (market gone quiet)

7 x S106 homes nearing contract

Planning applications submitted for:

- 110 Christchurch Road, Ringwood
- Gorse Close, New Milton
- Tourlands, Lymington

- Three schemes submitted for Homes England Grant and one pending MHCLG funding

		Affordable housing completions				
		2018/19	2019/20	2020/21	2021/22	2022/23
Predicted with delivery expectations (planning in place, no planning required or high planning confidence)						
Buy-Back	GN			13	15	15
New Build (planning-led, NFDC land, other land, off the shelf) (9)	GN			15	62	
Property acquisition and works (3)	TA			20		
NFDC conversion works (general need) (1)	GN			1		
NFDC conversion works (temporary accommodation/move on) (4)	TA			7	6	
	Sub total			56	83	15

Temporary Accommodation summary

29

Blease Court, Lymington	7
Old Bakery, New Milton	6
Site in Ringwood (subject to Planning)	7
Heather Road, Fawley	5
129 Ashley Road, New Milton	4
Tourlands, Lymington	6
Total	35

		Affordable housing completions				
		2018/19	2019/20	2020/21	2021/22	2022/23
Future programme assumptions and identified sites						
New Build (planning-led, NFDC land, other land, off the shelf) (7)					33	46
Large scale affordable housing development opportunities (in dialogue)						
NFDC conversion works (4)						7
	Sub total				33	53

Future Programme

Identified

- Close to acquisition of existing property in Totton
- Firm pre-app enquiry for potential rural exception site

Building the pipeline

- Looking at various ‘with’ and pre-planning openings
- Town centre housing opportunity in New Milton
- Looking at existing schemes and developments under construction

Improving efficiency

- Improved liaison and collaborative work with Planners
- Appointed Stepnells, Powell and HPC to four year framework
- Construction Professionals Framework

But before closing.....

But before closing.....

33 129 Ashley Road, New Milton

19, 20, 21 Jones Lane, Hythe

“THE MOVIE”



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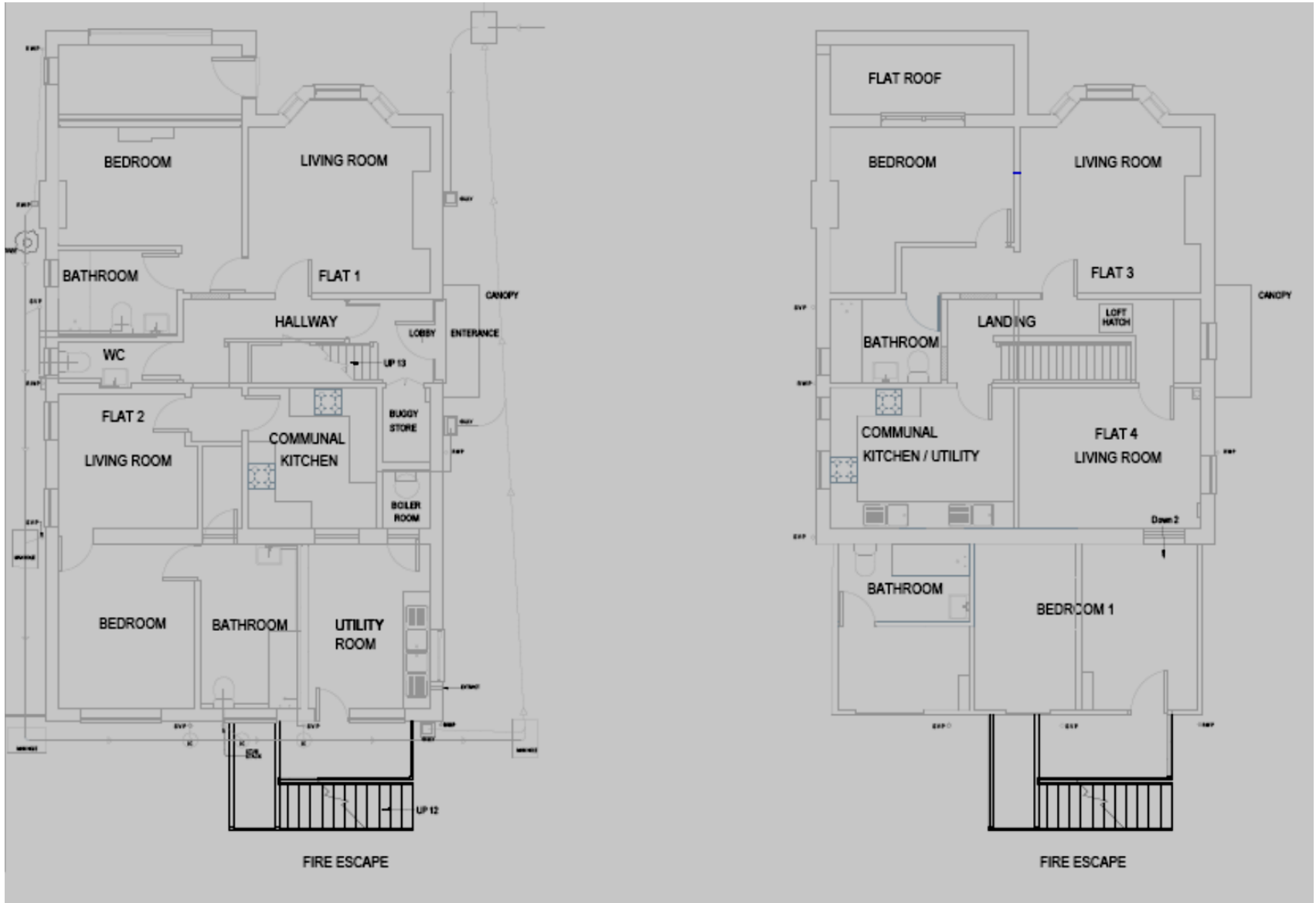
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Homelessness Update

Richard Knott
Housing Options, Rents, Support &
Private Sector Housing

- Covid 19 Contingency Plan
 - Working alongside Estate Management, Corporate H&S
 - Contingency plan in place
 - 3 properties put aside to aid self isolation
 - Lockdown and outbreak measures
 - All hotels and external accommodation have a Covid Secure risk assessment
 - Fact sheet given to all residents
- Rough Sleeper numbers continue to rise – up to 20 currently
- Approaches by single people threatened with homelessness continue to rise
- Bid submitted to MHCLG
 - Redesign of Tourlands, Lymington Hostel to supported accommodation for 6 rough sleepers
 - 3 en-suite bedsits, shared kitchen and office
 - 3 self contained flats on 1st floor
 - 4 year support funding - day time support
 - Accommodation costs 1st July 2020 to 31st March 2021
 - Move on costs
 - Additional support costs
 - October announcement

- Approaches for TA slowing down – 11 last month
- 120 households accommodated in TA 6 months
- 45 households currently in external TA
 - 40 single people
 - 5 families
 - 17 in en-suite hotel rooms with access to cooking facilities
 - 28 in Private temporary accommodation with facilities
 - 30 single people still accommodated from Covid lockdown period

Move on since March 2020

Move on Outcome	No. of Applicants
Camper Van	3
Council TA	14
Council Tenancy	5
Negotiated return to Family	14
Negotiated return to Friends	6
Private Rented Sector	23
PSL	3
Returned to prison	1
Unknown - lost contact	5
Returned to Rough Sleeping	5
Returned home	1
Grand Total	80

Questions?