

FAREHAM

BOROUGH COUNCIL

AGENDA HOUSING SCRUTINY PANEL

Date: Thursday, 9 February 2023

Time: 6.00 pm

Venue: Collingwood Room - Civic Offices

Members:

Councillor Mrs K Mandry (Chairman)

Councillor S Ingram (Vice-Chairman)

Councillors R Bird
F Birkett
H P Davis
D G Foot
Mrs K K Trott

Deputies: Ms S Pankhurst



1. Apologies for Absence

2. Minutes (Pages 5 - 8)

To confirm as a correct record the minutes of the Housing Scrutiny Panel meeting held on 29 September 2022.

3. Chairman's Announcements

4. Declarations of Interest and Disclosures of Advice or Directions

To receive any declarations of interest from members in accordance with Standing Orders and the Council's Code of Conduct and disclosures of advice or directions received from Group Leaders or Political Groups, in accordance with the Council's Constitution.

5. Deputations

To receive any deputations of which notice has been lodged.

6. Executive Business (Pages 9 - 10)

To consider any item of business dealt with by the Executive since the last meeting of the Panel that falls under the remit of the Housing Portfolio. This will include any decisions taken by the Executive Member during the same time period.

(1) Appendix B to the Fareham Housing Regeneration Strategy (Fort Fareham Housing Estate Regeneration) (Pages 11 - 12)

(2) Fareham Borough Council Social and Affordable Housing Adaptation Policy (Pages 13 - 14)

(3) Fareham Housing Development of Ophelia Court, Montefiore Drive, Park Gate (Pages 15 - 16)

7. Draft Empty Homes Strategy (Pages 17 - 40)

To receive a report by the Head of Housing Delivery which presents the draft Empty Homes Strategy for consideration.

8. Affordable Housing Update (Pages 41 - 42)

To receive a presentation by the Head of Housing Delivery which updates Members on progress with Fareham Housing sites and other relevant strategic housing matters.

9. Tenant Satisfaction Measures (Pages 43 - 44)

To receive a presentation by the Head of Housing & Benefits which outlines the new tenant satisfaction measures.

10. Greener Measures & Installations on Council owned homes (Pages 45 - 52)

To consider a report which will detail greener measures & installations on Council owned homes.

11. Housing Scrutiny Panel Priorities

To provide an opportunity for Members to consider the scrutiny priorities for the Housing Panel.



P GRIMWOOD
Chief Executive Officer

Civic Offices
www.fareham.gov.uk
01 February 2023

**For further information please contact:
Democratic Services, Civic Offices, Fareham, PO16 7AZ
Tel:01329 236100
democraticservices@fareham.gov.uk**

FAREHAM

BOROUGH COUNCIL

Minutes of the Housing Scrutiny Panel

(to be confirmed at the next meeting)

Date: Thursday, 29 September 2022

Venue: Collingwood Room - Civic Offices

PRESENT:

Councillor Mrs K Mandry (Chairman)

Councillor S Ingram (Vice-Chairman)

Councillors: R Bird, F Birkett, D G Foot and Mrs K K Trott

Also Present: Councillor Mrs C L A Hockley, Executive Member for Housing



1. APOLOGIES FOR ABSENCE

There were no apologies for absence given at this meeting.

2. MINUTES

RESOLVED that the minutes of the meeting of the Housing Scrutiny Panel held on 14 July 2022 be confirmed and signed as a correct record.

3. CHAIRMAN'S ANNOUNCEMENTS

There were no Chairman's announcements made at this meeting.

4. DECLARATIONS OF INTEREST AND DISCLOSURES OF ADVICE OR DIRECTIONS

There were no declarations of interest made at this meeting.

5. DEPUTATIONS

There were no deputations made at this meeting.

6. EXECUTIVE BUSINESS

(1) Social Inclusion (homelessness) Services Contribution

There were no comments or questions for clarification in respect of this item.

(2) Fundraising and personalised employment support and private rented sector tenancies for people who are homeless or at risk of homelessness

There were no comments or questions for clarification in respect of this item.

7. AFFORDABLE HOUSING UPDATE

The Panel received a presentation by the Head of Housing Delivery which updated members on the progress being made with Fareham Housing Sites and other relevant strategic housing matters. A copy of the presentation is attached to these minutes as Appendix A.

Members commented on the excellent progress being made with the current development projects. It was agreed that when the Gordon Road conversion works are complete, a visit to the site would be arranged for members to view the facilities available.

RESOLVED that the Housing Scrutiny Panel notes the content of the presentation.

8. AFFORDABLE HOUSING STRATEGY REVIEW

The Panel considered a report by the Head of Housing Delivery which provided the Panel with an initial overview of those areas of the adopted Strategy that are recommended for change to ensure that it is reflective of progress to date, that the information and data is correct and that the objectives and actions are appropriate.

The Panel commented that the number of households on the Housing Waiting list at the end of July was approximately 600 which was greater than the 550 mentioned in this more recent report. It was suggested that an update be provided at a future meeting of the Panel to provide members with more information about the number of customers on the Housing Register, particularly in relation to any impact from the cost of living crisis.

It was noted that the Panel would have an opportunity to scrutinise the updated Strategy prior to it being presented to the Executive.

RESOLVED that, having considered the contents of the report, the Housing Scrutiny Panel had no concerns with the proposed approach to the review.

9. NEW HOUSING MANAGEMENT SYSTEM

The Panel received a presentation by the Policy and Development Officer which provided members with an update on the implementation of the new Housing software for the Housing department. A copy of the presentation slides is attached to these minutes as Appendix B.

During the discussion of this item, Councillor Mrs Trott requested that the minutes record her view that outstanding work is carried out by the Housing team.

Members were impressed with the functionality of the new software and requested an opportunity to see the system in operation.

RESOLVED that the Housing Scrutiny Panel notes the content of the presentation.

10. HOUSING SCRUTINY PANEL PRIORITIES

The Chairman advised the Panel that from April 2023, all registered providers of social housing will need to collect and publish a range of comparable information about their service and standards. The new service standards will enable tenants to scrutinise their landlord's performance and will provide a source of information to the Regulator of Social Housing about whether landlords are meeting requirements. It was agreed that a report will be brought to the Panel's meeting in February which will provide more information about the standards and how the Council will meet them.

The Chairman also advised that a Strategy detailing how the Council will bring empty homes across the Borough back into use is in the process of being drafted and will be brought to the February meeting of the Panel for members to scrutinise.

It was agreed that, as discussed at item 8 on the agenda, an update on the Housing Waiting list will be brought to a future meeting of the Panel so that members can gain an understanding of the impact that the current cost of living crisis is having on people and how this might affect the demand for housing.

Councillor Bird proposed that an item be added to the scrutiny priorities to provide members with a broader understanding of the ongoing use of Housing Revenue Account capital funds and the Council's Housing development projects. Members raised concern that the Panel would need to satisfy itself that the benefit of receiving this information would represent a good use of officer time. Councillor Bird therefore withdrew his proposal and agreed to work with relevant officers to investigate whether this was a matter he would like to pursue further.

Taking into account the items already agreed for the February meeting it was agreed that the annual Tenancy Management, Repairs and Maintenance of council-owned properties report scheduled for the meeting in February be deferred to a later date so that it can incorporate information based on the new service standards.

RESOLVED that the Housing Scrutiny Panel considered and updated the Scrutiny priorities.

(The meeting started at 6.00 pm
and ended at 7.25 pm).

FAREHAM

BOROUGH COUNCIL

Housing Scrutiny Panel

Date **09 February 2023**

Subject: **EXECUTIVE BUSINESS**

SUMMARY

One of the key functions of this Scrutiny Panel is to hold the Executive Portfolio Holder and Senior Officers to account in the delivery of the service and the Improvement Actions identified in the Council's Corporate Priorities and Corporate Vision.

Members are therefore invited to consider the items of business which fall under the remit of the Housing portfolio and have been dealt with by the Executive since the last meeting of the Panel. This also includes any decisions taken by individual Executive Members.

The relevant notices for decisions taken are attached for consideration.

RECOMMENDATION

It is recommended that Members consider the items of Business discharged by the Executive since the last meeting of the Panel and make any comments or raise any questions for clarification.

FAREHAM

BOROUGH COUNCIL

2022/23
Decision No.
2386

Record of Decision by Executive

Monday, 7 November 2022

Portfolio	Housing
Subject:	Appendix B to the Fareham Housing Regeneration Strategy (Fort Fareham Housing Estate Regeneration)
Report of:	Deputy Chief Executive Officer
Corporate Priority:	Providing housing choices

Purpose:

To approve the inclusion of the site-specific Fort Fareham appendix (Appendix A to the report) with the Fareham Housing Regeneration Strategy.

To note the contents of Appendix A to the report which details the energy efficiency works being undertaken to the Council owned properties at Fort Fareham estate.

To note that a budget has been set aside for the energy efficiency works to be undertaken, however, other aspirational works will require further investigation.

To also agree in principle the redevelopment of Redoubt Court and the additional works to further improve the site, should budgets allow.

The Regeneration Strategy was adopted at the 01 March 2021 Executive meeting. The Strategy details the factors that will be considered when identifying and progressing housing regeneration opportunities. Appendix A is the second of the individual site-specific appendices produced for Executive approval.

The age and type of build of the homes at Fort Fareham estate mean that the energy efficiency is typically poor. Appendix A details the improvement works that will help reduce energy costs for the Council's tenants and improve the condition of the properties. The project is separated into several areas: houses, flats, Redoubt Court and other improvements.

Redoubt Court has been identified in the emerging Local Plan as having potential for further affordable housing.

It is worth noting that there is little scope to redevelop Fort Fareham as a whole due to the high level of private ownership. Some private owners have already made improvements to their homes to address the inherent thermal issues.

The 'aspirational' area of the project outlines how to further improve the immediate area. These additions may only go ahead if budgets allow. They include enhanced greener installations, removal of the drying areas to provide private gardens for tenants and a community orchard with wildflower grassland. Further details of this and the other projects are outlined in the report.

Options Considered:

At the invitation of the Executive Leader, Councillor Mrs K K Trott addressed the Executive on this item.

As recommendation.

Decision:

RESOLVED that the Executive:

- (a) approves the inclusion of the site-specific Fort Fareham appendix (Appendix A to the report) within the Fareham Housing Regeneration Strategy;
- (b) agrees the principle of redevelopment of Redoubt Court (subject to inclusion within the Local Plan 2037);
- (c) agrees the principle of additional works to further improve the flat blocks and their surrounding areas, should budgets/funding allow.

Reason:

To ensure that the principle to seek a regeneration of Fort Fareham housing estate is appropriate.

Confirmed as a true record:

Councillor SDT Woodward (Executive Leader)

Monday, 7 November 2022

FAREHAM

BOROUGH COUNCIL

2022/23
Decision No.
2387

Record of Decision by Executive

Monday, 7 November 2022

Portfolio	Housing
Subject:	Fareham Borough Council Social and Affordable Housing Adaptation Policy
Report of:	Deputy Chief Executive Officer
Corporate Priority:	Providing housing choices

Purpose:

To seek approval of the draft Fareham Borough Council Social and Affordable Housing Adaptations Policy.

In 2009 the Executive approved the Disabled Aids and Adaptations Policy – Council Housing. Since its approval, several key areas of legislation have been amended resulting in a requirement for this policy to be updated.

The Social and Affordable Housing Adaptations policy recognises accessibility as a fundamental design principle. The document outlines the process in ensuring Council tenants with disabilities be provided with housing that best meets their assessed needs in addition to the Council meeting the relevant statutory requirements.

Options Considered:

At the invitation of the Executive Leader, Councillor Mrs K K Trott addressed the Executive on this item.

As recommendation.

Decision:

RESOLVED that the Executive approves the draft Fareham Borough Council Social and Affordable Housing Adaptations Policy, as provided in Appendix A to the report, for publication. This to supersede and replace the Disabled Aids and Adaptations Policy (2009).

Reason:

To detail how the Council makes its social and affordable housing properties accessible for those who require it.

Confirmed as a true record:

Councillor SDT Woodward (Executive Leader)

Monday, 7 November 2022

FAREHAM

BOROUGH COUNCIL

2022/23
Decision No.
2399

Record of Decision by Executive

Monday, 9 January 2023

Portfolio	Housing
Subject:	Fareham Housing Development of Ophelia Court, Montefiore Drive, Park Gate
Report of:	Deputy Chief Executive Officer
Corporate Priority:	Providing housing choices

Purpose:

To seek approval to update the funding arrangements to deliver nine new affordable home ownership flats at Ophelia Court, the former Coldeast Scout Hut site on Montefiore Drive and to seek updated approval of the process toward the appointment of contractors, following contractor tender returns for the scheme.

The report provides Members with an overview of the updated funding arrangements proposed for the delivery of nine new flats for affordable home ownership at the former scout hut site, to be known as Ophelia Court.

Further details surrounding the funding arrangements, including the total estimated cost to deliver the project, are provided in the confidential Appendix A attached to the report.

In addition to the funding arrangements, this report seeks updated Executive approval for delegated authority that will allow a time efficient appointment of an appropriate contractor to build out the scheme.

Options Considered:

During the discussion on this item the Executive Member for Housing placed on record her thanks to the officers of Fareham Housing and the Finance teams who have delivered a mix of affordable and shared ownership homes across the Borough and aims to provide up to 345 homes over the coming years. All members of the Executive conveyed their thanks and admiration.

As recommendation.

Decision:

RESOLVED that the Executive agrees:

- (a) the updated funding mechanisms, as outlined in the confidential Appendix A to the report, for the delivery of an affordable home ownership scheme at Ophelia Court; and
- (b) that the award of contract and the appointment of building contractor(s) for Ophelia Court be delegated to the Deputy Chief Executive Officer, following consultation with the Executive Member for Housing.

Reason:

To ensure the funding arrangements are acceptable and to enable the award of contract and appointment of building contractor(s).

Confirmed as a true record:

Councillor SDT Woodward (Executive Leader)

Monday, 9 January 2023

FAREHAM

BOROUGH COUNCIL

Report to Housing Scrutiny Panel

Date **09 February 2023**

Report of: **Head of Housing Delivery**

Subject: **DRAFT EMPTY HOMES STRATEGY**

SUMMARY

This report provides Members with an overview of the Draft Empty Homes Strategy. The draft Strategy provides an overview of the amount and type of empty homes in the Borough, together with two objectives relating to the Council's potential approach to empty properties. The draft Strategy acknowledges the detrimental issues that can arise with a small number of empty homes and articulates the importance of proportionate and appropriate action in addressing the issue.

RECOMMENDATION

It is recommended that the Panel provide any comments or observations on the draft Strategy in advance of the Council's Executive being asked to approve the Draft Empty Homes Strategy for a period of public consultation.

INTRODUCTION

1. The Fareham borough has a lower number of long-term empty homes than the national average. This is despite the figures presently being distorted by a number of new retirement living schemes where apartments remain unsold.
2. Regardless of the relatively low number of empty properties, some could provide a home for an individual or family if brought back into use; positively contributing to the provision of homes in the Borough. When left empty, some homes can also be more vulnerable to misuse and/or generate issues for immediate neighbours or the wider community if the property is not appropriately maintained.
3. A draft Empty Homes Strategy has been produced which (a) outlines the extent of the issue in Fareham; (b) provides two overarching objectives to help facilitate tackling long term empty homes in the Borough; and (c) also explains the need to consider any action in a proportionate and appropriate manner.
4. The Strategy provides a more transparent overview of the various powers the Council has, how each case must be considered on its individual merits, and ultimately that any decisions to act should be proportionate, appropriate, and a prudent use of Council resources.

THE DRAFT EMPTY HOMES STRATEGY

5. The draft Empty Homes Strategy is at Appendix A to this report. It incorporates three main sections: -
 - Empty Homes in Fareham
 - The Objectives
 - Proportionate and Appropriate Action

Empty Homes in Fareham Borough

6. The extent of the issue with empty homes is explained on pages 5 & 6 of the draft Strategy. The figures for homes vacant for two years or more are currently heavily distorted by a small number of new retirement living developments. The Beck Lodge development in Park Gate and Meadow Court in Sarisbury Green were largely completed during and around the COVID-19 pandemic, and many properties currently remain unsold and vacant.
7. National comparisons (Action on Empty Homes/DLUHC data) on the number of long-term empty homes by district/borough are generally based on homes vacant for 6 months or more. 2022 data showed that 1 in 71 homes were empty for six months or more in Fareham Borough (0.78% of total homes) compared to a national average of 1 in 50 homes (0.99%). Excluding the 129 empty retirement properties (explained in the paragraph above) would bring the percentage of homes in Fareham Borough vacant for 6 months or more down to 0.52%, nearly half the national average.
8. The draft Strategy figures focus on those homes vacant for 1-2 years, and 2 years plus. This acknowledges that many homes vacant for over 6 months will resolve with no intervention or detrimental issues arising.
9. When accounting for the empty retirement new builds (which is not representative of a trend) and other properties empty for logical reasons (such as the majority of flats at Assheton Court) it is clear that any remaining key issues around long-term empty

homes is small in a numerical sense and focused on privately owned homes that remain empty.

10. Privately owned empty homes that have been vacant for 1-2 years make up just 0.1% of homes in the Borough, with those empty for 2 years or more making up a further 0.07%.
11. Despite the low number of privately owned empty homes in the Borough it is often a small number of these homes where concerns from neighbours or the wider community can often be focused. This is primarily due to poor (or complete lack of) management and maintenance of the property.
12. Typical problems that can be associated with a minority of long-term empty homes include (a) visual neglect; (b) overgrown vegetation; (c) structural issues; (d) misuse; (e) failure to pay Council Tax (including Premiums if applicable); and/or (f) untraceable owners. In all cases empty residential properties can also be a missed opportunity. If brought into use the properties could provide a home for an individual or family.

The Objectives

13. The draft Strategy includes two objectives which are explained in detail as part of the Strategy (Appendix A).
14. Objective 1 is to 'encourage owners of empty homes to bring their properties back into use'. This objective focuses on the softer and encouraging tactics that can be (and often are) deployed by officers to try to bring homes into use. This is detailed on pages 8 & 9 of the draft Strategy. Even in instances where the homes cannot be encouraged back into use, retaining positive communication with the owner (or relatives of owners) can help to prevent the property from becoming problematic to neighbours or the wider community.
15. Objective 2 seeks to 'appropriately and proportionately use Council resources to address problematic empty homes'. On pages 11 to 13 of the draft Strategy the various tools available to the Council are articulated, recognising that they often fall to different departments and in turn may have differing determining bodies. These tools are articulated in the Strategy to provide transparency rather than intended to suggest they can and should be used on all cases.
16. Officers at the Council have successfully used powers in the past to address issues associated with some problematic empty properties and will continue to do so.

Proportionate and Appropriate Action

17. Pages 14 to 15 of the draft Strategy introduce the idea of 'proportionate and appropriate' action. Every case of a problematic empty home will be different and have its own nuances. The draft Strategy provides a framework and understanding of the factors that should be considered before any action is pursued by the Council. This includes legislation, personal circumstances, the extent of harm vs. action (ensuring it is proportionate), and cost.
18. Cost is an important element in balancing the appropriateness to use the more enforcement related tools at the Council's disposal, and this is explained further below.

RESOURCES

19. The Council does not have a nominated officer resource that is dedicated to addressing issues with empty homes in the borough. This reflects the limited extent of the issue in the Borough and the fact that only a minority of long-term empty homes could realistically have potential to be brought back into use. An even smaller number being empty homes which are a blight to neighbours and/or the wider community.
20. Any empty home case will typically be overseen by the most appropriate department using their expertise and knowledge, with officers addressing the issue as part of or alongside their day-to-day work responsibilities.
21. Many cases of disrepair or poor maintenance are addressed through phone calls or emails to the owner (or relative of the owner) without the need for a more heavy-handed approach. These cases would rarely escalate and often provide an opportunity for informal discussion around why the property is empty and whether there is any willingness to consider renting or selling the home. They also have minimal impact to officer time.
22. There will always be some cases where issues persist and there may be a desire to utilise one or more of the measures outlined in Objective 2 of the draft Strategy. More formal action will involve considerable officer time. Often including the need for legal advice or tracing services, even before more formal action can be formally considered and commence.
23. The costs to address single empty homes cases can be significant. As an example, on one on-going case in the borough, it is estimated that FBC officer costs have exceeded £19,000 across four years. In addition to this there have been tracing agency costs of just under £2,000, court action costs of nearly £6,000, and direct-action costs of nearly £12,000 (the latter two remaining unrecouped currently). Although this had allowed for some improvement to the visual appearance of the home it has not provided a long-term solution. The other tools potentially available to the Council would incur even more significant costs to the public purse which would unlikely be recouped. This to potentially bring one single home into use and resolve the issues that single home is presenting. This would unlikely be a pragmatic and prudent use of limited Council resource despite recognising that the property is a blight and nuisance to neighbours and/or the wider area.
24. The draft Strategy recognises the scale of resource required, and ultimately proposes that each case will be considered on its merits having regard to the matters that are articulated in the Proportionate and Appropriate Action section of the draft Strategy. Officers will seek to utilise the enforcement tools outlined under Objective 2 of the Draft Strategy when it is necessary and appropriate to do so, having regard to the cost and risk of any potential action.

DECISION MAKING ON THE USE OF ENFORCEMENT TOOLS

25. Most empty homes cases will be looked at and addressed by officers. In some cases where enforcement tools are being utilised this would be undertaken using delegated or emergency powers, or more formal approval will be required. When necessary, approvals will continue to be sought through the appropriate decision-making body at the Council. As explained on page 14 of the draft Empty Homes Strategy this might

include the Licensing and Regulatory Affairs Committee, Planning Committee, or potentially an Executive decision.

CONCLUSION

26. The draft Empty Homes Strategy articulates the extent of the issue with empty homes in Fareham Borough, recognising that in a minority of cases long-term empty homes can be a blight and amenity impact to neighbours and/or the wider community. The draft Strategy outlines the 'encouragement tools' that can and do get used to encourage empty homes back into use. It also outlines the 'enforcement tools' potentially available through various legislation, managed by various departments, and overseen by various decision-making bodies at the Council.
27. The draft Strategy proposes that any action on a long-term empty home be considered on a case-by-case basis, and that any action be proportionate and appropriate to the case, acknowledging the implication to officer time and the cost of action and whether it is a prudent and appropriate use of Council resources.
28. The draft Empty Homes Strategy provides an opportunity to transparently articulate the extent of the empty home issue in Fareham Borough, and how it will be approached by the Council. This will achieve a balance between the level of the issue and the use of resources across the organisation to tackle it.

NEXT STEPS

29. It is proposed that following comments and observations on the draft Strategy by members of the Housing Scrutiny Panel (and any attendees from Policy and Resources Panel) that the draft Strategy will go before the Executive to seek approval for a period of public consultation on the Strategy.
30. Following a period of public consultation on the draft it is intended that appropriate adjustments are made to the Strategy ahead of it returning to the Executive for approval/adoption.

RISK ASSESSMENT

31. There are no significant risk considerations in relation to this report

Appendices: **(A)** The draft Empty Homes Strategy

Enquiries:

For further information on this report please contact Robyn Lyons (Head of Housing Delivery) on 01329 824305

Empty Homes Strategy

Fareham Borough Council

2023

OK!

[THIS PAGE IS DELIBERATELY LEFT BLANK]

DRAFT

Contents

	Page
Introduction <i>-Including 'Why do properties become empty?'</i>	4
Empty Homes in Fareham Borough	5
Objectives <i>-Including the 'Benefits of bringing empty homes back into use'</i>	7
Objective 1: To encourage owners of empty homes to bring their properties back in to use	8
Objective 2: To appropriately and proportionately use Council resources to bring problematic empty homes back into use	10
Proportionate and Appropriate Action	14
Concluding Summary	16
Contact Details	17

This strategy was approved by the Council's Executive on
[XXinsert dateXX] 2023

[THIS PAGE IS DELIBERATELY LEFT BLANK]

DRAFT

Introduction

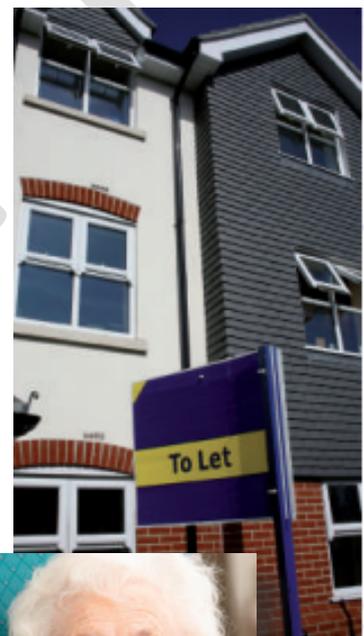
This strategy sets out how Fareham Borough Council consider long-term empty homes in the Borough, and where appropriate seek to bring those homes back into use. This supports the corporate objective of Providing Housing Choices and can make a small but important contribution toward housing need. It also recognises that empty homes can be a blight to local communities, and frustrating for nearby residents.

Although the number of empty properties in the Borough is below the national average, there are a small number that can present an ongoing challenge. This Strategy explains the actions that could be considered on problematic long-term empty homes. It also provides information around proportionate and appropriate use of enforcement-based intervention by the Council. Ultimately this Strategy seeks to articulate the Council's approach to empty homes.

Why do properties become empty?

Properties can become empty for several reasons, including but not limited to the following examples:

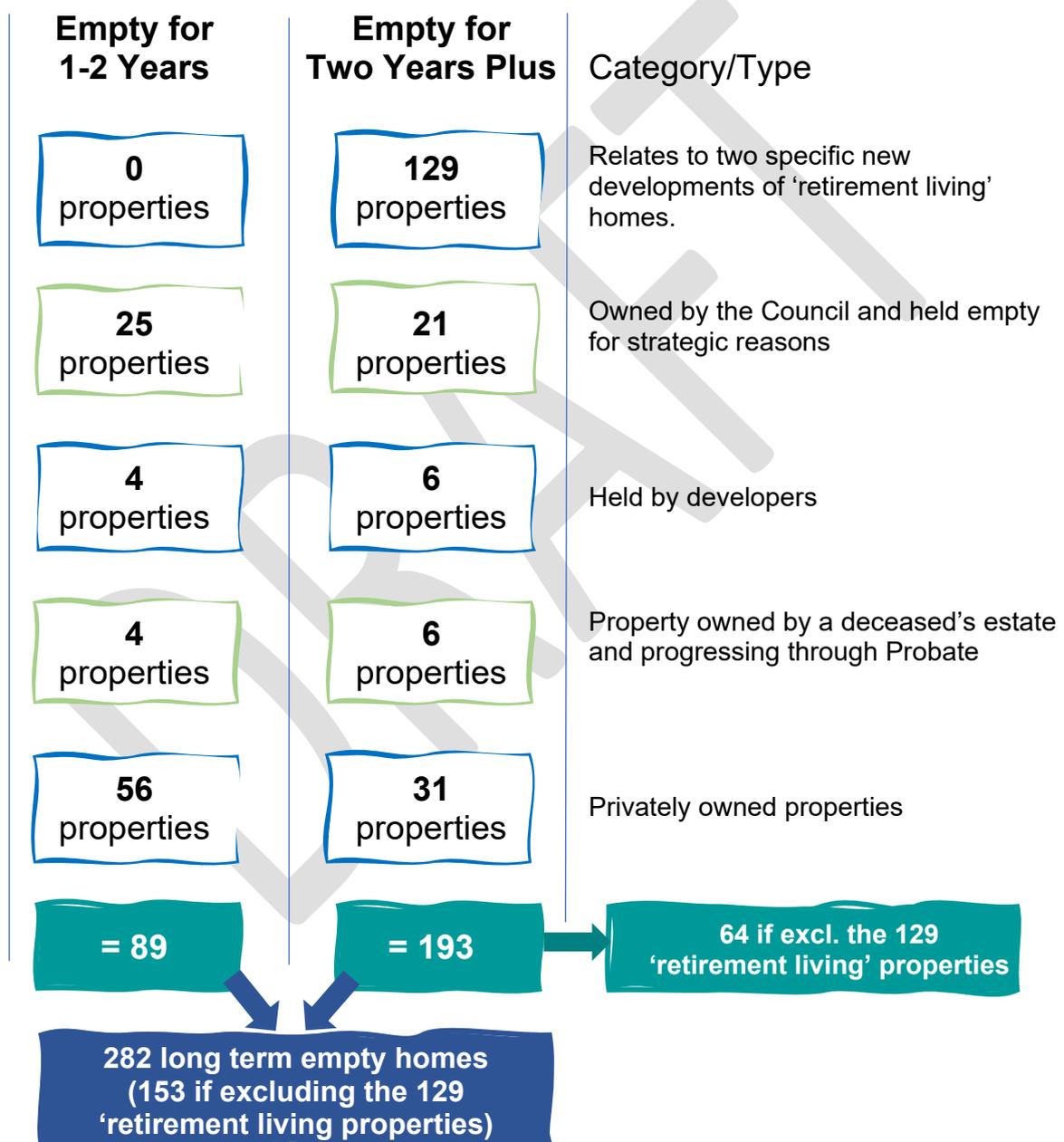
- The normal process of buying, selling, and letting properties
- A property that is unsuitable to rent or sell due to its physical state and that would require renovation beyond the budget of the owner
- When a property has been abandoned by the owner and the owner is untraceable
- Where an owner is in prison
- Where there is an issue of unresolved ownership, often because of the previous owners' death. Resolving ownership can be a lengthy legal process, during which time the property may remain empty
- Due to an ageing population, older owners may need to move into alternative older person accommodation for care or support needs, they may choose not to sell their property or to let it out, which results in the property remaining empty.



Empty Homes in Fareham Borough

There are slightly over 50,000 residential properties in Fareham Borough. As many properties will be empty for a short period of time (typically allowing for property transactions) the challenge and focus for Fareham Borough Council are those properties that have been vacant for a longer period.

Based on Council tax records in winter 2022, 282 properties are recognised as long term empty. 89 have been empty for between one and two years, and 193 have been empty for more than two years.



The number of empty homes in Fareham Borough has been consistently below the national average, and there are no indications of an increasing trend in the Borough.

129
empty
retirement
living homes

The figures for the Borough are currently heavily impacted by the 129 empty retirement living homes which have been vacant for over two years. This is not representative of a trend, and instead reflects a small number of specialist developments delivered during recent years (during the COVID-19 pandemic). Officers will monitor these to ensure the number continues to reduce, which is expected as property sales take place in the years ahead.

Excluding these 129 empty 'retirement living' homes, there are 89 homes which have been empty for between one and two years, and 64 homes which have been empty for more than two years.

Several properties are held empty due to wider redevelopment/regeneration projects. For example, in December 2022 over 20 apartments were empty at Assheton Court; this facilitating the Council's redevelopment project at the site which should commence in 2023.

Of particular concern are the privately owned homes which have been empty for over two years. These homes tend to be those that can visibly or structurally fall into decline and can often be of great concern to neighbours and the wider community.



There will be occasions where a long-term empty home is well kept and where the Council tax (including any applicable premiums) is paid, but where the owner has a particular or personal reason for retaining and keeping their property vacant.

The data for long term empty homes in Fareham Borough suggests there is no significant empty home problem in Fareham Borough. However, empty homes can on occasions present issues of concern, and would be better brought back into use to contribute to housing need in the Borough. Objectives to address the issue that empty homes can present have therefore been identified.

Objectives

The following objectives will apply to tackling long term empty homes in Fareham Borough:

Objective 1
To encourage owners of empty homes to bring their properties back into use

Objective 2
To appropriately and proportionately use Council resources to address problematic empty homes

These objectives are explained further overleaf, including the tools that the Council could use and consider in helping to deliver against these objectives.

Benefits of bringing empty homes back into use	
Community Benefits	Property Owner Benefits
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ Improve the appearance of the neighbourhood ▪ Providing housing for local people in need of a home ▪ Easing the pressure for housing elsewhere ▪ Reducing the risk of squatters, vandalism, and crime 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ Security against vandalism and squatting ▪ Better condition property (increase in value and reduced future maintenance costs) ▪ A rental income or improved sales potential ▪ Council Tax paid by tenants, not the owner

Objective 1

To encourage owners of empty homes to bring their properties back into use

The Council's initial aim is to provide help and advice to the owners of empty homes. There is no dedicated Empty Homes Officer at Fareham Borough Council due to the limited extent of the issue. Instead, a multi-department approach will be taken to understand the issues and provide the most appropriate advice and/or encouragement for any individual case.

Engaging with empty property owners and reaching a voluntary solution is always preferred. These types of approaches have less demand on Council resources and can often retain a positive relationship with the property owner.

A multi-department approach

The expertise of different departments to best address the issue

Encouragement Tools

Advice on selling/letting the home

We can encourage the owner to contact a local agent to understand the options available to them.

FareLets

The Council operated private rented scheme can encourage empty home owners to become landlords. It provides a safe, secure option for a private owner to let their property. Giving guaranteed rent with tenants provided by the Council following reference checking.



There are three levels of service offered by FareLets, from a simple tenant find to a full management service. Further information on FareLets is available [here](#) or by calling 01329 824649.

Council Tax

The Council tax chargeable on empty homes will be used to act as a deterrent to property owners leaving a home empty, or in turn an incentive to bring a property back into use.

Since 2013 local authorities can apply an empty homes premium for properties that have been empty for two years or more. Initially this was set at 150% but in 2018 increased to 200%, so in effect requiring owners to pay double the standard Council Tax liability. From 2020 owners of properties empty for five years or more can be charged 300%, and from 2021 400% can be levied for properties empty for ten years or more. The implementation of empty homes premium is at the discretion of the Council's Council Tax department.



Council Tax Premium:

On empty homes premiums can apply to the Council Tax payable

Empty two years or more = 200%

Empty five years or more = 300%

Empty ten years or more = 400%

Communication

Communication with empty owners will be key, building an understanding of the reasons for the empty home and considering the most appropriate suggestions and encouragement for that homeowner. In some cases there will be personal and emotional reasons that apply and officers will be considerate of this.

On many occasions communication with the owner (or relatives of the owner) can bring about improvements to the issues the empty home is presenting. An example being where a property owner is now in a care home and is choosing not to sell or let the property, should vegetation become overgrown and simple visual repairs be required then contact with an appropriate relative can often bring about the necessary works being arranged.

Objective 2

To appropriately and proportionately use Council resources to address problematic empty homes

Where encouragement tactics have failed, or there is an imminent risk to health and safety, the Council could consider more formal action.

These approaches come at a cost to the Council both in terms of direct financial cost and/or risk, but also because they involve significant officer time. As such, any decision to use formal/enforcement action will have to consider whether that action is proportionate and appropriate for the scale of issue the empty home presents.

For instance, a home visibly ill kept and with overgrown vegetation might look unattractive and be a blight to neighbours, but it may not warrant the more extreme of enforcement tools and accompanying expense to the Council. This is explained further under 'Proportionate and Appropriate Action' on pages 14 and 15 of this Strategy.

In all cases the ability to take enforcement action can depend on whether the owner of the empty home is traceable. Unfortunately, if an owner of a property cannot be ascertained and/or cannot be traced, then this can add complexity and ultimately hinder the options available to the Council.

Untraceable Owners:

Present an additional challenge and can reduce the options available to the Council

Many of the enforcement tools available to the Council (explained in the following pages) will not forcibly bring the property back into use. Instead, they will deal with issues the empty home might be creating.

Enforcement Tools

Community Protection Notices (CPN)

Under the Crime and Policing Act 2014 (Part 4), in certain circumstances Environmental Health can issue a Community Protection Notice (CPN). These are designed to stop a person (including an absent property owner) from continuing with conduct which has a detrimental effect and unacceptably affects victims and the community. In circumstances where it can apply a notice can be served to require buildings to be put into an acceptable state, in terms of appearance. For a CPN to be issued there must be reasonable grounds that the conduct of the individual is having a detrimental impact on the quality of life of those in the locality, and that it is unreasonable, and the conduct is persistent or continuing in nature.

Typically led by: Environmental Health

Section 215 of the Planning Act 1990

These powers can and do get used by the Council to enforce the tidying up of land or buildings where they are causing a detrimental impact to the surrounding area, and the issue is clearly not short term in nature. Although a Section 215 Notice does not in itself bring an empty home back into use, it can address the blight to a wider area that the empty home is causing. It can also spur some owners into more positive action around returning the home to use.

Notices issued under Section 215 of the Town and Country Planning Act will specify the steps that the recipient must take to comply with the Notice and the timescale for doing so. These steps can for example include removing vegetation, repairing different parts of a building, or requiring a building to be repainted or re-rendered. If the recipient of the Section 215 Notice does not carry out the steps specified in the Notice, the Council can pursue legal proceedings through the Magistrates Court.

Typically led by: Development Management (Planning)

Example



Before and after clearance works secured via a Section 215 Notice in the Borough. In this case the Council took direct action to ensure the Notice was complied with. A legal charge for the costs of these works was then attached to the property

Local Government (Miscellaneous Provisions) Act 1982

Where buildings are unoccupied and not effectively secured against unauthorised entry or become a danger to the public, Environmental Health can undertake works to prevent unauthorised entry for the purpose of preventing the property becoming a danger to public health. For example, this could include boarding up the property.

Typically led by: Environmental Health

Environmental Protection Act 1990

Under Section 80 of this Act the Council can take action to stop a premises causing a Statutory Nuisance to another property. Certain conditions need to be met but an example could be where water ingress from an empty home is affecting a neighbour.

Typically led by: Environmental Health

Building control – unsafe structures

The Building Act 1984 includes provisions relating to buildings and structures that have become dangerous. In more extreme cases this can be where there is a imminent risk of collapse, in other cases it can be where a structure presents a hazard such as a loose roof tile or leaning garden wall. Upon notification the dangerous element would be inspected by a Building Control surveyor and depending on the nature and severity, Building Control could either: -

- 1) Require the owner of the property to make safe any immediate dangerous parts of the structure or if the owner cannot undertake this work, carry out the necessary work and recharge the owner or their insurance company; or
- 2) Where the structure is assessed as being potentially dangerous, issue a formal notice requiring the necessary remedial works to be carried out within a stipulated timescale. In the event that action is not taken by the owner then a Court Order can be sought, in which case the Council may undertake the work and recover the cost from the property owner, either directly or through a charge being placed against the property.

Typically led by: Building Control

Empty Dwelling Management Orders (EDMO)

An EDMO can be made where a property has been empty for two years or more and is a nuisance to the locality. The Council can take over management of the property for up to seven years, carrying out work required before letting.

EDMOs are typically resource heavy, involving a considerable administrative burden when compared to other options. An EDMO is open to appeal at any stage and many properties would be exempt (for example where the owner is temporarily residing elsewhere, or where the owner is giving/receiving care). There is also the difficulty in recovering the costs of renovation within the seven-year period allowed by the order.

Any decision to use an EDMO would have to have regard to the factors above to ensure it is a viable and appropriate option for the Council. Ultimately an EDMO does not change ownership of the property so at the end of the seven years it would return to the same ownership of who left it vacant and neglected in the first instance.

Typically led by: Fareham Housing

Enforced Sale

The Law and Property Act 1925 allows local authorities to recover debts owed to them where they have been registered as charges on the property. Where owners fail to pay debts relating to work in default carried out in respect of the Prevention of Damage by Pests Act 1949, Housing Act 2004 and Building Act 1980, the Council can be granted the power to sell by service of relevant notices and verification by the Land Registry. In these instances, the debt takes priority charge, even over an existing mortgage.

Typically led by: Dependant on where the debt lies

Compulsory Purchase Orders (CPO)

Where the Council can make a compelling case in the interest of the public for a home to be compulsory purchased, and where other methods of returning the home to use have been tried and failed, a CPO provides the final sanction to facilitate the renovation and reoccupation of the most problematic of empty homes.

There are various requirements on the Council that would apply if it were to pursue a CPO, this includes showing a clear intended use of the home and that there are the resources to follow through with the process. Owners of compulsory purchased homes may be entitled to compensation for the loss at a level equivalent to the open market value and may be entitled to additional compensation. The Council would also then incur the cost for works to the property to bring it to a lettable/marketable state.

Typically led by: Likely to be multi-department led

Proportionate & Appropriate Action

Each case of a long-term empty property brought to the Council's attention will be assessed by officers and treated on its individual merits.

Encouragement tools (as identified under Objective 1) will be used in the first instance. If these do not bring about success then an assessment will be made on whether further enforcement tools are justified, proportionate and appropriate. This will be a balance taking account the impact the empty home is having, and the costs/risks and merits in progressing any form of enforcement action.



Case by Case

Every case will differ and have its own nuances. The justification and any decisions to act will be made on a case-by-case basis by the relevant determining body at the Council.

Various departments will potentially be involved in any decision to act in relation to an empty home. For more extreme enforcement/interventions the appropriate regulatory and decision-making bodies would be involved. This might include one or more of the following: -

- Licensing & Regulatory Affairs Committee
- Planning Committee
- Executive (Executive meeting or individual Executive decision)

Proportionate and Appropriate – Things to consider

The following factors provide an indication of what will be considered before more formal action (as identified under Objective 2) would be progressed by the Council in relation to an empty property.

Legislation: Is it justified & appropriate?

The ability and appropriateness to progress enforcement action will firstly be governed by the relevant legislation and whether there is justification for formal action to be taken. Officers in the respective departments have good awareness and knowledge of the legislation and will seek further legal advice when required.

Personal Circumstances: Is it justified & appropriate?

On some occasions the personal circumstances of the individual homeowner will need to be considered. More heavy-handed interventions and enforcement action may be less appropriate if there are emotional or health issues to be considered in the case. This with awareness of the distress that could be caused to the homeowner and balancing that against the impact the empty home is having. It may also be a factor considered by a judge should the case result in court action.

Harm vs. Action: Is it proportionate?

A key balance will be whether the proposed action is proportionate to the harm being caused by the empty property. The extent of harm will therefore need to be considered. This might take account of: -

- How many other people are detrimentally affected?
- How bad an impact is it having on others?
- What is the visual appearance of the empty home?
- Is that visual appearance visible from the public domain and to what extent?
- Are there any true safety risks, if so to whom and what extreme?
- What would a 'do nothing' approach result in?

Even when it is deemed that the harm is significant, the most proportionate action would be considered depending on the particulars of the case.

Cost: Is it justified & appropriate?

Costs also need to be considered. Any action taken by the Council (even encouragement tools set out in Objective 1) will incur a cost. The more direct enforcement actions outlined in Objective 2 will incur more significant costs, with Compulsory Purchase typically being the costliest.

Costs considerations: -

- Officer time in dealing with a case
- Cost of any legal advice or input
- Cost of any external tracing services
- Actual expenditure associated with more direct/enforcement tools being utilised
- Likelihood of receiving monies/costs back

Tracing the untraceable

On some occasions there will be no registered owner of a property, or a registered owner who is untraceable. This presents additional challenges and costs to progressing more direct intervention in an empty property case. When these issues arise, it will have to be weighed up against other factors such as the extent of harm caused.

Concluding Summary

- The quantity of long-term empty homes in Fareham Borough remains relatively low
- The majority are empty for understandable or logical reasons
- The majority do not cause any significant issues to neighbours or the wider community
- There are a small minority of empty homes cases where there is no understandable or logical reason for the property to be empty
- Some empty homes could provide a home for an individual or family (helping toward housing need)
- There are a very small number of empty properties that present a blight to the wider area or detrimental issues for immediate neighbours
- There are various 'tools' available to the Council to address problematic cases
- 'Encouragement tools' look to work with owners to bring a home into use or encourage the occupation of the home through Council Tax premiums payable
- 'Enforcement tools' are potentially available through various legislation, managed by various departments, and overseen by various decision-making bodies at the Council
- Any action against a long-term empty home will be considered on a case-by-case basis
- Any action should be proportionate and appropriate
- Any decisions to take action should acknowledge the cost of action and whether it is a prudent and appropriate use of Council resources

Contact Details

If you have any queries about a property you believe to be long term empty in Fareham Borough, then you can contact the Council at:

Email: Housingstrategy@fareham.gov.uk

Telephone: (01329) 263100

Please note that email is the preferred method of communication as this will then allow Officers to understand what communication or involvement the Council may have already had about a particular property. As this can often involve multiple Council departments, we are likely to need to investigate this further before being able to provide an initial response.

DRAFT

FAREHAM

BOROUGH COUNCIL

Presentation to The Housing Scrutiny Panel

Date: 09 February 2023
Report of: Head of Housing Delivery
Subject: Affordable Housing Update

SUMMARY

The purpose of the presentation is to inform Members of the Panel of the progress with the Fareham Housing sites and other relevant strategic housing matters

RECOMMENDATION

It is recommended that Members consider the contents of the presentation and make any comments or raise any questions for clarification.

FAREHAM

BOROUGH COUNCIL

Presentation to The Housing Scrutiny Panel

Date: 09 February 2023

Subject: TENANT SATISFACTION MEASURES

SUMMARY

A presentation will be given by the Head of Housing & Benefits which will outline the new way of measuring tenant satisfaction with services provided.

RECOMMENDATION

It is recommended that Members consider the contents of the presentation and make any comments or raise any questions for clarification.

FAREHAM

BOROUGH COUNCIL

Report to Housing Scrutiny Panel

Date **09 February 2023**

Report of: **Deputy Chief Executive Officer**

Subject: **GREENER MEASURES & INSTALLATIONS ON COUNCIL OWNED HOMES**

SUMMARY

This report provides Members with an update on the greener measures undertaken on Council owned housing. This includes work carried out as part of Government funding as well as future initiatives.

RECOMMENDATION

It is recommended that the Panel considers the contents of this report and comment or raise any points for further clarification.

INTRODUCTION

1. On 16 December 2019 the Executive approved the Fareham Housing Greener Policy. On the 7 June 2021 the Executive approved the Fareham Borough Council Climate Change Action Plan. Both documents set out actions to invest in the energy efficiency of our social housing stock, with the aim of ensuring our tenants can afford warm homes whilst maximising grant funding opportunities.
2. This report details the actions undertaken since these documents were approved. It also introduces how greener measures in future developments are designed.

THE LOCAL AUTHORITY DELIVERY PHASE 2 (LAD2) SCHEME

3. At the 11 October 2021 Executive meeting it was agreed that the Council would enter into a contract of works to facilitate LAD2 funding. LAD2 was the second phase of the Government Local Authority Delivery scheme. The intention of LAD was to improve the household energy efficiency for those on low incomes. The scheme was aimed at properties with poor energy efficiency; stipulated as homes with an Energy Performance Certificate (EPC) of D or lower. The Government set a cap of £30,000 combined income per household to ensure the works targeted those who need the most help.
4. The LAD2 funding was a relatively simple process; a managing agent (City Energy) was responsible for confirming works, overseeing delivery, arranging procurement, and submitting funding audit information. The Neighbourhood Officers liaised with tenants to ensure that they understood the improvements taking place. As with all the LAD schemes, the Council was required to contribute a third of the costs.
5. Under this grant the Council was able to implement a total of 177 improvements to some of its less energy efficient stock. Several properties benefitted from more than one measure, for example, they had improved loft insulation as well as solar panels. In total, 159 properties were improved. The following table details the costs and the measures installed. It also details the stipulated financial contribution the Council had to make as part of the funding rules:

Total Cost of LAD2 Works	Total FBC Contribution to LAD2 Works Cost	Total Funding Received
£1,028,988	£385,664	£643,324

Figure 1: Cost of LAD2 works

Measure Installed	Number of improvements
Loft Insulation	22
Upgrading Electric Storage Heaters	66
Solar Panels	89
Total	177

Figure 2: Greener measures installed in Council properties

6. Figure 3 shows the EPC ratings of the Council's housing stock, post LAD2 works. An EPC is valid for 10 years and the Council must provide a copy to any new tenants. There are 1350 Council properties with a valid EPC, the majority of these are rated 'C'.

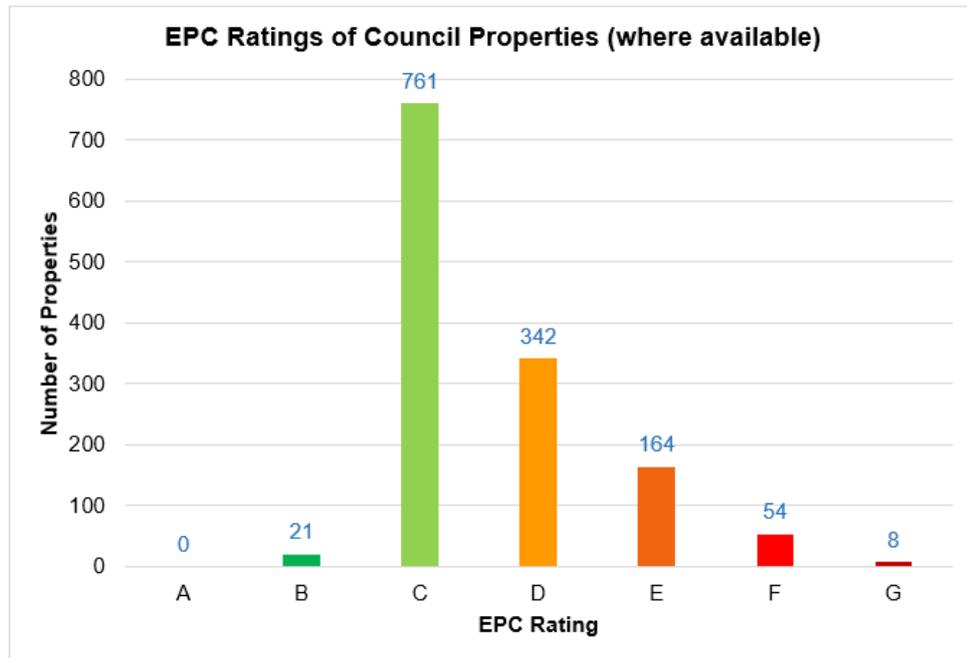


Figure 3: EPCs of Council properties

7. There is ongoing focus on improving the remaining D-G rated properties. The EPCs at Assheton Court, for example, are rated E and F. The new development will be far more efficient and will have energy saving measures implemented as part of the build.
8. Figure 4 compares the EPC ratings of the properties selected for the LAD2 works. The two graphs show the before and after works energy performance ratings.

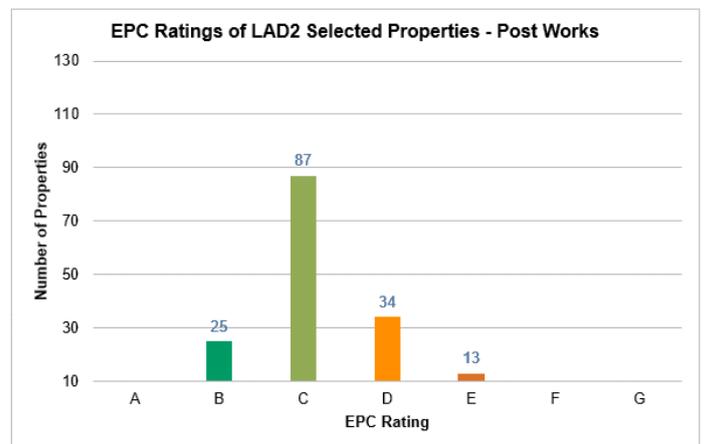
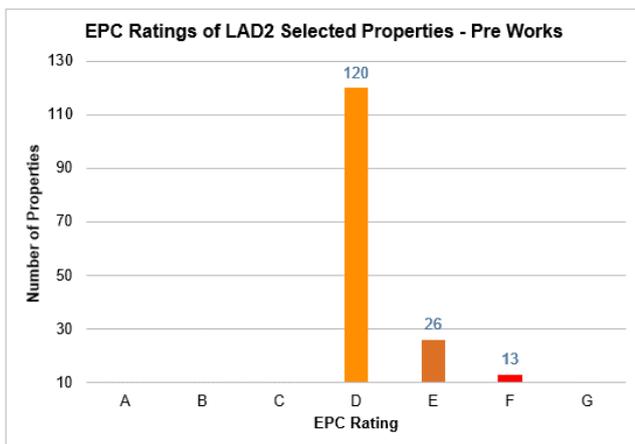


Figure 4: EPCs of properties selected for LAD2 works

9. The LAD2 project was a great success for the team. The Managing Agent were incredibly helpful and professional, and the project had minimal impact on officer time. This meant that officers were able to fully focus on supporting the tenants during this time. More funding of this nature would be welcomed, however no further announcements by Government have been made at the current time.
10. There has been little feedback from customers, however what has been received has

been positive. The energy cost savings from the works will not be as notable due to the rise in energy costs, but it will have improved the comfort and charges to those customers than had the works not taken place.

CAPACITY FUNDING

11. In July 2021 the Council was successful in obtaining £23,940 in funding from the South West Energy Hub. This grant funded a study to understand how the Council could improve the energy efficiency of its harder to treat stock (retrofit). The most significant challenge in retrofitting our estate is understanding which measures to implement.
12. Flats present a problem in that they are typically more difficult to retrofit. The reasons being that there are multiple dwellings within one block, some of which may also be leaseholders, and what may work for a house may not be appropriate for flats. We also need to consider other factors. This includes the technologies available, the size, type, age and construction of our properties, the costs / budget required, and the level of disruption. As flats make up over 60% of our stock, we need to ensure that the correct measures are applied first time; we need to ensure minimal disruption for our tenants and make effective use of budgets. We especially do not want any greener measures to result in increasing costs for residents.
13. The outcome from this funding stream included details of how to potentially retrofit 8 different property archetypes. This included a sheltered housing scheme, maisonettes, 2 storey flats and 4 storey flats. The aim was to meet EPC A, with options for practicality omissions that would take the property to at least EPC C. Some of the properties chosen were found to already be at EPC C, which stresses the importance of reliable data.
14. This grant funding has now been fully utilised. It has enabled officers to understand how retrofit works could be applied to Council properties and has given an outline of the costs involved. The next step with this project is to apply some of the findings to one of the subject properties.

FORT FAREHAM

15. At the 7 November 2022 Executive meeting, Appendix B to the Fareham Housing Regeneration Strategy (Fort Fareham Housing Estate Regeneration) was approved. The Fort Fareham regeneration project area consists of 19 Council owned flats and 13 houses. The document itself outlines the various projects to improve the energy efficiency of Council homes at this site.
16. Full details of the project can be found in the Executive report. However, to summarise, the following improvements are planned for the houses and flats at the site:
 - Provide deeper foundations to enable the replacement of the existing PVC-u panels with insulated and eternally cladded wall panels
 - Replace windows
 - Replace the kitchen & bathrooms
 - Redecoration to areas affected by the works – painting, carpets etc.

- New heating where required
17. In addition, and subject to the Local Plan, redevelopment of Redoubt Court at the southern side of Fort Fareham is proposed. At the appropriate time, an architect will be appointed to recommend improvements and add new dwellings at the site, or to design a more comprehensive redevelopment.
 18. The redevelopment/reconfiguration of this site will facilitate providing a larger number of affordable homes. Newer homes tend to be far more energy efficient and can have greener measures incorporated within the design from the outset.
 19. Subject to costs, the document suggests aspirational improvements that could be incorporated at the site. This would bring additional benefits to the area and provide further greener improvements to the homes. The Fort Fareham document outlines the areas for addition to the project, listing them from required through to desirable. These potential and desired improvements could facilitate access to grant opportunities, should they become available. Some of the aspirational improvements include:
 - Improved lighting and seating in areas around the blocks.
 - Providing small private gardens to ground floor flats (low level boundary treatment).
 - Replacement of communal drying areas with hardstanding or landscaping (appropriate bin storage/collection points and alternative drying and storage provision).
 - Installation of photovoltaics.
 - Improving biodiversity of open areas.
 - Adding balconies to the flats.
 20. Officers will seek to progress these more aspirational improvements that will further enhance the housing offer and produce wider regeneration benefits for Fort Fareham.

FUTURE DEVELOPMENTS

21. As part of the Council's commitment to providing housing choices, further developments of social housing are in the pipeline. To ensure the continued commitment of delivering energy efficient homes, a detailed appraisal is undertaken at each site. This involves determining the correct greener measures for each site and understanding how they can be delivered. For example, Sir Randal Cremer House has solar panels on the roof which will provide energy for the communal areas, with the addition of a battery to store energy generated by the panels. This will help reduce the communal energy costs passed to the tenants.
22. Other sites already in development / recently completed also underwent energy efficiency analysis. These include implementing solar panels at Oak Tree Close as well as Queens Road. In addition, the two properties at Queens Road will also have air source heat pumps instead of gas boilers. Assheton Court is currently undergoing an appraisal to understand the most appropriate energy measures.
23. There can at times be a challenge in achieving appropriate greener solutions in an affordable way. This in terms of the initial cost of providing greener solutions (adding to the project/construction costs) but also ensuring the solution is affordable for our

customers living in the homes. On some occasions the optimum greener measure for carbon reduction will lead to higher running costs for customers. An appropriate balance is therefore often sought.

FUTURE GRANT OPPORTUNITIES

24. There are some new funding streams emerging via central government. This includes the Social Housing Decarbonisation Fund (SHDF). At the moment many of these opportunities bring with them a complexity and resource intensive approach; importantly they are often aimed at properties which are not representative of our stock. For example, homes with particularly poor EPC ratings or which do not have gas provision to the home.
25. Officers will continue to maintain their awareness of appropriate grant funding opportunities and build in greener measures to the planned maintenance programme to Council homes. Alongside this, background work will continue to be developed to understand the opportunities to make greener improvements; having projects identified and 'oven ready' often places the Council in a better position should grant funding opportunities arise.

RISK ASSESSMENT

26. There are no significant risk considerations in relation to this report. The report does however recognise the challenge around matching a greener agenda to flats, which make up a significant proportion of Council owned homes. It also refers to the fact that the greenest solutions could have a detrimental impact on running costs for our customers.

CONCLUSION

27. The Council has been successful in both securing grant funding and in improving the energy efficiency of its housing stock. However, this is only the beginning. It is recognised that there is further work to be undertaken to raise the Council's housing portfolio to at least EPC C. In some instances, due to construction type or site restrictions this may not be possible. Where this is the case, officers will ensure members are advised accordingly.
28. Officers will continue to seek further funding opportunities to help fund greener measures. It is recognised that this funding is rare, therefore analysis and appraisals will help inform how budgets can be spent to best serve customers.

Appendices: None.

Background Papers: None.

Reference Papers: Fareham Housing Greener Policy
16 December 2019 Executive minutes

Reference Papers (contd.): Fareham Borough Council Climate Change Action Plan
7 June 2021 Executive minutes

11 October 2021 Executive minutes

7 November 2022 Executive minutes

Appendix B to the Fareham Housing Regeneration
Strategy (Fort Fareham Housing Estate Regeneration)

Enquiries:

For further information on this report please contact Fleur Allaway - tel.01329 824304

