

Housing Strategy Consultation Overview

Q1. The Introduction outlines the key housing challenges and evidence for the priorities we have identified. Do you think we have correctly identified the main challenges?

91.66% of sample agreed

Comment: The negative sample illustrated not that the main challenges were incorrectly identified, but that there was a higher expectation for the Council to deliver more.

Q2. A key aim of this Strategy is to establish a consistent introduction of new affordable housing and to implement a housing development programme. To achieve this we have identified key priorities to action. Do you think we have chosen appropriate priorities?

66.66% of sample agreed

Comment: Overwhelmingly the sample supported the introduction of new affordable housing; however there was a recognition it has to be truly affordable; environmentally sustainable and targeted towards younger households who have few housing options.

Q3. A key aim of this Strategy is to explore and develop housing options for younger households, particularly for those in employment/aspiring to enter employment. To achieve this we have identified key priorities to action. Do you think we have chosen appropriate priorities?

83.3% of sample agreed

Comment: A distinct majority supported the development of housing options and recognised a need to ensure employment is promoted to create an aspirational culture. A note of caution was raised that these efforts should not be to the detriment of core service provision.

Q4. A key aim of this Strategy is to establish how we can help people access private rented housing and find ways to improve housing conditions. To achieve this we have identified key priorities to action. Do you think we have chosen the appropriate policies?

75% of sample agreed

Comment: The negative sample either provided no clear explanation of why the priorities were incorrect or identified no alternatives. Indication was made that greater efforts should be made by the Council to engage with the private rented sector.

Q5. Do you feel that the design and layout of the draft Housing Strategy is clear and easy to understand?

91.66% of sample agreed

Comment: A key objective in re-designing the Housing Strategy was to ensure it was transparent and comprehensible. The sample showed direct recognition of achievement in this area.

Qualitative Responses:

- ❖ Whilst a very small percentage of the sample indicated personal issues unconnected with the Housing Strategy the majority of opinions were directly supportive of the direction Brentwood Borough Council is taking in relation to Housing issues.
- ❖ A key concern was the correct targeting of resources, with a distinct commitment towards younger households, and those in employment rather than NEETs (not in education, employment or training).
- ❖ Support has been identified for the use of alternate accommodations, away from traditional 'bricks and mortar' where it presents an opportunity for greater volume and affordability of housing.
- ❖ The use of Flexible Fixed Term Tenancies and the strategy to ensuring provision of a range of housing 'products' for those with differing needs was welcomed.
- ❖ A broad recognition of the crucial issue of affordability, particularly set against high private sector rentals was identified; again younger households were the main demographic identified as being in the greatest need of assistance.
- ❖ Concern was raised by a small section of the sample that NIMBY'ism within the Borough may prove an effective bar against creative housing solutions.
- ❖ The introduction of Universal Credit and engagement with welfare reform was commented upon as a key challenge for both customers and Brentwood Borough Council. The importance of partnership working with key agencies, notably the DWP, was urged by both local residents and professionals.