



Agenda

Housing, Health & Community Committee

Monday, 18 December 2023 at 7.00 pm

Council Chamber, Brentwood Borough Council, Ingrave Road,
Brentwood, Essex CM15 8AY

Membership (Quorum – 3)

Cllrs Dr Barrett (Chair), Mrs Davies (Vice-Chair), Mrs Francois, Kendall, Mayo, Mrs Pound, Russell, Sankey and Slade

Substitute Members

Cllrs Barrett, Naylor, Poppy, Reed and Rigby

Agenda

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Live broadcast

[Live stream to start at 7pm and available for repeated viewing](#)

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Jonathan Stephenson
Chief Executive

Town Hall
Brentwood, Essex
08.12.2023

Information for Members

Substitutes

The names of substitutes shall be announced at the start of the meeting by the Chair and the substitution shall cease at the end of the meeting.

Where substitution is permitted, substitutes for quasi judicial/regulatory committees must be drawn from Members who have received training in quasi- judicial/regulatory decision making. If a casual vacancy occurs on a quasi judicial/regulatory committee it will not be filled until the nominated member has been trained.

Rights to Attend and Speak

Any Members may attend any Committee to which these procedure rules apply.

A Member who is not a member of the Committee may speak at the meeting. The Member may speak at the Chair's discretion, it being the expectation that a Member will be allowed to speak on a ward matter.

Members requiring further information, or with specific questions, are asked to raise these with the appropriate officer at least two working days before the meeting.

Point of Order/ Personal explanation/ Point of Information

Point of Order

A member may raise a point of order at any time. The Mayor will hear them immediately. A point of order may only relate to an alleged breach of these Procedure Rules or the law. The Member must indicate the rule or law and the way in which they consider it has been broken. The ruling of the Mayor on the point of order will be final.

Personal Explanation

A member may make a personal explanation at any time. A personal explanation must relate to some material part of an earlier speech by the member which may appear to have been misunderstood in the present debate, or outside of the meeting. The ruling of the Mayor on the admissibility of a personal explanation will be final.

Point of Information or clarification

A point of information or clarification must relate to the matter being debated. If a Member wishes to raise a point of information, he/she must first seek the permission of the Mayor. The Member must specify the nature of the information he/she wishes to provide and its importance to the current debate. If the Mayor gives his/her permission, the Member will give the additional information succinctly. Points of Information or clarification should be used in exceptional circumstances and should not be used to interrupt other speakers or to make a further speech when he/she has already spoken during the debate. The ruling of the Mayor on the admissibility of a point of information or clarification will be final.

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Where members of the public use a laptop, tablet device, smart phone or similar devices to make recordings, these devices must be set to 'silent' mode to avoid interrupting proceedings of the council or committee.

If you wish to record the proceedings of a meeting and have any special requirements or are intending to bring in large equipment then please contact the Communications Team before the meeting.

The use of flash photography or additional lighting may be allowed provided it has been discussed prior to the meeting and agreement reached to ensure that it will not disrupt proceedings.

The Chair of the meeting may terminate or suspend filming, photography, recording and use of social media if any of

these activities, in their opinion, are disrupting proceedings at the meeting.

 **Private Session**

Occasionally meetings will need to discuss some of its business in private. This can only happen on a limited range of issues, which are set by law. When a Committee does so, you will be asked to leave the meeting.

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 **Evacuation Procedures**

Evacuate the building using the nearest available exit and congregate at the assembly point in the Car Park.



Minutes

Housing, Health & Community Committee Monday, 18th September, 2023

Attendance

Cllr Dr Barrett (Chair)
Cllr Mrs Davies (Vice-Chair)
Cllr Kendall
Cllr Mayo

Cllr Russell
Cllr Sankey
Cllr Slade

Apologies

Cllr Mrs Francois

Cllr Mrs Pound

Substitute Present

Cllr Poppy
Cllr Reed

Also Present

Cllr Wagland
Cllr Barber
Cllr Mrs Fulcher
Cllr Mrs Murphy

Officers Present

Lauren Stretch	- Director of Housing
Tracey Lilley	- Director - Communities & Health
Zoe Borman	- Governance and Member Support Officer
Kim Anderson	- Corporate Manager Communities, Leisure & Health
Carol Burton	- Corporate Manager - Technical Services
Nicola Marsh	- Corporate Manager - Housing Estates
Paulette McAllister	- Programme Lead - Strategic Housing Development Programme

LIVE BROADCAST

[Live stream to start at 7pm and available for repeat viewing.](#)

158. Apologies for absence

Apologies had been received from Cllrs Mrs Francois and Pound. Cllrs Poppy and Reed were substituting.

159. Minutes of the previous meeting

The Minutes of the last meeting held on 19th June were agreed as a true record.

160. Chairs Update

This report highlighted the work achieved by the Housing and Community Teams to date.

The Performance Presentation giving an overview of the partnership between Brentwood Borough Council and Everyone Active which was unavailable at the meeting is attached to the Minutes.

Members raised questions concerning Lighting Up Brentwood. Mrs Anderson has since sent committee members event details for this year supported by BID.

Cllr Kendall advised the Committee that Hutton Poplars Bowling Club would sadly be closing down.

Members raised concerns regarding the lift which was out of action at Victoria Court and requested that Members were kept fully informed of this and other similar issues.

Officers advised that since the pandemic there have been difficulties obtaining the parts required to maintain the lifts.

The Lift Communications Plan is currently under review. The council are aware the lifts are old and more prone to faults. Temporary and long term solutions are being investigated such as stair lifts.

Members declared an interest in the site visits to Estate Pilot Sites.

Members noted the report.

[Cllr Reed declared a non-pecuniary interest with regards the Try a Tri event and supplying animals on behalf of SNAP]

161. Creative & Cultural Vision 2023-2027

The report outlines the vision for creativity and culture in Brentwood, for the next 5 years, as determined through a public consultation process with a range of stakeholders. A clear strategy for culture and creativity with a five-year complementary action plan against the three priorities outlined in this report, will be developed to monitor delivery and progress.

Members noted the report.

162. Leisure Contract Information

The Brentwood Leisure Centre and Hartswood Pavilion in King George's Playing Fields is currently managed by Everyone Active (SLM) and their contract is due to expire on 1 October 2023. The Council is looking to extend the contract until 31 March 2025 and during that period draw up the tender documents to go out in 2024 for a longer-term leisure contract. This short extension aligns with expiration of the Leisure Contract for Rochford District Council's leisure facilities. It is proposed to do a joint tender for the leisure facilities across Brentwood and Rochford from 1 April 2025.

Cllr Dr Barrett **MOVED** and Cllr Davies **SECONDED** the recommendations in the report.

Cllr Dr Barrett advised that Cllrs Russell, Poppy, Dr Barrett, Davies and Mayo would form the Leisure Strategy Working Group.

Following a short discussion a vote was taken by a show of hands and it was **RESOLVED UNANIMOUSLY**

1: To note the report that went to Finance, Assets, Investment and Recovery Committee on 13 September for information

2: That Members nominate cross party representatives for the Leisure Strategy Working Group.

Reasons for Recommendation

Brentwood Borough Council needs to develop a robust and evidenced based feasibility study on potential investment options at the Brentwood Centre. This will be informed by the following information:

- Engagement with internal and external stakeholders and partners to understand local needs and aspirations for the facility.
- Assessment of supply and demand for different facilities and, taking into account the size and demographics profile of the identified catchment population
- Assessment of potential options, including energy saving opportunities and a clear rationale and evidence base for the preferred option.
- Drawing and accommodation schedules
- Budget cost estimates and project delivery programmes which set out the timeframes for procurement, detailed design, planning and construction.

- Revenue business plans based on robust assumptions and market insight.
- Collation of all outputs into a report outlining key findings, conclusions and recommendations which will be presented to the relevant committee.

163. Leisure Strategy Action Plan

The Leisure Strategy 2018-28 is one of the key strategies for the Council to ensure that its leisure facilities now are not only fit for purpose now, but for the future. The Strategy and annual action Plan set the vision of what the Council needs to achieve, the challenges it faces and how the priorities and outcomes have been identified. The Annual Action Plan sets out what has been delivered in 2022-23 and the planned activity for 2023-24.

Cllr Dr Barrett **MOVED** and Cllr Davies **SECONDED** the recommendations in the report.

Following a short discussion a vote was taken by a show of hands and it was **RESOLVED UNANIMOUSLY**

1: To agree the Leisure Strategy action plan for 2023-24 and to note the progress in 2022-23.

Reason for Recommendation

As part of the Council's due diligence in delivering a successful leisure strategy, members and officers need to have a complete picture of the current associated costs, risk profiles of the Borough Leisure facilities and identify opportunities for income generation.

164. Health & Wellbeing update

The Health and Wellbeing Strategy 2020 – 2023, was written before the COVID-19 pandemic and is due to be refreshed before 2024. In light of the upcoming strategy refresh the public health team felt it necessary to have an updated, post-pandemic snapshot of the health and well-being of the borough in line with current data, in order to update the priorities to best suit the needs of the residents.

Following a full discussion Members noted the report.

165. Pets as Prizes (RSPCA Campaign)

The report provided the context on the ban of giving live animals (e.g., goldfish, etc.) as prizes as set out in the Royal Society for the Prevention of Cruelty to Animals (RSPCA) campaign of 2021 and explained the current legislation framework and recommendations of actions that Brentwood Borough Council can take in support of the RSPCA campaign on an outright ban of giving live animals away on Council owned land.

Cllr Dr Barrett **MOVED** and Cllr Davies **SECONDED** the recommendations in the report.

Members welcomed this report. Following a full discussion a vote was taken by a show of hands and Members **RESOLVED UNANIMOUSLY**

1: That Brentwood Borough Council agrees that an outright ban of the giving of live animals as prizes in any form, on Brentwood Borough Council owned land is implemented.

2: That Brentwood Borough Council writes to the UK Government requesting an outright ban of live animals as prizes on both public and private land.

3: The Council carries out a review of the current policies and the terms and conditions of the licences and hire of Council owned land and premises to ensure that they reflect the Council's position as regards giving of live animals (e.g., goldfish, etc.) as prizes.

Reasons for Recommendation

The Council was contacted by a resident in Brentwood through their Councillor expressing their concerns that the practice of giving live animals is still not outlawed and has requested that the Council work with the RSPCA to support their campaign to ban outrightly the giving of live animals as prizes on Council owned land.

The RSPCA provides several reasons as to why the giving of such prizes is an outdated practice, their concerns on animal welfare, release of unwanted animal prizes into the environment and the lack of preparation and understanding of the care that animals require to provide them with a suitable environment.

Therefore, by issuing an outright ban on such activities on all Council owned or operated land and properties, the Council will send a clear message of its commitment to ensure the welfare of animals and help reinforce the message that these practices are no longer desirable in our community.

166. Compliance & Repairs Update

Members received a presentation from Brentwood Housing Team together with Mr Chris Houlihan of Axis.

Members welcomed the positive update and look forward to seeing an improvement on the current services.

167. Housing Policy Reviews

Since 2020, Housing have been reviewing and renewing all its policies and strategies. Many of these are now approaching their review dates.

On 4 September 2023, a Policy working group was held with members of this committee who were invited to read and make comments and suggestions on the 4 reviewed policies:

Appendix A: Income Management Policy

Appendix B: Former Tenant Debt Recovery Policy
Appendix C: Recharge Policy
Appendix D: Electrical Safety Policy

Amendments and suggestions have been implemented as discussed to form the final draft documents.

Each policy has had amendments made which are explained in the report.

Cllr Dr Barrett **MOVED** and Cllr Davies **SECONDED** the recommendations.

A vote was taken by a show of hands and Members **RESOLVED UNANIMOUSLY**

1: To approve the below reviewed policies for immediate implementation by the Housing Service:

- 1. Income Management Policy**
- 2. Former Tenant Debt Recovery Policy**
- 3. Recharge Policy**
- 4. Electrical Safety Policy**

Reason for Recommendation

In order to keep all Housing policies relevant and up to date with Housing Legislation, they require regular reviews and updates.

168. Hoarding Policy

In the last two years the housing team have identified two serious hoarding cases within our stock. It quickly became apparent that there were no guidance documents or policies to help and support officers, only information from Social Care.

With the implementation of Tenancy Audits imminent, we are proposing to introduce a new Hoarding Policy to support officers and provide clear guidance on how to deal with these cases as we anticipate finding more as the new audits progress.

Our aim is to deal with each identified case in a safe, supporting, considerate and efficient manner.

Cllr Dr Barrett **MOVED** and Cllr Davies **SECONDED** the recommendations.

A vote was taken by a show of hands and Members **RESOLVED UNANIMOUSLY**

For members to endorse the Health & Safety and Wellbeing Policy.

Reasons for Recommendation

By implementing this policy, officers will have a guide to dealing with complex hoarding cases and if they are questioned on their actions, can refer to the document accordingly.

This will also be shared with residents should they query why we are doing

something and will also assist in their understanding of hoarding.

169. SHDP Update

This report summarises progress since the last committee in June 2023 on a pipeline of new affordable homes through the development and regeneration of various Housing Revenue Account (HRA) owned sites.

As a reminder, the Strategic Housing Delivery Programme (SHDP) is made up of two distinct elements, 1) the regeneration of Brookfield Close and Courage Court, Hutton to develop 62 zero carbon homes alongside Harewood Regeneration which consists of 40 new zero carbon homes, and 2) the development of a range of smaller HRA sites to deliver further affordable homes on further council owned sites.

The Council's Corporate Strategy 'Brentwood 2025' commits to Introducing "innovative Carbon reduction and absorption schemes", "identify opportunities for low emission and green developments" and using "brownfield sites efficiently, such as council owned garage sites, to provide affordable homes...".

Ms Paulette McAllister presented the report to Members.

170. Urgent business

Asset of Community Value: St Andrews Methodist Church, Herongate

The Localism Act 2011 requires local authorities to keep a list of assets (meaning buildings or other land) which are of community value. Once an asset is placed on the list it will usually remain there for five years. The effect of listing is that generally speaking an owner intending to dispose of the asset must give notice to the local authority. A community interest group then has six weeks in which to ask to be treated as a potential bidder. If it does so, the disposal cannot take place for six months. The theory is that this period known as the "moratorium" will allow the community group to come up with an alternative proposal- although, at the end of the moratorium, it is entirely up to the owner whether a disposal goes through, to whom and for how much. There are arrangements for the local authority to pay compensation to an owner who loses money in consequence of the asset being listed.

A valid nomination had been received by the Herongate and Ingrave Preservation Society on 14 September 2023 (**Appendix A**) In relation to St Andrews Methodist Church and land as indicated on the attached site plan (**Appendix B**) contained within the report.

Mrs Kim Anderson presented the report to Members.

Cllr Dr Barrett **MOVED** and Cllr Davies **SECONDED** the recommendations.

A vote was taken by a show of hands and members **RESOLVED UNANIMOUSLY**

1: To list the land as a community asset as indicated in Appendix B of the report as an Asset of Community Value and that it is added to the Council's Register of Community Assets.

Reasons for Recommendation

The nomination meets both the statutory tests as set out in 3.7 and therefore it is recommended to list St Andrew's Methodist Church and land as an Asset of Community Value and add it to the Council's Register of Assets of Community Value.

The Localism Act provides an opportunity for communities to raise finance to competitively bid when a community asset comes on the open market. This is achieved through a legal framework governed by the Local Authority. The Act allows communities to nominate assets of community value (ACV's). The council is given eight weeks to determine whether it meets the criteria for listing from the date of submission, and then places its decision on the list. When the owner of a listed asset wishes to dispose of it, the Act introduces a delay or 'moratorium' before he or she can do so, to give any interested and eligible community groups the time to prepare a bid. However, at the end of the moratorium period the owner can sell to whomever they choose at a price agreed by the buyer.

171. Strategic Housing Delivery Programme

The public were excluded from the meeting for the item of business on the grounds that the disclosure of exempt information as defined in Schedule 12A of the Local Government Act 1972 was involved.

A Motion was **MOVED** by Cllr Dr Barrett and **SECONDED** by Cllr Davies to agree the recommendation in the report. A vote was taken by a show of hands and it was **RESOLVED UNANIMOUSLY**.

172. Garage Site Review

The public were excluded from the meeting for the item of business on the grounds that the disclosure of exempt information as defined in Schedule 12A of the Local Government Act 1972 was involved.

A Motion was **MOVED** by Cllr Dr Barrett and **SECONDED** by Cllr Davies to agree the recommendation in the report. A vote was taken by a show of hands and it was **RESOLVED UNANIMOUSLY**.

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COMMITTEE TITLE: Housing, Health and Community Committee

DATE: 18th December 2023

REPORT TITLE:	Chair's update
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REPORT SUMMARY

This report provides an update to Members in relation to the areas covered under the Terms of Reference of the Housing, Health and Community Committee.

HOUSING

Update on Homelessness

There have been 663 requests for Housing Advice since April 2023. On average there are 82 requests per month. Since June 2023 there has been a steady increase in the number of approaches being made on a monthly basis. As at the end of November there are currently 147 live cases.

While overall numbers in temporary accommodation remain low, there has been an increase in the requirement to provide temporary accommodation. As at the end of November there were 30 households in temporary accommodation.

Local Authority Housing Fund (LAHF) Update

Further to the Committee report presented to the 19th June, Health, Housing and Community Committee by Julian Higson, the Former Director of Housing in regard to the Local Authority Fund update.

We have now completed three property purchases in Pilgrims Hatch which were all partially funded from the Council's overall grant funding from DLUHC of £1,671.953 and we are in the process of purchasing a further property. In addition, we have allocated a further five properties already within the HRA to the LAHF. In accordance with the grant funding requirements these properties will be allocated to Afghan and Ukraine families for a period of five years, after which they will be available to applicants via the Housing or Transfer Registers.

Garage Site Review

The review of the garage sites is progressing well. Officers met with Knight Frank earlier this month to discuss the proposed options appraisal for the identified sites. The next step is to internally look at the options proposed before entering consultation and/or working group with members.

In addition to the above, we are currently putting together a list of works for the most desirable to let sites to improve these areas, repair the garages and then let them accordingly.

Parking Order

In circa 2018, the housing department introduced a parking order at Mayflower House, Gibraltar House and the Keys, Eagle Way after several complaints from residents that the car parks were being used by the offices at the bottom of the drive.

Residents were consulted with, and resident parking permits implemented. This scheme worked well and in 2021, we embarked on rolling this out to the remainder of the Council car parks by adding all of them to the parking order with a view to implement the measures in a structured manner.

Officers began consultations with residents, however, due to resource issues this project was never completed.

We have now seen an increase in complaints from residents about the use of resident car parks and officers are therefore restarting the project to introduce parking permits for residents to alleviate some of the issues.

Officers will be starting with Orchard Avenue with consultation letters being sent to all residents effected and relevant members.

Once this order is in place, we will work through the remainder of the Housing sites, We anticipate this project will take at least 2 years to fully implement.

HEALTH

Update from the Mid and South Essex Integrated Care Partnership (MSE ICP)

The MSE ICP published its integrated Care Strategy 2023-2033 in March 23. The delivery plan is being developed with the following priorities agreed in consultation with a community assembly to ensure that the voice of the residents/service users are heard. The aim of the Partnership is by working collaborative across the area to reduce population health inequalities. There are 5 key priorities that the partnership is focussing on.

1. Working together to address the wider determinants of health (this includes factors such as Health behaviours, Socio-economic factors together with built environment as well as clinical care.
2. Addressing health inequalities for people of all ages with a particular focus on the Core 20 plus 5
 - a. Top 20% of the population in the most deprived areas
 - b. Plus 5 clinical areas of focus
 - i. Maternity
 - ii. Severe Mental Health
 - iii. Chronic respiratory disease
 - iv. Early cancer diagnosis
 - v. Cholesterol management
3. Adult care – focusing on ageing well, mental health and suicide prevention, loneliness and isolation, Learning Difficulties and autism, alcohol and substance, and end of life and palliative care.
4. Babies Children and Young People – focusing on a good start in life, Children and Adolescent Mental Health support, Special Educational Needs and supporting the Healthy Schools agenda.

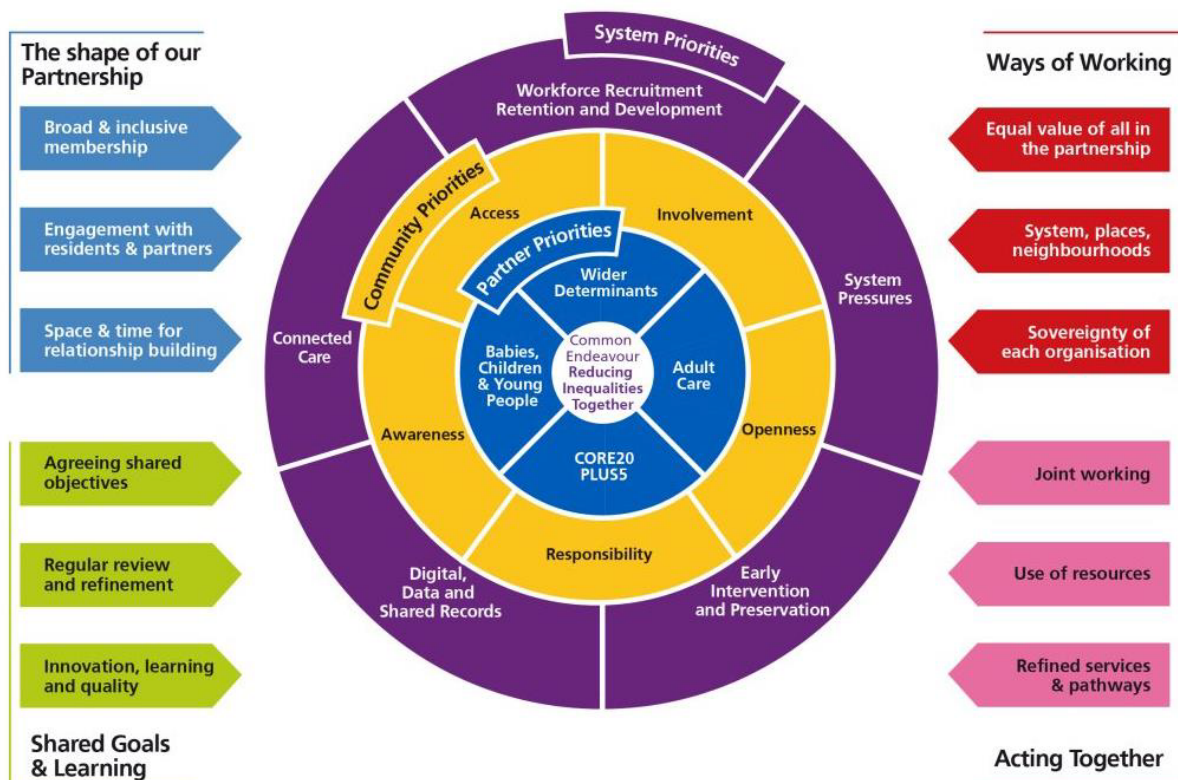
Work with the community also identified 5 priorities for how they would like to see services developed as the strategy is implemented:

- **Access:** good access to health and care systems, more personalised care closer to home
- **Openness** – clear honest conversations so that residents understand what to expect from services and how to access them in the right way.
- **Involvement** – maximising opportunities for them to engage in the development of services
- **Awareness** – helping residents and patients understand what services are available and how they can appropriately access them.
- **Responsibility** – with residents taking responsibility for their own health and wellbeing and participating in healthy behaviours and seeking help from the system when they need it.

There are also 5 areas of joint working across Mid and South Essex.

1. **System pressures** working together to manage health and care capacity and ensure care is available where it is needed
2. **Workforce recruitment, retention, and development** to ensure a skilled workforce across the area.
3. **Early intervention and prevention** to progress the population health and health inequalities agenda; smoking cessation and vaping policies to support a Smoke Free Essex by 2030; targeting cardiovascular (CVD) prevention and increasing cholesterol lowering therapies.
4. **Connected Care** with the focus on developing Integrated Neighbourhood Teams with primary and community service teams to deliver coordinated care in the community reducing duplication.
5. **Digital, data and shared records** with a focus on single electronic Patient Record

The diagram below sets out the ICP Plan on a page



Find Your Active Brentwood (formerly Active Brentwood)

In October Find Your Active Brentwood and Active Essex successfully delivered a 1-day funding clinic to sports clubs and organisations in Brentwood. Clubs were given the opportunity to ask questions around funding and then were signposted to available funding pots. The 40-minute slots were snapped up within 24 hours and the feedback was very positive and will look to put on another funding clinic in 2024.

Networking event date for your diary will be **Friday 1 March 2024** location to be confirmed.

Local Cycling and Walking Infrastructure Plan (LCWIP)

The public consultation has now closed, and officers are awaiting results from the County Council meeting on 8th December. The rural Essex County LCWIP has started, and they are looking to have proposed routes by Summer 2024.

COMMUNITY

Cost of Living

The Cost-of-Living webpage is regularly updated and to signpost and provide guidance to residents that may need additional support. The list of warm hubs has been updated for this year.

[Cost of living | Brentwood Council](#)

Community Connect Trailer Dates

The Community Connect Trailer will be at the following locations on dates set out below. The trailer is normally there between the hours of 10am – 1.00pm.

- Thursday 1 February – St Peters Church, Hutton
- Friday 8 March - Brentwood High Street
- Wednesday 20 March - Ingatestone High Street
- Wednesday 10 April – Brentwood High Street
- Tuesday 23 April – Kelvedon Hatch (Nisa Shop)
- Wednesday 8 May – Doddinghurst (outside shops)
- Thursday 16 May – Brentwood High Street
- Tuesday 28 May – Shenfield High Street

Brentwood Centre & Hartswood Pavilion

Christmas opening times at the Brentwood Centre

- Saturday 23rd Dec – Normal (No Event at present).
- Sunday 24th Dec – 8am – 2pm
- Monday 25th Dec – CLOSED
- Tuesday 26th Dec – CLOSED
- Wednesday 27th Dec – 8am – 8pm
- Thursday 28th Dec – 8am – 8pm
- Friday 29th Dec – 8am – 8pm
- Saturday 30th Dec – 8am – 6pm (Pantomime Event in Hall)

- Sunday 31st Dec – 8am – 2pm
- Monday 1st Jan – CLOSED
- Tuesday 2nd Jan – Normal operating times
- Wednesday 3rd Jan – Normal operating times

Hartswood Pavilion

- Saturday 23rd December 7am – 7pm
- Sunday 24 December 7am – 2pm
- Monday 25 December – CLOSED
- Tuesday 26 December – CLOSED
- Wednesday 27 December 7am – 6pm
- Thursday 28 December 7am – 6pm
- Friday 29 December 7am – 6pm
- Saturday 30 December 7am – 7pm
- Sunday 31 December 7am – 2pm
- Monday 1 January – CLOSED

Event programme at the Brentwood Centre

December

- 19th – Jack Whitehall
- 20th – Bingo Loco
- 21st – Hutton & Shenfield Choral Society
- 22nd – The Big Sing
- 30th – Cinderella

January

- 7th - Antiques Fair
- 13th – Toy Fair
- 19th – Queen
- 20th – Mega Inflatables
- 27th & 28th – Ballroom Dancing

February

- 10th – Boxing
- 17th & 18th – Boccia
- 19th & 20th – Mega Inflatables

Leisure procurement strategy

Two workshop Sessions have been held with the Leisure Strategy Working Group to identify the key priorities for the joint leisure procurement for an operator for the Brentwood Centre and Hartswood Pavilion in King George's Playing Fields, together with two sites in Rochford District Council. The sessions looked at the following areas to be considered as part of the new leisure contract:

- strategic objectives
- scope of services
- contract length,
- Investment options
- Maintenance and utility risks
- Variant bids
- Procurement procedure
- Evaluation framework
- Profit Share

There will be a separate report going to the additional Housing Health and Community Committee on 15 January 2024 to ask for formal approval of the Procurement Strategy for the new Leisure Contract at this meeting.

Good Company

The Council has collaborated with partners to deliver a successful pilot of a creative dementia and carer programme at Brentwood Theatre. The 8-week programme offered activity and care at a weekly, creative group at Brentwood Theatre, where participants were immersed in an array of stimulating arts activities by renowned organisations, from reminiscence theatre to dance, film and orchestral music, creating work inspired by lived experience, exploring wellbeing, identities and relationships between family carers and those they care for. The impact of participating in the programme will be evaluated by the University of Essex.

Graduates from Good Company will be able to participate in weekly shorter sessions at the Theatre from January, whilst an 8-week programme for a new cohort will begin in February. The fundraising continues!

Dunton Hills Garden Village - arts commission

In partnership with Essex Cultural Diversity Project, the Council has commissioned an artist to work with local schools to examine the different environments and biodiversity at Dunton Hills Garden Village. The artist will be exploring the theme of habitat and home for a range of wildlife and work with school children to design some wooden totem habitats to eventually be placed in situ at the site.

Digital Inclusion Hubs

The Council is working closely with Essex County Council and community organisations to develop 4 digital inclusion hubs across the Borough. The hubs will utilise donated laptops from Brentwood Prep School and engage Duke of Edinburgh Students to train as Digital Champions to support residents to get online. The Maple Hall digital hub opens on 12 December with a special Christmas event for local children where they Santa GPT will dial in and they can ask him questions. Other hubs are at Brentwood Theatre, Daily Bread Cafe and Ingatestone Library. Funding was secured through the County Members' Local Community Fund.

UKSPF - Grant Programme launching

Expressions of Interest for arts and sports grant programme to allocate UKSPF opened on 11 December. Prospective applicants have until 8 January to submit an expressions of interest form for large capital and revenue grants for projects starting 1st April. All details will be on the Council's funding page on the website.

SAFER
GREENER
HEALTHIER
Transforming travel in Essex

LCWIP PHASE ONE REPORT

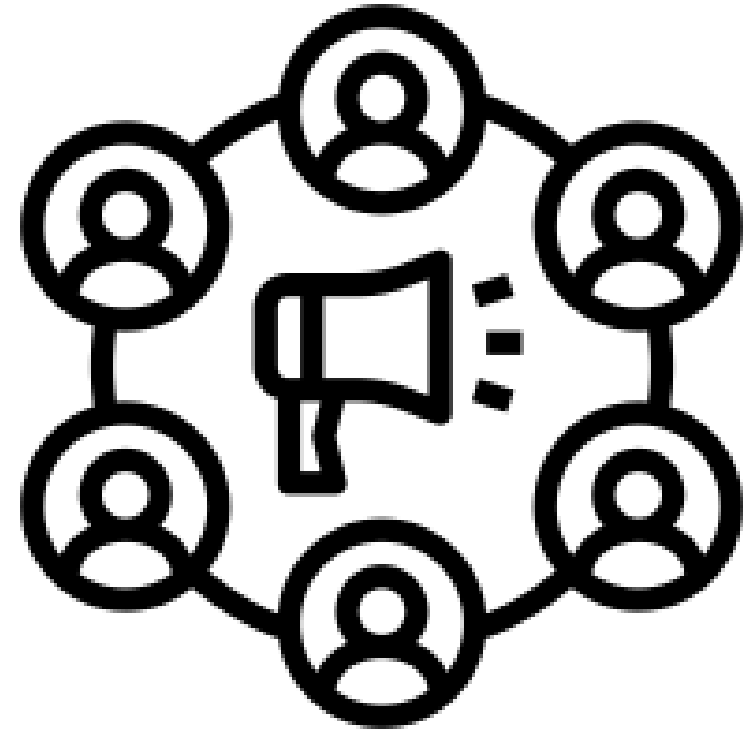


WHAT WE DID

- **Timeline:**
 - 31 July to 15 October 2023
- **Tools:**
 - Citizenspace platform
- **Purpose:**
 - Facilitate community engagement and gain insights on potential network alignments
 - Ensure alignment of proposed routes with the diverse needs and preferences of the Essex community;
- **How:**
 - By encouraging community members to share their experiences, opinions and perspectives about the routes in their area through the survey.

METHODS OF DISSEMINATION

- **Digital media:**
 - Dissemination of adverts through collaborative channels such as the Essex County Council (ECC) and other partner districts/boroughs;
 - Sponsored posts on Facebook and newsletters, leveraging the Essex County Council communications team as a dissemination platform;
 - Sending emails to key officials and relevant stakeholders, encouraging them to share the survey within their own networks and communication channels;
- **Events:**
 - Eco Festival.



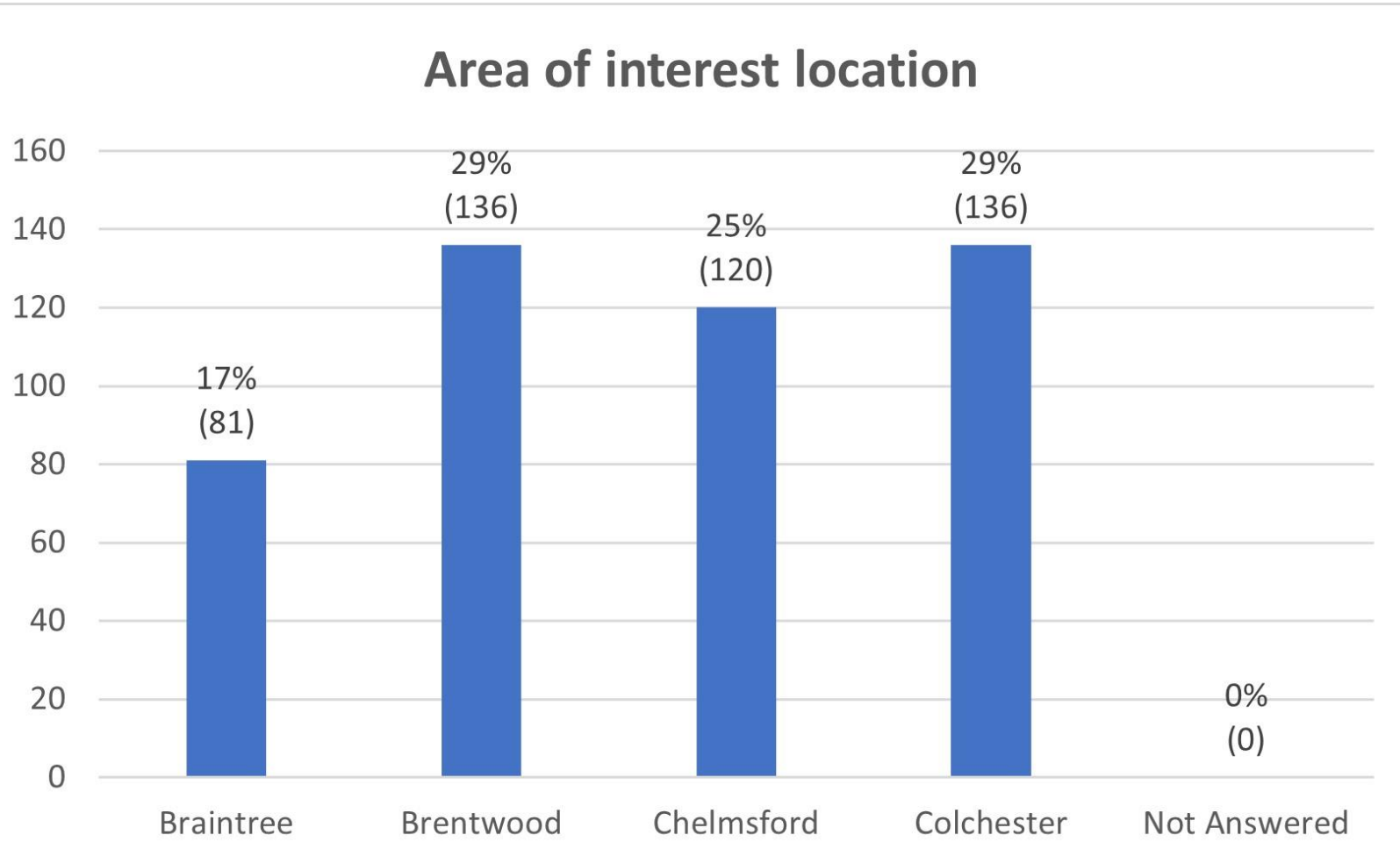
STAKEHOLDER ENGAGEMENT PHASE

- Collaborative sessions in partnership with WSP to identify optimal routes;
- Creation of networks among residents, businesses, and local authorities, including walking and cycling groups, as well as professionals specialising in health, transport, and local experts;
- Presentation of key routes findings for walking and cycling to gain insights, allowing the team to receive crucial feedback to incorporate any necessary changes from stakeholders in the relevant area.

KEY FINDINGS

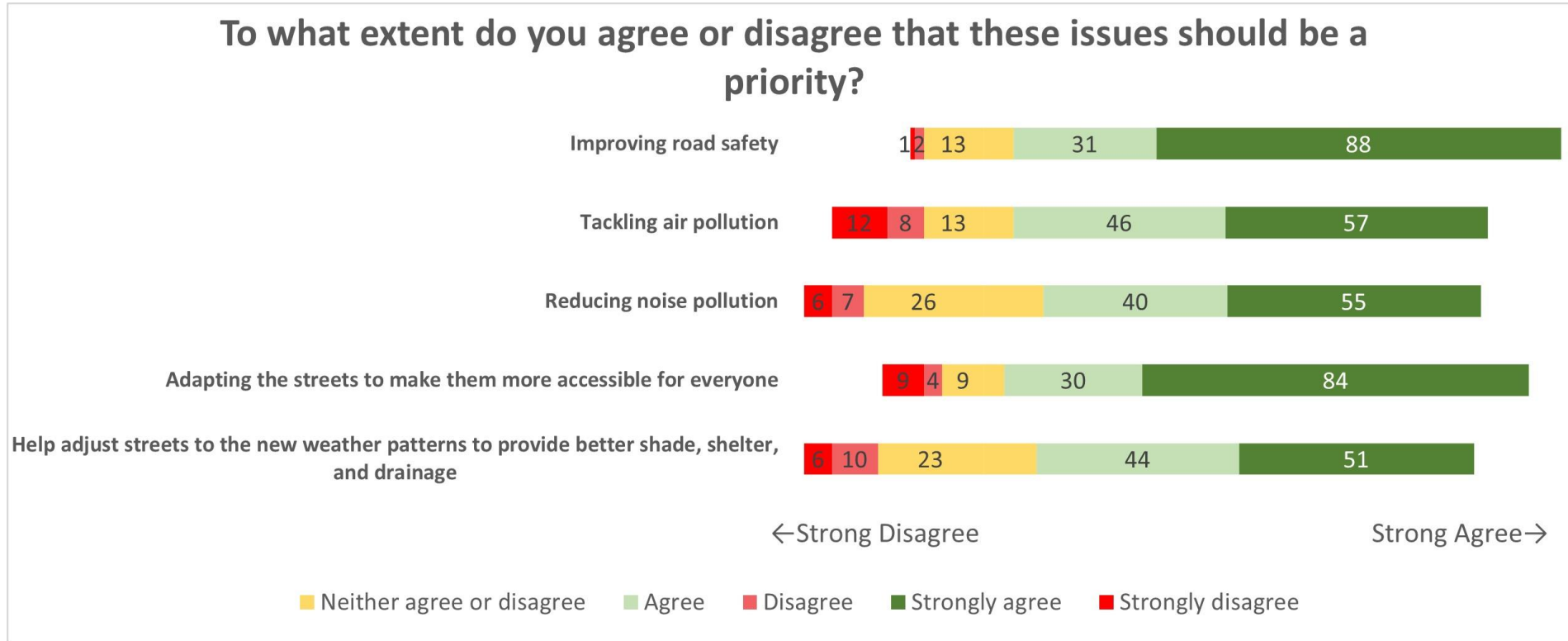
Location of residents

Area of interest location



KEY FINDINGS

Issues considered a priority by Brentwood community:

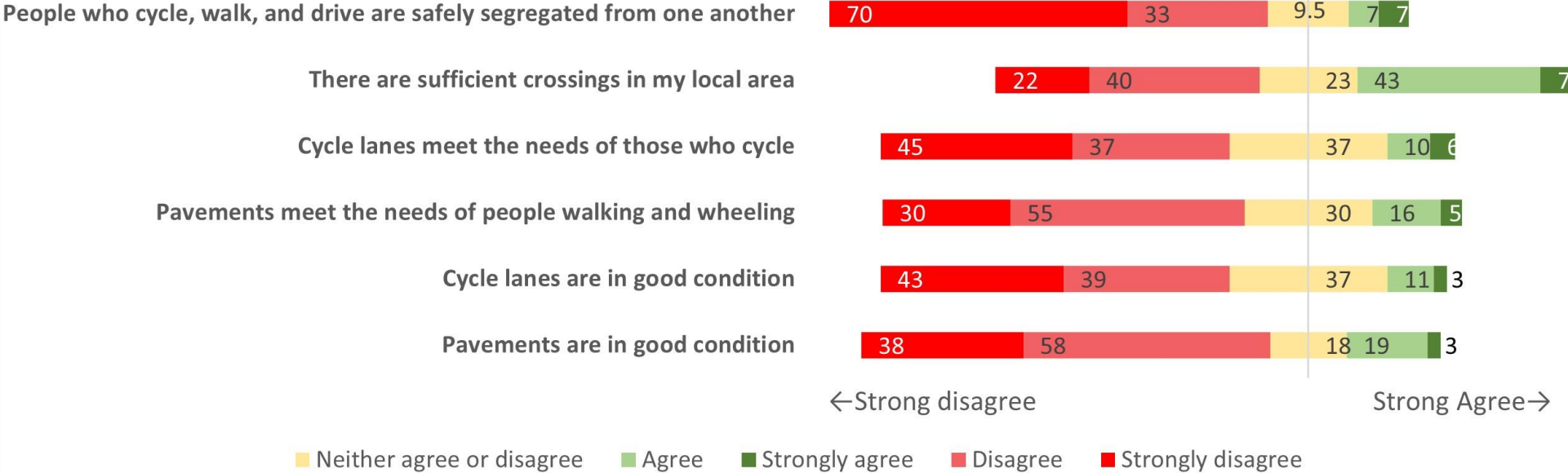


KEY FINDINGS

Key aspects of urban infrastructure

Page 28

To what extent do you agree with the following statements in your local area?

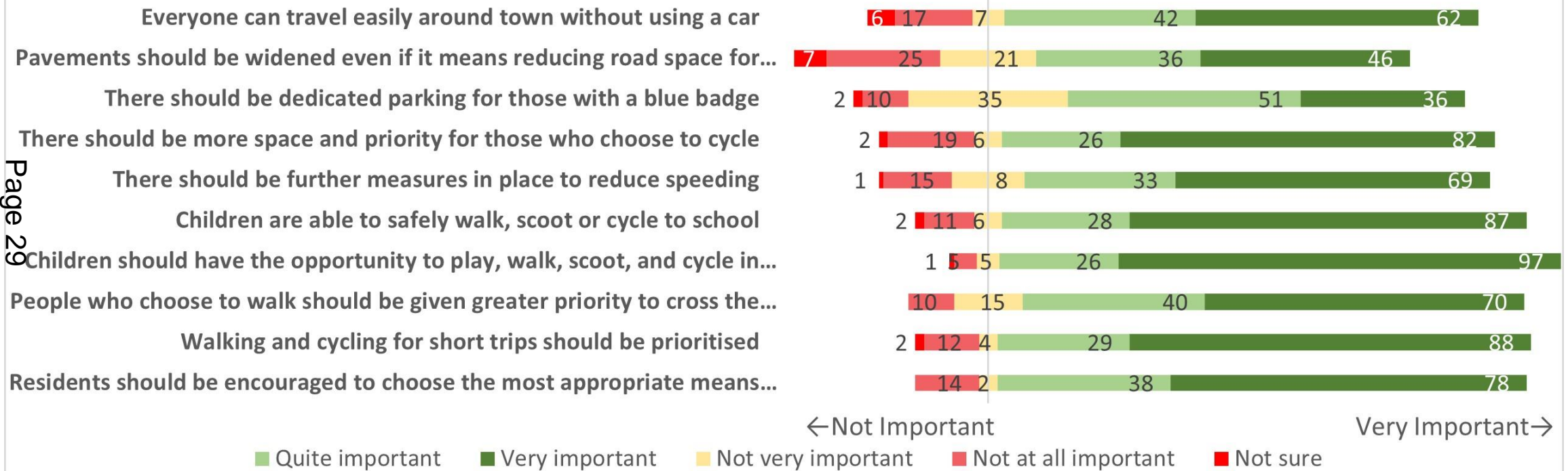


KEY FINDINGS

Prioritisation of sentences

Page 29

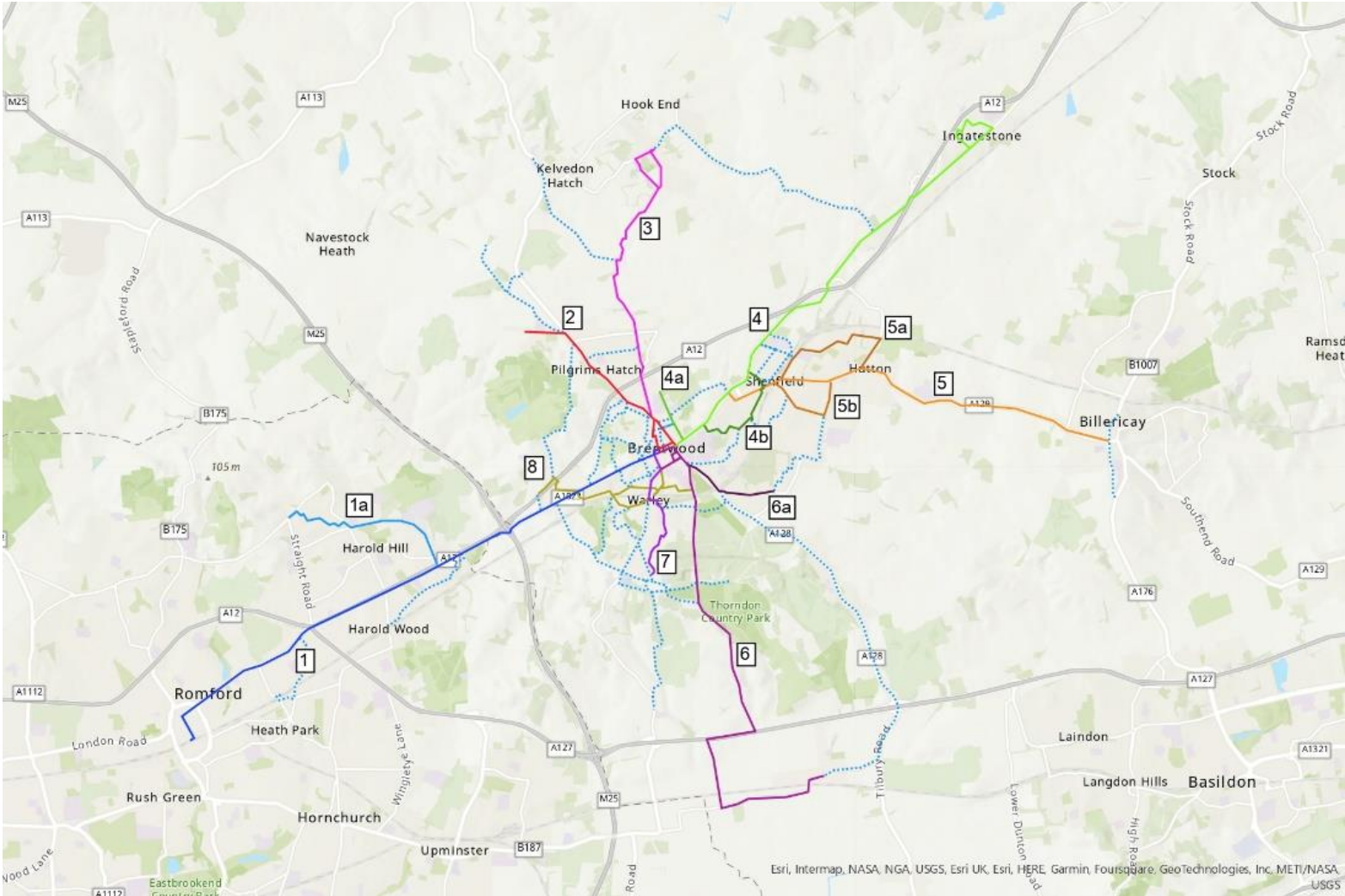
What are your views on the following:



KEY FINDINGS

Cycling – Proposed Routes

Page 30



KEY FINDINGS

CYCLING

CHALLENGES

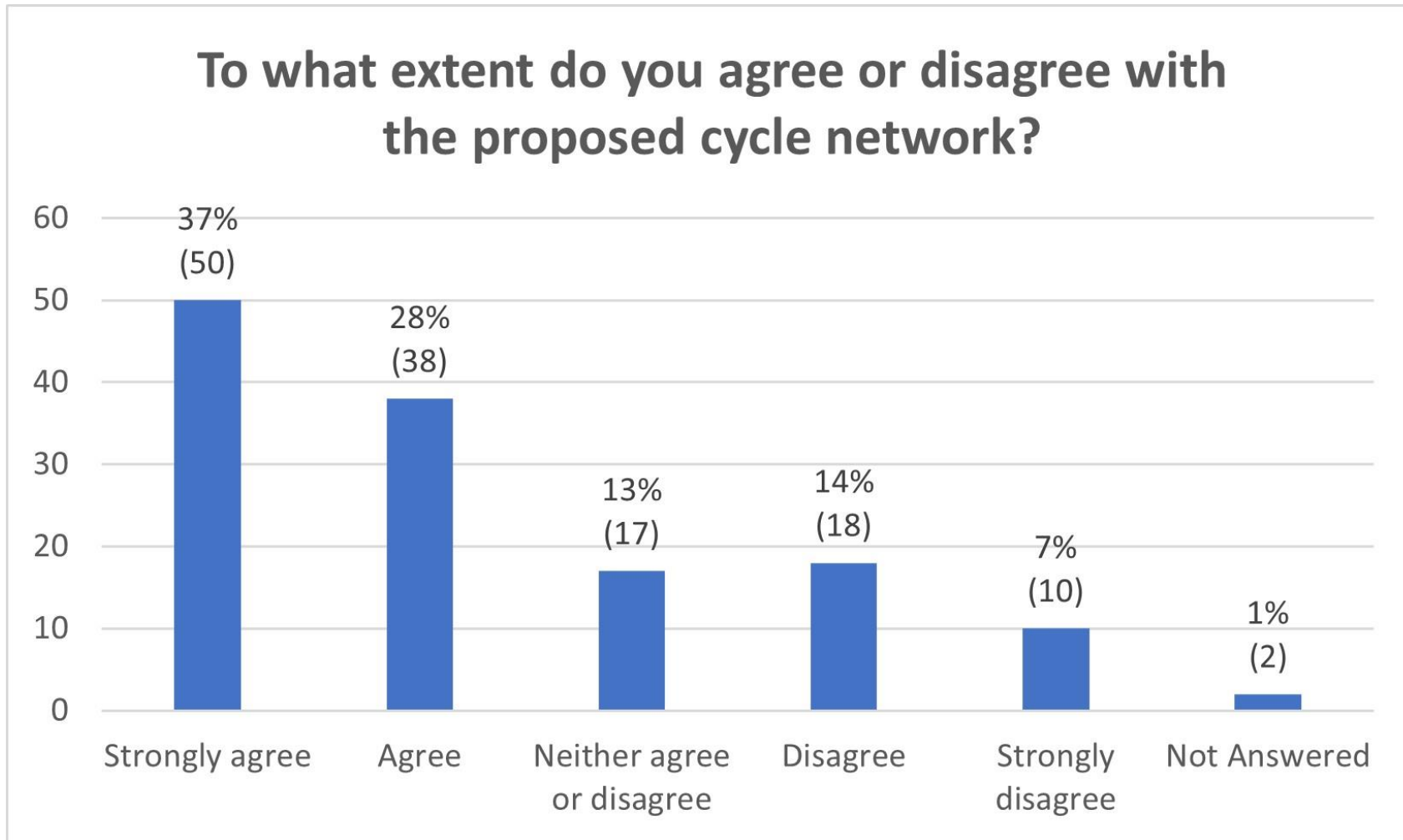
- Lack of appropriate connections to desired destinations - 44 responses
- Lack of awareness about the initiative to promote sustainable travel - 40 responses
- Significant discrepancy of opinions regarding addressing air pollution - 20 responses
- Lack of key routes in the original cycling plan - 13 responses
- Proposal deemed inaccurate and not representative of local cycling routes - 13 responses

OPPORTUNITIES

- Recognition of the importance of establishing a comprehensive and interconnected network - 136 responses
- Adapting streets to make them accessible to everyone - 114 responses
- Improvement of road safety - 119 responses
- Expansion of proposed routes to farther cities - 88 responses
- Addressing concern about air pollution - 20 responses

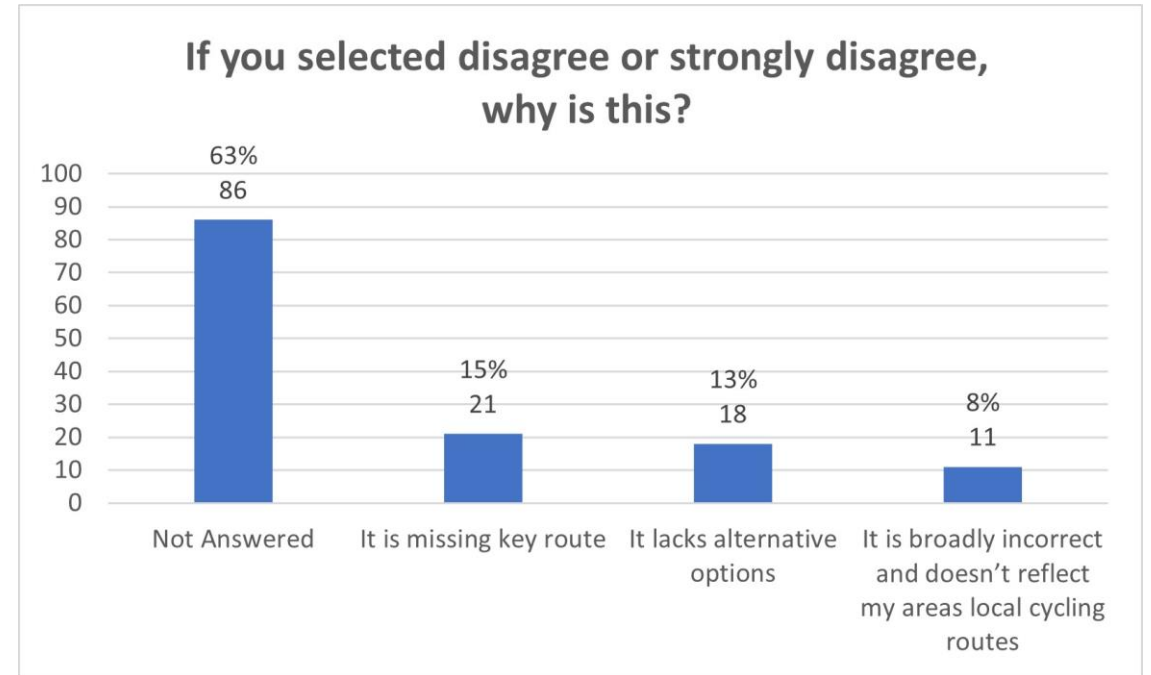
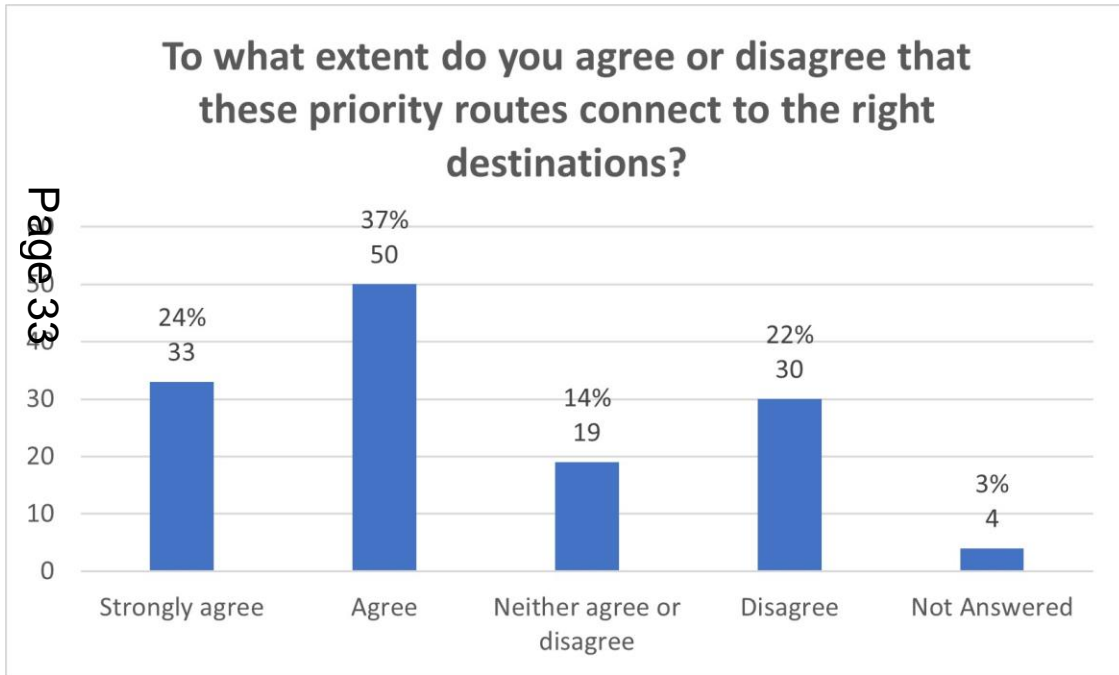
KEY FINDINGS

Agreement to the proposed cycle network



KEY FINDINGS

Agreement to the right destinations



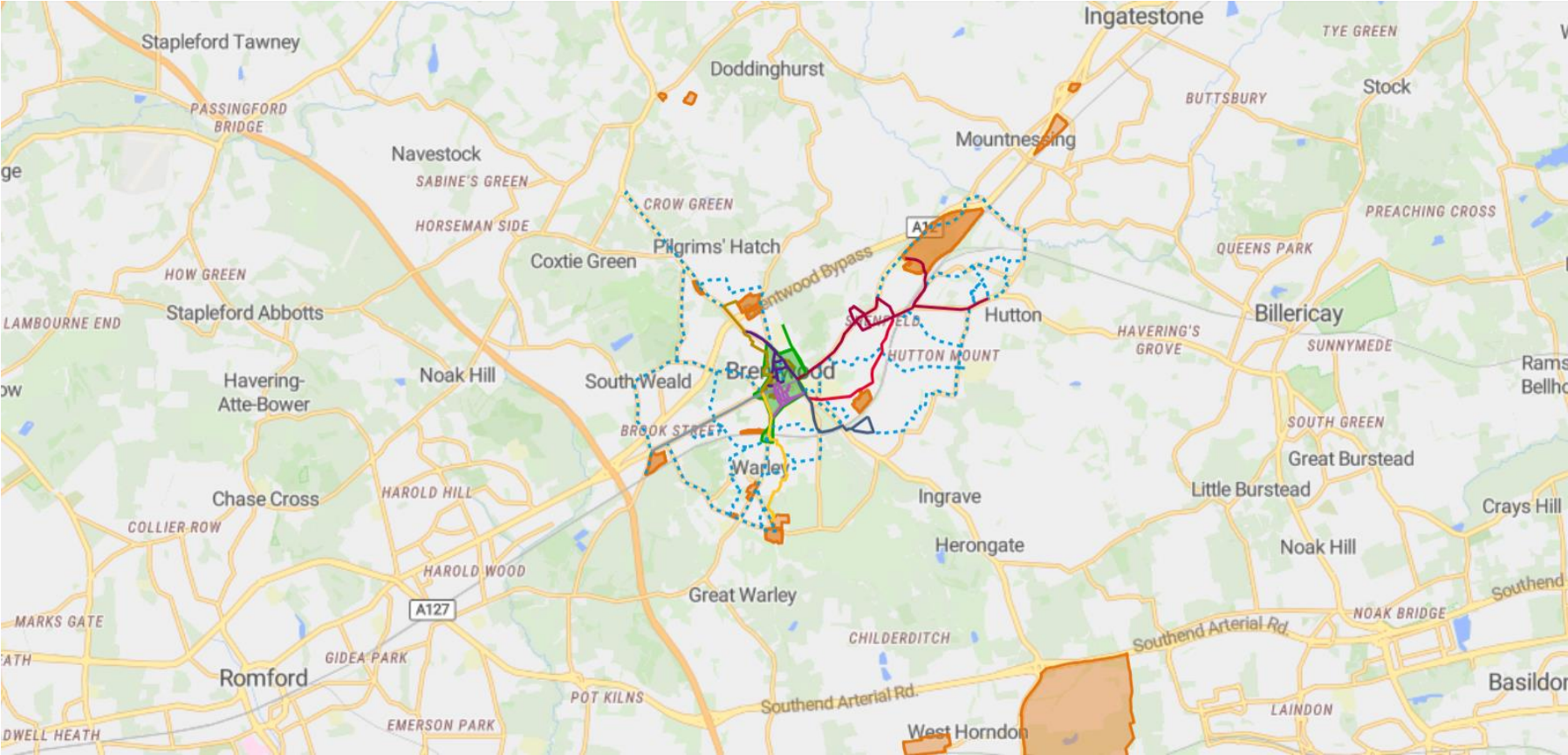
KEY FINDINGS

WALKING

- Strong support (more than 25%) for the proposed walking network among the respondents, indicating a positive reception of the initiative in the community.
- A substantial proportion of participants, comprising 53%, agreed that the priority routes are connected to the right destinations, suggesting overall satisfaction with the proposed routes.
- The absence of key routes was the most cited reason among respondents who disagreed with the proposed priority routes, indicating a significant concern regarding the comprehensiveness of the proposed network. This issue was highlighted by 10% of the participants.
- Several secondary routes were proposed, extending beyond the original survey proposals, and reaching Ingatestone for example.

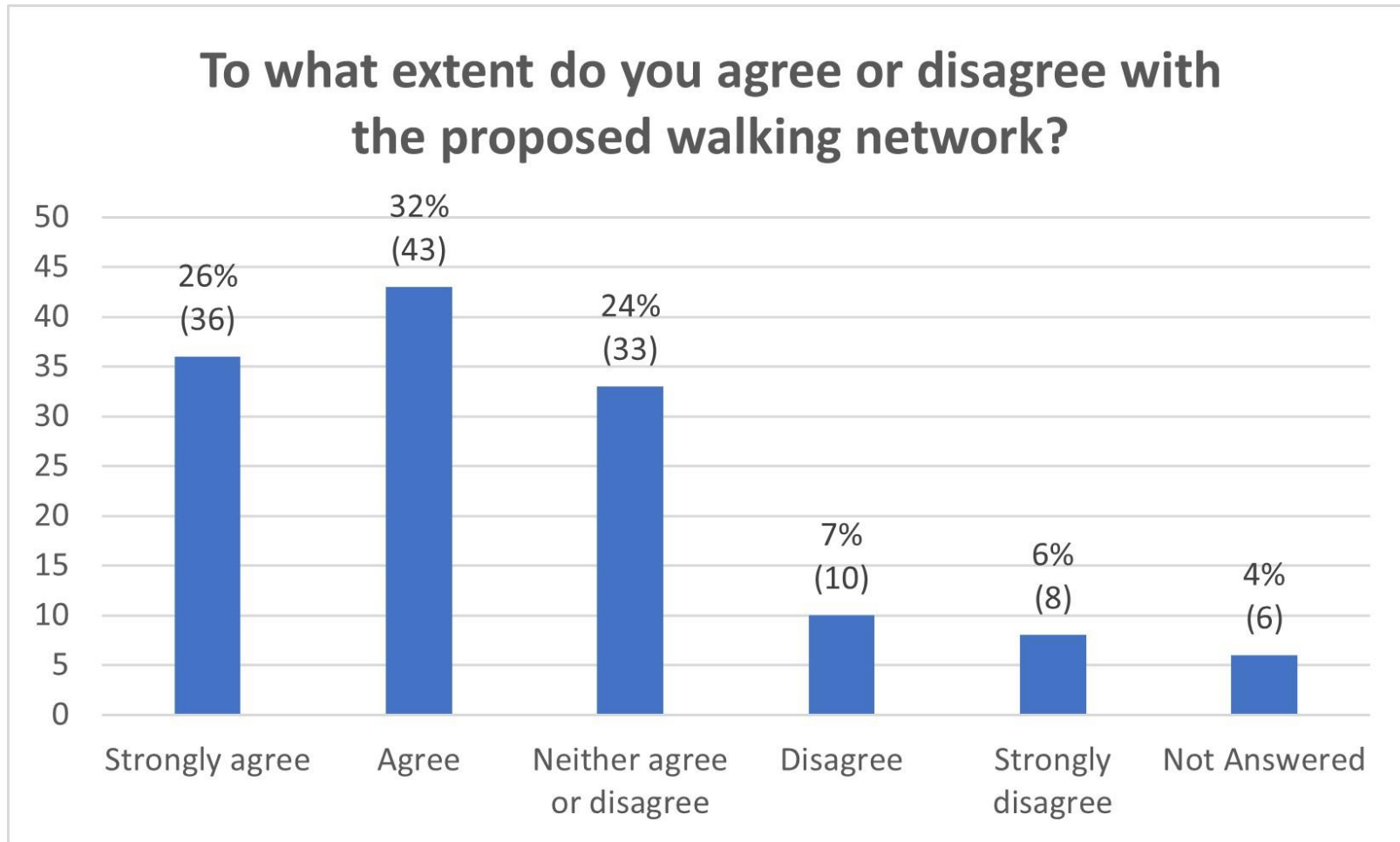
KEY FINDINGS

Walking – Proposed Routes



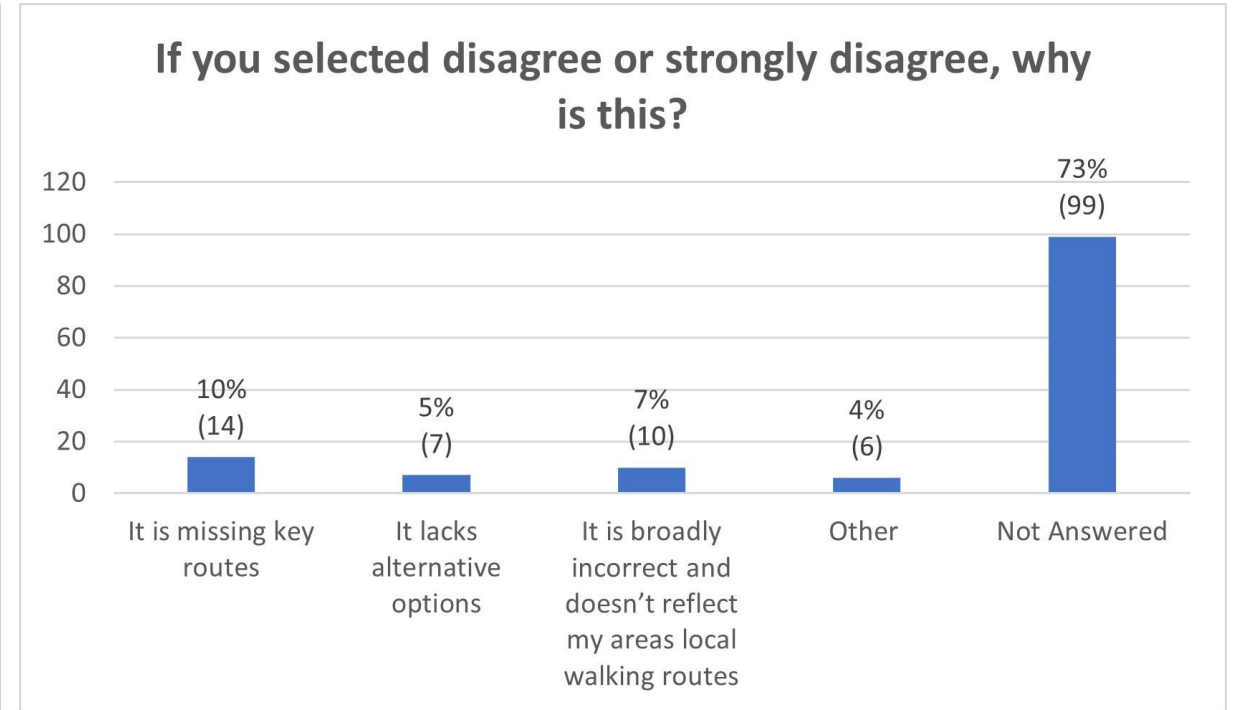
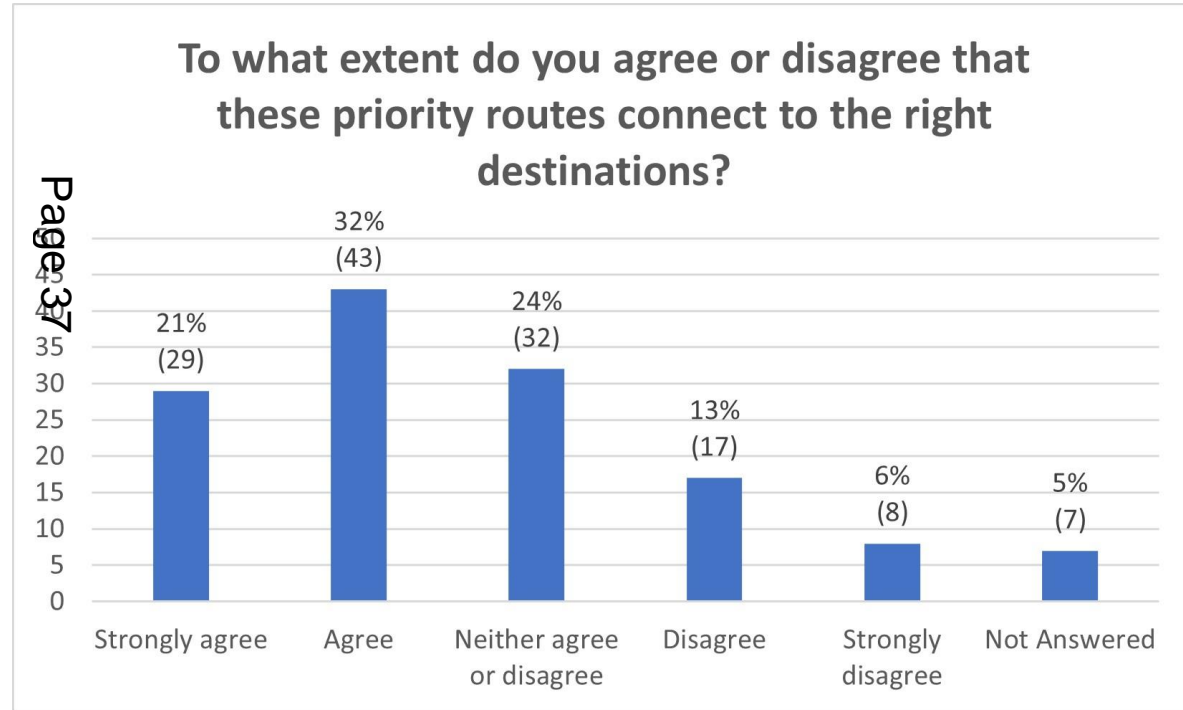
KEY FINDINGS

Agreement to the proposed walking network



KEY FINDINGS

Agreement to the right destinations



COMMENTS

“The survey was quite limited in scope. My view is that it's misleading to refer to a cycling network without any separation of cycling from vehicles, and without clear signage and traffic calming. One of my main concerns is the A128, which, although a route, is very dangerous for cyclists. I'd like to see Hanging Hill Lane included as a designated route with traffic calming. Where 20 mph routes have been introduced, such as Priests Lane and Priars Avenue, the signage should be more prominent and there should be some enforcement.”

3
0
8

"I propose the following improvements to the cycling routes: An alternative to Wilsons Corner to travel from north to south of the High Street is needed. This is a congested area with a high traffic volume converging from four directions at a double roundabout and will deter many cyclists. Use of Sawyers Hall Lane or the crossroads at Bennetts Undertakers could provide safer alternatives. It is essential to separate cyclists from other traffic in this part of Ongar Road. A safe route across the A127 would link West Horndon with Brentwood, possibly with a footbridge. A path through Thorndon Park may be useful to reach central Brentwood.“

COMMENTS

"I have been looking at the proposed cycle routes for Brentwood and Chelmsford but can see no path to connect Ingatestone/Margaretting along the A414, up Three Mile Hill to the very good pathway provision from the A414 at Hylands House, into Chelmsford. Three mile hill is a really dangerous road for cyclists from Margaretting to Hylands House. From Hylands House into Chelmsford the provision is great - it's just impossible to cycle on the very poor path up three mile hill to the start of the paved path leaving no alternative than to brave the double lane fast traffic into Chelmsford or get off the bike and push on the grass verge up the hill to Hylands House! No mean feat and sometimes very overgrown. I do not know whether this comes under Brentwood or Chelmsford Borough Council. It seems to be an area of no-one's responsibility. Please could you look into this much needed connection for cyclists between our villages to the City of Chelmsford"

NEXT STEPS

- **Prioritisation of routes**



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Committee Title: Housing, Health and Community Committee

DAT: 18 December 2023

REPORT TITLE:	Brentwood Health and Wellbeing Strategy
REPORT OF:	Tracey Lilley – Director of Communities & Health

REPORT SUMMARY

The Brentwood Health and Wellbeing Strategy (**Appendix A**) sets out the five-year plan to improve the health and wellbeing of residents in Brentwood and reduce the health inequalities at every stage of residents' lives.

The Strategy sets out the partnership approach to influence the wider determinants of health to make the biggest difference in our communities. The Strategy has been co-produced by board members, those with lived experience and informed by what the relevant data is telling us.

In developing the Strategy, the Health and Wellbeing Board considered the health and wellbeing outcomes it would want to see in Brentwood, how it links to other local strategies and plans, data and insight from partners and feedback from residents and those with lived experience. It is also important to recognise the needs that emerged from the COVID 19 pandemic.

The refreshed strategy is currently under consultation with Health and Wellbeing Board partners, due to be finalised in January 2024.

RECOMMENDATION

R1: To review and give comments on the Health and Wellbeing Strategy 2024- 28 (Draft) (Appendix A).

SUPPORT ING INFORMATION

1.0 REASON FOR RECOMMENDATION

1.1 The Brentwood Health and Wellbeing Strategy (**Appendix A**) has been developed in partnership with the Health and Wellbeing board members who include statutory partners such as Essex County Council, Brentwood and Basildon Alliance together with Voluntary and Community Sector partners. The Strategy is also aligned to the Essex Joint Health and Wellbeing Strategy, Fit for Future Physical activity and Sports Strategy for Essex Southend and Thurrock the Essex Children and Young People's Plan as well as Brentwood Borough Council's Corporate Plan 2020-25.

1.2 The Strategy sets out some key priorities that need to be tackled holistically with a partnership approach. In order to deliver on these priorities, subgroups have been set up on the Health and Wellbeing Board. These are Start Well, Find Your Active Brentwood, Ageing well and Dementia Friendly Communities. There are also some overarching themes that cut across the whole population, and these are community resilience, the cost-of-living crisis, mental health support and active environments.

1.3 The Strategy also set out how we will measure the success and impact of the work that is undertaken to our residents across the three subgroups by regular reporting to the Health and Wellbeing Board and to the Housing Health and Committee.

2.0 BACKGROUND INFORMATION

2.1 This is the fifth joint Brentwood Health and Wellbeing Strategy, and regularly refreshed to ensure that the priority areas identified are relevant. Our health is determined by a wide range of factors beyond clinical area which are also known as the wider determinants of health. These include:

- Health behaviours such as Diet/exercise, Alcohol use, smoking and poor sexual health these factors account for 30%
- Socio economic factors which include Education, Income, employment, Family/Social Support and Community Safety account for 40%.
- Built environment such as housing and environmental quality accounts for 10%
- Clinical care such as access to care and quality of life accounts for 20%

2.2 The differences in the care that people receive, and the opportunities they have to lead healthy lives, can lead to differences in health outcomes which are called health inequalities. These can only be tackled in partnership and not by one organisation in isolation. Some of these can be measured in life expectancy which is closely linked to a person's socio-economic circumstances which are measured by the level of deprivation which will vary by ward area across the Borough.

2.3 The development of the Brentwood and Basildon Alliance replacing the Clinical Commissioning Group (CCG) also needs to be aligned with the Health and Wellbeing Board to look at areas of opportunities and avoiding duplication across the geographical area.

3.0 OTHER OPTIONS CONSIDERED

3.1 The most effective way of delivering health improvements is by working in partnership to enable better outcomes for our residents.

4.0 RELEVANT RISKS

4.1 The development of the sub-groups provides a mechanism for reporting back to the board and also to identify if there are concerns, barriers or issues that need to be addressed.

4.2 The Brentwood Health and wellbeing Board is a discretionary board but will feel into the statutory Essex Health and Wellbeing Board. OBJ

5.0 ENGAGEMENT/CONSULTATION

5.1 The Strategy has been developed in consultation with the Health and Wellbeing Board members, as well as those with lived experience and informed by data sets to establish the priority areas which need to be the key focus of the work of the Health and Wellbeing Board.

6.0 FINANCIAL IMPLICATIONS

Name & Title: Tim Willis, Director – Resources & Section 151 Officer
Tel & Email: 01277 312500 / tim.willis@brentwood.rochford.gov.uk

There is Memorandum of Understanding with Essex County Council who currently fund the Public Health Practitioner post (0.5FTE) and also provides a pot of money for the delivery of projects that support the priority areas identified by the Health and Wellbeing Board. This funding agreement is agreed every two years.

7.0 LEGAL/GOVERNANCE IMPLICATIONS

Name & Title: Claire Mayhew, Acting Joint Director – People & Governance & Monitoring Officer
Tel & Email 01277 312500 / Claire.mayhew@brentwood.rochford.gov.uk

Any funding arrangements will be agreed by the Health and Wellbeing Board as part of their governance arrangements.

8.0 EQUALITY & HEALTH IMPLICATIONS

Name & Title: Kim Anderson, Corporate Manager - Communities, Leisure and Health
Tel & Email 01277 312500 kim.anderson@brentwood.gov.uk

The Public Sector Equality Duty applies to the Council when it makes decisions. The duty requires us to have regard to the need to:

- a. Eliminate unlawful discrimination, harassment and victimisation and other behaviour prohibited by the Act. In summary, the Act makes discrimination etc. on the grounds of a protected characteristic unlawful.
- b. Advance equality of opportunity between people who share a protected characteristic and those who do not.
- c. Foster good relations between people who share a protected characteristic and those who do not, including tackling prejudice and promoting understanding.

The protected characteristics are age, disability, gender reassignment, pregnancy and maternity, marriage and civil partnership, race, religion or belief, gender, and sexual orientation. The Act states that 'marriage and civil partnership' is not a relevant protected characteristic for (b) or (c) although it is relevant for (a).

The proposals in this report will not have a disproportionate adverse impact on anybody with a protected characteristic and the Health and Wellbeing Strategy looks to reduce the health inequalities in relation to some of the protected characteristics.

9.0 ECONOMIC IMPLICATIONS

Name & Title: Phil Drane, Director - Place
Tel & Email 01277 312500 / phil.drane@brentwood.rochford.gov.uk

It is important as part of placemaking that our residents have access to and are supported with appropriate health and wellbeing services and programmes.

10.0 ENVIRONMENTAL IMPACT

Name & Title: Henry Muss, Sustainability & Climate Officer

Tel & Email 01277 312500 henry.muss@brentwood.gov.uk

The Health and Wellbeing Strategy looks at the wider determinants of health which includes a number of socio-economic factors including the environment and housing conditions.

REPORT AUTHOR: Name: Kim Anderson
Title: Corporate Manager, Community Leisure and Health
Phone: 01277 312500
Email: kim.anderson@brentwood.gov.uk

APPENDICES

Appendix A: Health and Wellbeing Strategy

BACKGROUND PAPERS

SUBJECT HISTORY (last 3 years)

Council Meeting	Date
Housing Health and Community Committee - Brentwood Health and Wellbeing Board update	18 September 2023

Housing, Health & Community Committee

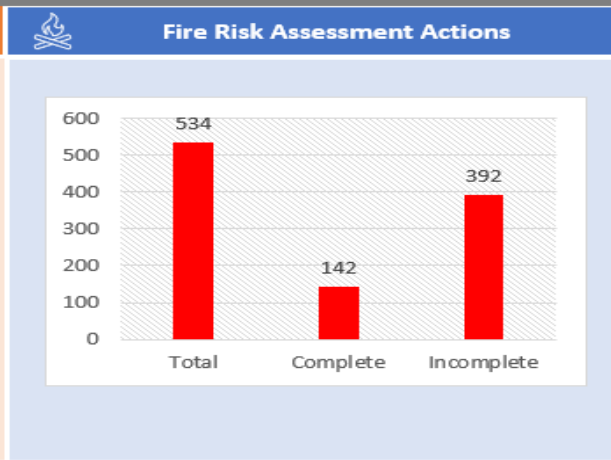
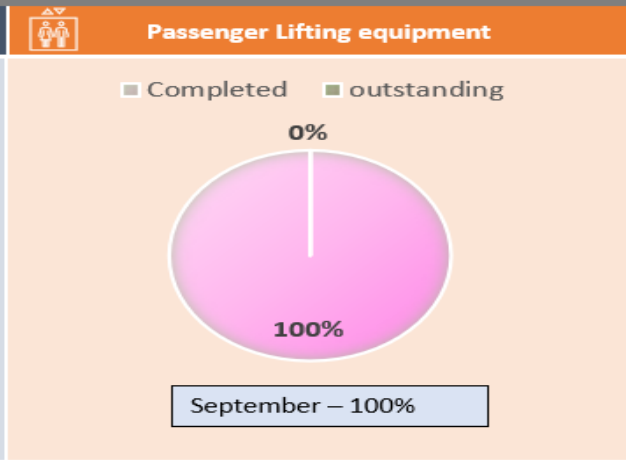
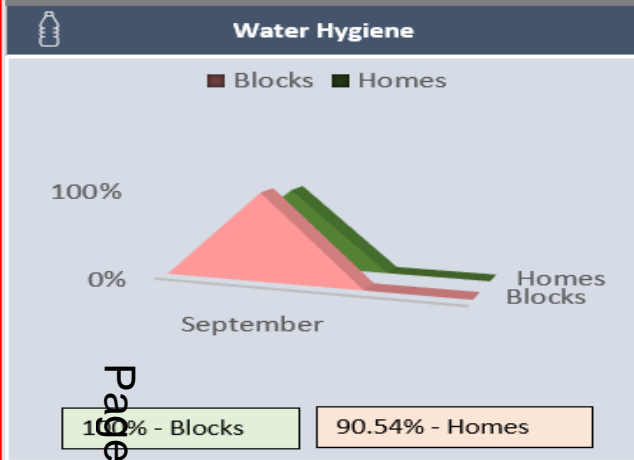
18th December 2023

Compliance and Repairs Service Update



Compliance Update

Performance for September 2023

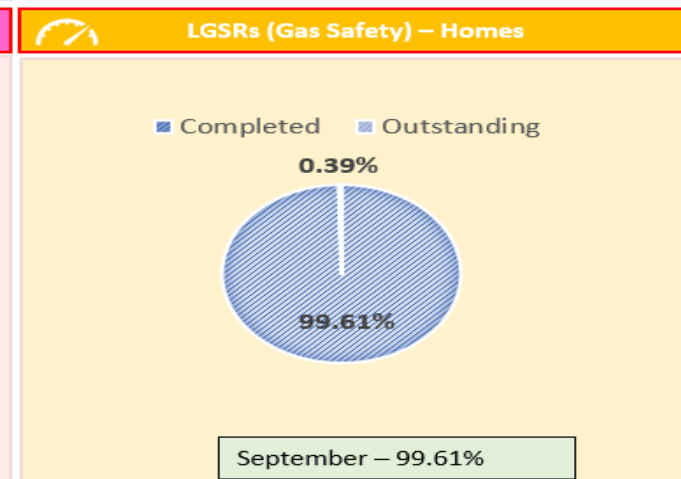
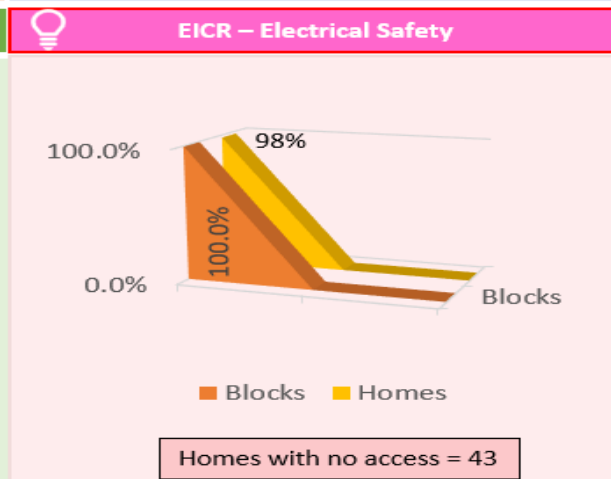
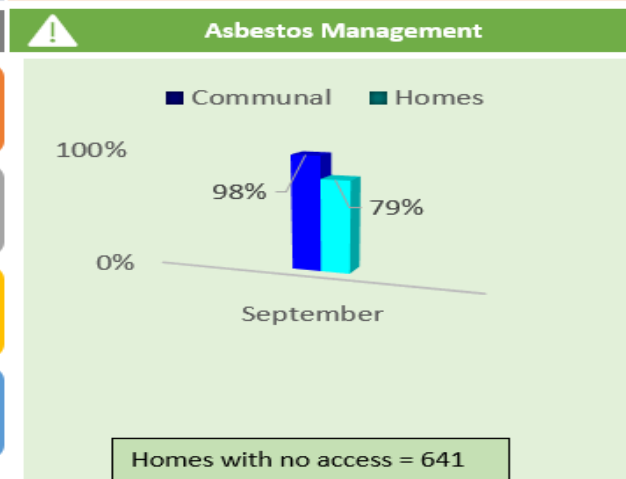


Analysis

- Water Hygiene – 225 homes still require initial assessments
- Fire Risk Assessment Actions – Re-inspection cycle commenced April 2023. Actions include several planned works for the next 3-5 years.
- Asbestos Management Communal - 3 blocks left to be surveyed by the end of October 2023. Homes – No access has remained static
- EICR Homes – Slight improvement in accessing homes
- LGSR - 8 remaining services are overdue; access has not been gained to these properties.

Improvements to be made

- A process has been agreed across all compliance areas for no access properties.
- Gas safety procedure has been amended with the intention of the process being a month in advance including applying to court.
- A reconciliation of data is currently taking place to enable a centralised system for efficiency and ease of access across all compliance areas.
- Compliance reporting to include lifting equipment as well as passenger lifts.



Damp and Mould “Task Force”

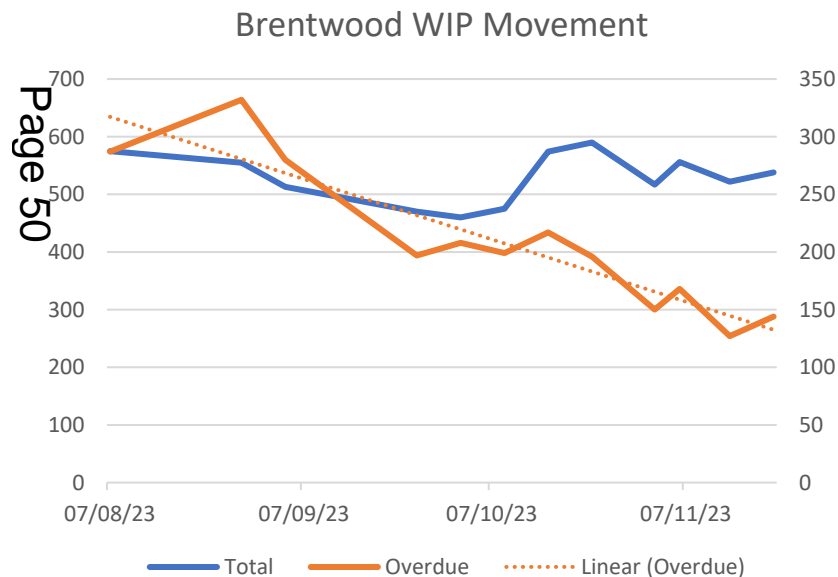


- Task force in place, including designated ownership of active repairs, surveyor visits, senior management governance
- Updated media, including online, physical and in person communication
- Surveys and Calls made, proactive approach to identify cases (lower than anticipated demand)
- Active monitoring and shared information on problematical properties
- Designated resource
- <10% of active case relate to “mould” issues



<https://www.brentwood.gov.uk/repairs-and-maintenance#useful-documents>

Performance overview – Case Management



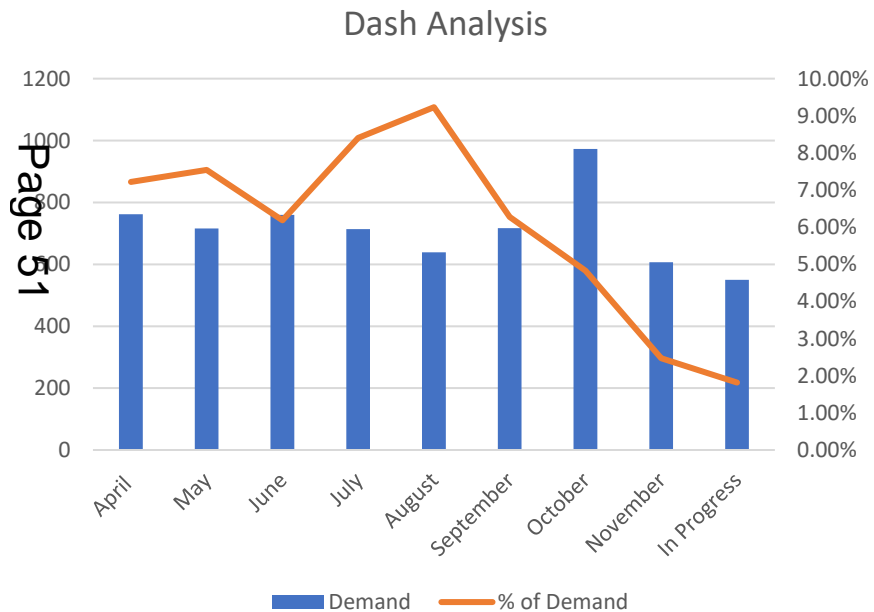
Positives:

- Work In progress (WIP) maintained less than monthly demand
- Age profile has reduced by 50%
- Less than 2% now over 60 days aged

In Progress:

- Reduce age profile to less than 10% of all actives cases
- 0 cases over 30 days aged

Performance overview - Escalations



Positives:

- A reduction of queries from 9% to to 3% (escalated)
- Consistent demand, circa 750 pm
- Resilience to above average demand

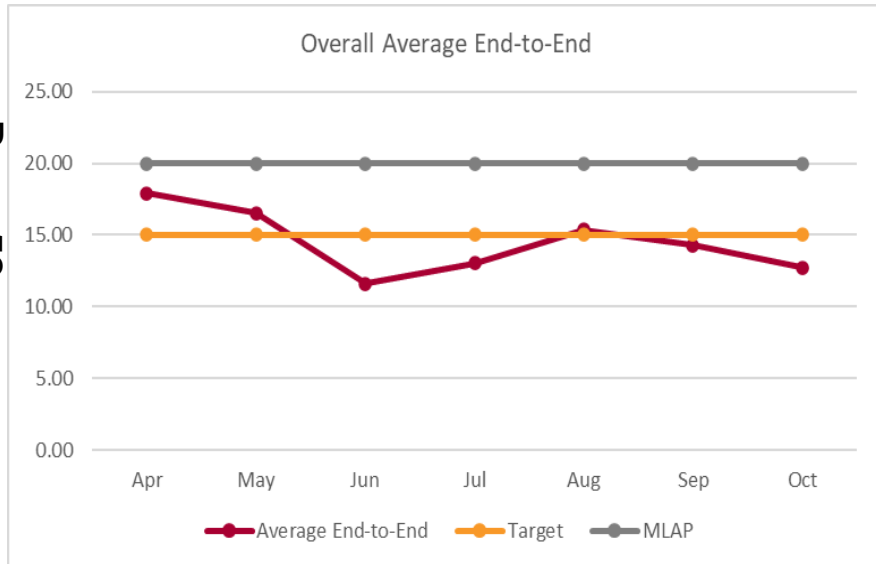
In Progress:

- Reduce queries received to <1.5%
- Operative productivity and engagement

Performance overview – Time Taken



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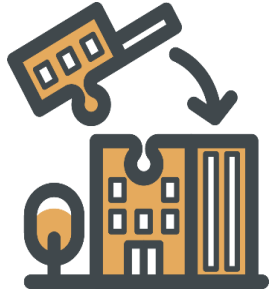
Positives:

- Reduction in time take to complete repair, average down from 18 days to 11 days
- Target being achieved

In Progress:

- <10 day end to end for average for repairs

The Next Steps



Call Centre Performance – improvement needed

Operative Engagement – productivity and reliability of message

Perception - increase satisfaction

Communication – consistency required

Resident engagement – increase presence



Thank You Any Questions





COMMITTEE TITLE Housing, Health & Community

DATE 18th December 2023

REPORT TITLE:	Strategic Housing Delivery Programme (SHDP)
REPORT OF:	Steve Summers (SHDP Programme Sponsor)

REPORT SUMMARY

This report summarises progress since the last committee in September 2023 on a pipeline of new affordable homes through the development and regeneration of various Housing Revenue Account (HRA) owned sites.

As a reminder, the Strategic Housing Delivery Programme (SHDP) is made up of two distinct elements, 1) the regeneration of Brookfield Close and Courage Court, Hutton to develop 62 zero carbon homes alongside Harewood Regeneration which consists of 40 new zero carbon homes, and 2) the development of a range of smaller HRA sites to deliver further affordable homes on further council owned sites.

The Council's Corporate Strategy 'Brentwood 2025' commits to Introducing "innovative Carbon reduction and absorption schemes", "identify opportunities for low emission and green developments" and using 'brownfield sites efficiently, such as council owned garage sites, to provide affordable homes...".

RECOMMENDATIONS

To note progress in the delivery of new Council homes through the SHDP.

SUPPORT ING INFORMATION

1.0 REASONS FOR RECOMMENDATIONS

To update Members on the progress of the SHDP pipeline and implementation of the adopted strategy.

2.0 OTHER OPTIONS CONSIDERED

Not applicable

3.0 BACKGROUND INFORMATION

3.1 Brookfield Close and Courage Court Regeneration Update

The site is fully decanted and under the ownership of the HRA. At the last committee (September 2023) members resolved to proceed to Tendering for the Demolition of structures at Brookfield Close and Courage Court and proceed to proceed to Tender of the Main Construction Contract.

The Demolition contract was awarded to Erith Contractors Ltd further to the competitive exercise run through the Crown Commercial Services Framework. A programme for the contract is pending at the time of authoring this report, currently awaiting the date for removal of services by CADENT and UKPN. Ward Members and community updates will be issued as soon as this final programme is signed off by the delivery team.

The Main Contract tender through Crown Commercial Services (CCS) Framework, closed on 29th September 2023. No bids were received. Feedback from the market was obtained and an alternate Framework is currently being pursued in parallel to dedicated procurement resource and targeted market discussions with contractors. A further update on the next tender exercise will be issued in the New Year.

Members of this committee are requested to note the planning application for Courage Court (variation of the extant permission) was approved at Planning Committee on the 19th September 2023.

In terms of the tenure for the site, members are requested to note the delivery team are modelling a 100% affordable scheme, proposing to eliminate the OMS (Open Market Sales) units (as approved), this ensures the scheme retains an improved viability position whilst being Affordable Homes led, any change in tenure will be subject to LPA approval and members of this committee will be briefed prior to any such application to vary is submitted.

Security at the site remains along with resident and community engagement including the local schools through the SHDP Education Programme.

As previously reported since programme inception, each site will be subject to a Local Lettings Policy, which will be brought to a future Housing, Health & Community Committee, this LLP will set out the rent levels for the Zero Carbon Affordable Homes in line with the guidance from Homes England Grant Advisors.

3.2 Harewood Regeneration Update

This scheme was unanimously approved by Brentwood Borough Council's Planning Committee in December 2022, it will result in 29 of the Councils poorest quality and currently rented homes, mostly of a post-war 'pre-fabricated' construction with timber and felt roofs, being replaced with 40 new energy efficient homes using modern construction methods. Most affected homes are currently rented or void and therefore no 'buy-back' of homes is required to facilitate the regeneration.

The Main Contract tender through Crown Commercial Services (CCS) Framework, closed on 29th September 2023. No bids were received. Feedback from the market was obtained and an alternate Framework is currently being pursued in parallel to

dedicated procurement resource and targeted market discussions with contractors. A further update on the next tender exercise will be issued in the New Year.

The 'Landlord Offer' approved by members of Housing Committee (27th February 2023) has been actively implemented, at the time of authoring this report only three Households remain to be decanted into their appropriate accommodation by the Housing Services Department. Resident support and coordination of the decant remains in place led by the Corporate Manager of Housing Needs and Delivery.

As previously reported since programme inception, each site will be subject to a Local Lettings Policy, which will be brought to a future Housing, Health & Community Committee, this LLP will set out the rent levels for the Zero Carbon Affordable Homes in line with the guidance from Homes England Grant Advisors.

The Harewood Regeneration Scheme received Highly Commended in November at the Essex Housing Awards; from the Leadership Team, the Programme Sponsor through the variety of committees and all service areas within the Council, the SHDP is regarded by the delivery team as a 'collective effort' they wish to express their thanks to members of this committee for its continued support to officer and residents.

3.3 Small Sites Programme Update

Willingale Close, Hutton

The scheme offers the provision for 3 x 3 Bed Zero Carbon (in use) Council Homes. Members are reminded this development was expected to be included within the Tender Pack for Brookfield Close, however given the complexities of the Construction at Brookfield Close, its delivery is proposed through a separate competitive tender.

A scheme review of the technical elements of the units has been completed and currently being evaluated for construction and tender options.

Since the last committee members are to note active site security has been implemented and positive community feedback received by the Corporate Manager of Housing Needs and Delivery.

Ingleton Regeneration

At the last committee members were updated on the engagement programme for the site and wider environs, this included bespoke 121 sessions with those residents directly affected.

Since the last committee, community co-design and direct stakeholder engagement including that with Ward Members and Parish Councillors was undertaken, this culminated in a submission for the scheme to the LPA in November 2023.

This scheme will see the first hybrid approach to an SHDP site, which will deliver new both zero carbon affordable homes together with retrofit of stock to a range of HRA bungalows to the west of the former Ingleton House building.

The site is the selected pilot for the '6 Streets' project launched at Solace 2023, this is an initiative to cross share building typology data and measurement of social impact accelerate Retrofitting of housing; a separate briefing on this initiative will be brought to members.

This scheme endeavours to demonstrate high quality and reduced carbon affordable accommodation without full demolition of all structures within the 'blue line' of ownership.

Members of this committee will continue to be updated along with Ward Members and Parish Council representatives.

The scheme is expected to be determined at February/March Planning Committee.

Highwood Close

A detailed planning submission has been validated by the LPA (August 2023) the development proposes 12 Net Zero Carbon (in use) Affordable Units on HRA land along with the provision of storage and parking for the existing tenants of Highview Close and 'hot spot' parking for Care Workers visiting St Georges Court.

Members are asked to note this scheme does not have direct impact upon tenants in terms of housing decants or housing buy backs, this is part garage site and part vacant undeveloped land. No Landlord Offer is required.

A structured approach to the site arrangement through community and Ward Member engagement, has seen the layout, mix and density adapt over the period of design development.

Sir Francis Way

In April 2022 as part of the Small Sites by technical partner Pelling's LLP, a planning submission was made to the LPA which proposed 'Demolition of existing garages and construction of 4 x 3no bedroom, 3 storey houses with associated car parking along with alterations to existing car parking and bin stores'.

This application (reference 22/00572/BBC) was heard at a March 2022 Planning Committee and resolved for Approval.

Members are asked to note this scheme does not have direct impact upon tenants in terms of housing decants or housing buy backs, this is a HRA garage site. No Landlord Offer is required.

The next stage technical brief is currently being reviewed by the SHDP Team in parallel with viability assumptions and SHDP delivery milestones.

Four Oaks

Community engagement bespoke to this site was due to commence late September 2022, this was reordered in order to efficiently resource the delivery of the two major

regeneration sites within the SHDP. The programme for delivery of this site remains a priority.

In advance of consultation Ward Members will be notified and issued with the consultation methodology and programme by the delivery team, in addition Ward members will be invited to any consultation sessions planned.

3.4 SHDP Education Programme

As part of the scheme 'Land at Brookfield Close', the SHDP team engaged with two local primary schools 'Willowbrook' and 'St Joseph the Worker'. Engagement in this type of project is vital, not only for directly affected residents but also those young people who are in close vicinity of SHDP schemes.

Artwork was produced in the summer term and handed to the team, Chief Executive Officer and Chair of this committee in July 2023, this artwork will be displayed on the hoarding by the end of the year, now pending the installation by the appointed contractors for demolition.

The chair of this committee will be updated on this progress and other school engagement events and initiatives.

3.5 Grant Funding of the Programme

Investment Partner Status to Homes England has been made alongside further discussion for grant levels required to support the programme.

Grant Funding applications remain expected by the end of the financial year for Brookfield and Harewood Regeneration. This committee will be updated on progress of Grant Level awards.

References to the Corporate Plan

The Council's Corporate Strategy 'Brentwood 2025' commits to Introducing "innovative Carbon reduction and absorption schemes", "identify opportunities for low emission and green developments" and using 'brownfield sites efficiently, such as council owned garage sites, to provide affordable homes...". The SHDP and specific proposals in this report contribute to all of these strategic objectives.

4.0 FINANCIAL IMPLICATIONS

Name & Title: Tim Willis, Director – Resources & Section 151 Officer

Tel & Email: 01277 312500 / tim.willis@brentwood.rochford.gov.uk

The Strategic Housing Delivery Plan is expected to spend £60million over 5-7 years. This is currently reflected in the HRA 30-year business plan. The 30-year Business plan is updated to reflect the timeline of development to help ensure the business plan remains relevant and affordable going forward.

The SHDP requires revenue and capital resources from the HRA to deliver this programme. The finance structuring on each scheme is dependent on whether Homes England Grant Funding is applicable, whether any Section 106 is available and if Retained Right to Buy Capital Receipts can be utilised. Any difference requires borrowing which incurs financing costs that are to be borne by the HRA.

5.0 LEGAL IMPLICATIONS

Name & Title: Claire Mayhew - Corporate Manager (Democratic Services) & Monitoring Officer

Tel & Email 01277 312741 / claire.mayhew@brentwood.gov.uk

The Council must follow the statutory process when looking to develop or regenerate areas. This includes serving the statutory notices and holding consultations. The Council in following the process is mitigating the risks of challenge as the programme moves forward.

6.0 ECONOMIC IMPLICAGIONS

Name & Title: Phil Drane, Corporate Director -Place

Tel/Email: 01277 312500 philip.drane@brentwood.gov.uk

The Council's Housing Strategy provides further detail to the Corporate Plan and the recently adopted Local Plan. The Strategic Housing Development Plan adds specific detail on a programme of sites that utilise council owned land to deliver new affordable homes with environmentally led innovations. Housing delivery plays a vital role in the local economy, both in terms of short-term related construction benefits (i.e., technical preparatory work, on-site jobs and supply chains), and longer-term accommodation provision for people who can contribute to the local economy in a range of ways. This helps to ensure the borough remains an attractive place to live, work and visit.

7.0 RESOURCE IMPLICATIONS: STAFFING, ICT AND ASSETS

8.0 RELEVANT RISKS

Viability under current market conditions and Homes England Grant Level Awards.

9.0 ENGAGEMENT/CONSULTATION

All SHDP schemes are supported by an engagement strategy which is developed and adjusted according to site specific requirements. This engagement continues

through implementation process; contractor community engagement is embedded within Employers Requirements (ERs) for Tendering Main Contracts.

10.0 ENVIRONMENTAL IMPACT

Name & Title: Henry Muss, Sustainability & Climate Officer

Tel & Email 01277 312500 henry.muss@brentwood.gov.uk

REPORT AUTHOR:

Name: Paulette McAllister

Title: Programme Director Strategic Housing Delivery Programme

Phone: 01277 312500

Email: paulette.mcallister@brentwood.gov.uk

APPENDICES

None

BACKGROUND PAPERS

None

SUBJECT HISTORY (last 3 years)

Council Meeting	Date
HHC Committee	September 2023
HHC Committee	June 2023
Housing Committee	February 2023
Housing Committee	December 2022
Housing Committee	October 2022
Housing Committee	June 2022
EE&H Committee	March 2022
EE&H Committee	September 2021
EE&H Committee	July 2021

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COMMITTEE TITLE: Housing, Health and Communities

DATE: 18th December 2023

REPORT TITLE:	Housing Debt Write Off
REPORT OF:	Lauren Stretch

REPORT SUMMARY

In July 2023 the Council introduced a new Former Tenant Debt Recovery Agency to assist with the collection of all former tenant debts. This triggered a review of all outstanding debts.

Following this review, a number of accounts have been identified as requiring write offs for debts where all avenues of recovery have been exhausted, the debt is statute barred (6 year old debt) rendering it unrecoverable for legal action or the debtor has passed away and there is no money in the estate to cover the debts.

RECOMMENDATION

1: To agree that the following debt amounts are presented to the FAIR committee for approval for write off.

A: Former Tenant Debt £66,663.87

B: Temporary Accommodation Debt £122,607.67

C: Miscellaneous Debt £13,056

Total: £202,327.54

SUPPORT ING INFORMATION

1.0 REASON FOR RECOMMENDATION

Following a review of all former tenant debts. The below debts have been deemed to be unrecoverable for various reasons.

10 cases totalling £3691.33 are deemed statue barred. This means they are older that 6 years and officers have been unable to progress to the legal stage of collection.

275 temporary accommodation cases between 2004-2017 totalling £122,607.67 are deemed statue barred. This means they are older than 6 years and Officers have been unable to progress to the legal stage of collection.

18 cases totalling £12,329.16 are deceased residents where there is no money left in the estate to cover the rent debt left on he account.

50 cases totalling £50,643.38 are where all avenues of recovery and tracing of the person have failed by our specialist debt recovery agency and therefore are deemed uncollectable.

1 Miscellaneous case of shared equity loan under recovery totalling £13,056

The overall debt write off figure being proposed is £202,327.54

By writing these debts off officers can focus on the recovery of the debts we are able to redeem and work more efficiently.

2.0 BACKGROUND INFORMATION

In July 2023 the Council introduced a new Former Tenant Debt Recovery Agency to assist with the collection of all former tenant debts after it was identified that there was not the resource in house to actively recover these debts and the Council was losing revenue.

Before we could send the historical cases to the debt recovery agency appointed, we conducted a review of all outstanding debts, a task which was last completed in 2018.

During this review we looked at all former tenant debt accounts, temporary accommodation debt and any other long-term debts that sit within the Housing department. These were cross referenced against the credits we have on accounts to see if any could be cleared by existing funds and what remained, is what we are recommending be written off.

There are also a number of cases which did progress to our debt recovery agency, but efforts to recover the debts have been unsuccessful.

Finally, we also have one case of an equity loan which has become unrecoverable in whole due to a lack of equity following the sale of the property.

All debts to be written off have been consulted on in line with the constitution.

Any new debts which arise due to terminated properties, are being sent immediately to Debt Collection Services (DCS) our specialist recovery agency, to give us the best chance of collecting the debt.

Whilst the figures provided across all accounts will be written off, should that person(s) become known to the council again for the purposes of rehousing, the debt will be written back and asked to be cleared in full.

3.0 OTHER OPTIONS CONSIDERED

It was considered to leave the debt on the accounts but this posed problems in the collection of recoverable debts. It is also best practice to write off debts where all avenues of recovery have been exhausted or where the debt is deemed unrecoverable for statue barred purposes.

4.0 RELEVANT RISKS

Financial loss to the HRA.

5.0 ENGAGEMENT/CONSULTATION

The chair and vice chair of housing committee has been consulted on the write off debts along with the Director of Housing, Strategic Director of Operations and the Section 151 officer.

Tenant Talkback were consulted in November 2023 and agreed that unrecoverable debts be written off.

6.0 FINANCIAL IMPLICATIONS

Name & Title: Tim Willis, Director – Resources & Section 151 Officer

Tel & Email: 01277 312500 / tim.willis@brentwood.rochford.gov.uk

The recovery of former tenant debts is integral to the maintenance of the Housing Revenue account. However, it is recognised that bad debt needs to be written off.

It is important that there is an understanding and set process for any amount written off, to be written back on if the persons financial circumstances or whereabouts change. This will allow provision for future recovery.

7.0 LEGAL/GOVERNANCE IMPLICATIONS

Name & Title: Claire Mayhew, Acting Joint Director – People & Governance & Monitoring Officer

Tel & Email 01277 312500 / Claire.mayhew@brentwood.rochford.gov.uk

Statue barred regulations state that debts not at court action by 6 years are unrecoverable through the legal system and should be written off.

8.0 EQUALITY & HEALTH IMPLICATIONS

Name & Title: Kim Anderson, Corporate Manager - Communities, Leisure and Health

Tel & Email 01277 312500 kim.anderson@brentwood.gov.uk

9.0 ECONOMIC IMPLICATIONS

Name & Title: Phil Drane, Director - Place

Tel & Email 01277 312500 / phil.drane@brentwood.rochford.gov.uk

10.0 ENVIRONMENTAL IMPACT

Name & Title: Henry Muss, Sustainability & Climate Officer

Tel & Email 01277 312500 henry.muss@brentwood.gov.uk

None

REPORT AUTHOR:

Name: Nicola Marsh

Title: Corporate Manager Housing Estates

Phone: 01277 312981

Email: nicola.marsh@brentwood.gov.uk

APPENDICES

None

BACKGROUND PAPERS

SUBJECT HISTORY (last 3 years)

Council Meeting	Date



COMMITTEE TITLE: Housing, Health, and Communities

DATE: 18th December 2023

REPORT TITLE:	Rent Setting 2024 / 2025
REPORT OF:	Lauren Stretch

REPORT SUMMARY

This report seeks the recommendations of the committee on the proposed rent and service charge levels for 2024/2025.

The recommendations will be considered by FAIR Committee when the final recommendation will be made as part of the budget setting process. The final decision will be made by Ordinary Council on 28th February 2024.

RECOMMENDATION

R1. To apply a 7.7% (CPI+1%) increase to all Social and Affordable Housing Properties

R2. To apply a 7.7% (CPI+1%) increase to Shared Ownership and General Fund Property Rents

R3. To apply formula rent to all new tenancies from April 2024

R4. To apply a 7.7% (CPI+1%) increase to all non-council tenant garage rents

R5. To apply a 7.7% increase to all council tenant garage rents

R6. To note that service charges have been reconciled and charges have been increased or decreased so they are brought in line with actual costs and that no increase will exceed CPI plus 1%.

SUPPORT ING INFORMATION

1.0 REASON FOR RECOMMENDATION

The recommendation is to follow government guidelines which proposes to increase rents by 7.7%, for 2024/25. This figure is CPI from September 2023 which was 6.7% +1%.

The proposed increase will contribute to funding the current services provided as well supporting the development of the capital programme and housing development plans.

When considering the rent setting the following assumptions have been considered:

- The financial viability of the HRA business plan
- Provision for the repairs & maintenance capital programme
- Development for new homes in the borough
- Affordability for tenants
- Investing in services to the tenant receives the best service delivery.

It is also important to note that during the Autumn budget, the government announced that the local authority housing allowance for the rent element of benefits would be increasing. Whilst this amount is not yet set, this will benefit Tenants who are entitled to that particular benefit and assist with their rent payments.

2.0 BACKGROUND INFORMATION

Rents

Every year rents are increased in accordance with the Rent Standard Guidance from Government. Generally, this is CPI from September +1%. CPI for September 2023 was 6.7% therefore the proposal is to increase rents by 7.7%. This will allow the Housing service to continue delivering its services and improving the stock for residents.

Formula rents are calculated using a pre-set formula which incorporates local housing values, local earnings of resident's average rents and the number of bedrooms to each property and are to be increased by CPI+1% totalling 7.7%.

Landlords are encouraged to re-let vacant properties at the formula rent. Formula Rent is to increase by CPI plus 1%. Landlords have the added option of being able to charge a 5% margin (10% for sheltered housing) above formula rent and remain within the guidelines – but only on new tenancies. This is detailed within the Rent Setting Policy.

Each year the government release Rent Standard Guidance to assist in the rent setting process. To date, the guidance for 2024-2025 rents has not been released and therefore this report assumes the calculation for Formula rent will increase by the same as standard rents as has been the case for previous years.

When guidance is released, Housing in conjunction with finance, will clarify all figures against the Rents Standard Guidance in calculating the actual rents to tenants.

As of April 2021, The Bank of England’s CPI target for future years was 2% therefore the assumption built into the future rental forecasts was that rents will increase by 3% per annum from April 2021.

Officers are aware that a 7.7% increase is a significant increase in current financial climates. However, the HRA is a ring-fenced account and therefore the rental income maintains the whole housing stock and services available to its tenants. RPI for September was 8.9% therefore any costs that are subject to RPI-based inflation will increase faster than rents, increasing the pressure on the HRA budgets. Therefore, to maintain the pace of works within the HRA and to ensure the HRA remains sustainable for the future officers are content that the rents must rise as per government guidelines.

Of a total of circa 2400 current tenants, 353 are in receipt of full housing benefit meaning they should not be impacted by the rent increase, 326 are on partial housing benefit and 396 are on Universal credit. As we do not hold full information on the universal credit accounts, we must assume that they along with the partial benefit receivers, must pay a small proportion of their rents.

Officers will work with any tenants that raise concerns around their rent increase and financial capabilities will look at ensure tenants are signposted to the relevant departments to ensure they receive any support available to them.

The gross annual rental income is as follows:

Rental Types	Gross Forecast 2023 - 2024 £
Shared Ownership	32,779
Affordable Rents	512,782
Social Rents	12,905,334
Total	13,450,895

The Council currently has 15 Shared Ownership Properties of which the Council owns 50% of the property on 13 properties, 30% on 1 property and 40% on another property. There are 9 properties that are in the General Fund and are rented on

tenancies. The rents on these properties are not set by Government Guidelines as the properties are not for Social Housing Purposes.

For background information the average rent increases have been:

- 2015/16 2.20%
- 2016/17 -1.00%
- 2017/18 -1.00%
- 2018/19 -1.00%
- 2019/20 -1.00%
- 2020/21 2.70%
- 2021/22 1.50%
- 2022/23 4.1%
- 2023/24 7%

Service Charges

The current Service Charge Policy ensures that services supplied are cost recoverable. Any increases to current Service Charges, will be capped at CPI plus 1% as recommended in the Governments guidance. Tenants will be informed in due course regarding charges made to their current service charges. The financial impact of any Service Charge increases will be built into the final budget setting process for the HRA

Garage Rents

Currently the HRA has 1199 number of garages in ownership. 600 are currently void, of which 110 are in a lettable condition. An element of this high void is subject to sites allocated in the small sites development programme and so are purposefully kept void.

In August 2023, the Housing team started a Garage review project looking at which are currently, or with some works, could be lettable and which sites require a more in-depth options appraisal for future plans.

This is progressing well and we have already started letting more garages on the lettable sites.

3.0 OTHER OPTIONS CONSIDERED

In order to deliver services and future planned maintenance programmes, increasing rents in accordance with government guidance is the most viable option.

If we were to not increase rents increase them by less than the proposed 7.7%, our services may diminish or be cancelled, and homes may fall into disrepair.

Consideration has been given to the average cost to rent in the private sector. Even with the proposed increase of 7.7% the price of renting a Brentwood Council property is significantly lower.

The table below sets out the average rents of both social and private rented properties.

Average property prices in Brentwood:

Bed Size	HRA average rents	Private Rented properties average rents
One Bedroom	£456.99	£1225
Two Bedroom	£528.10	£1600
Three Bedroom	£585.52	£1925
Four Bedroom	£701.26	£2675

4.0 RELEVANT RISKS

Financial loss to the HRA.

5.0 ENGAGEMENT/CONSULTATION

None

6.0 FINANCIAL IMPLICATIONS

Name & Title: Tim Willis, Director – Resources & Section 151 Officer
Tel & Email: 01277 312500 / tim.willis@brentwood.rochford.gov.uk

The impact of the changes to the rent levels are outlined in report.

With a strong agenda to improve services currently delivered and invest in it's housing stock and drive a redevelopment agenda, the HRA needs to take the opportunity to increase revenue to support the costs in achieving these priorities.

The assumptions outlined in the report and forecast income figures will be included in the final budget position for the HRA that will be considered at Policy, Resources and Economic Development committee, to the be agreed at Ordinary Council

7.0 LEGAL/GOVERNANCE IMPLICATIONS

Name & Title: Claire Mayhew, Acting Joint Director – People & Governance & Monitoring Officer
Tel & Email 01277 312500 / Claire.mayhew@brentwood.rochford.gov.uk

The Council is required by the Local Government Housing Act (LGHA) 1989 to have a separate Housing Revenue Account. The Council is required to comply with the

Direction on the Rent Standard 2019. The Secretary of State set Direction in exercise of the powers conferred by section 197 of the Housing and Regeneration Act 2008. The Council is required to comply with the Ministry of Housing, Communities and Local Government Policy statement on rents for social housing February 2019.

8.0 EQUALITY & HEALTH IMPLICATIONS

Name & Title: Kim Anderson, Corporate Manager - Communities, Leisure and Health

Tel & Email 01277 312500 kim.anderson@brentwood.gov.uk

Consideration should be given to the detrimental effect the increase in rents may have on some residents and support should be offered where appropriate.

9.0 ECONOMIC IMPLICATIONS

Name & Title: Phil Drane, Director - Place

Tel & Email 01277 312500 / phil.drane@brentwood.rochford.gov.uk

There are no direct economic implications arising from this report. Maintaining a healthy housing stock across tenures in the borough can have indirect benefits that contribute to economic growth.

10.0 ENVIRONMENTAL IMPACT

Name & Title: Henry Muss, Sustainability & Climate Officer

Tel & Email 01277 312500 henry.muss@brentwood.gov.uk

None

REPORT AUTHOR:

Name: Nicola Marsh

Title: Corporate Manager Housing Estates

Phone: 01277 312 981

Email: nicola.marsh@brentwood.gov.uk

APPENDICES

- Appendix A: Rent Setting Analysis

Appendix A

HRA Properties

The rent increase applied to HRA properties is CPI plus 1%. CPI at September 2023 was 6.7%, therefore the rate of increase is 7.7%. This results in an average weekly rent of £101.41 and an average weekly increase of £7.25 for flats, and £125.35 for houses and bungalows with the average increase being £8.96

Flats

No of Bedrooms	Average Rent £	Average increase £	No of Properties
0	83.25	5.95	59
1	96.82	6.92	499
2	106.73	7.63	468
3	117.58	8.41	54
Overall Flat Average/Inc	101.41	7.25	1,080

Houses/Bungalows

No of Bedrooms	Average Rent £	Average increase £	No of Properties
0	87.55	6.26	16
1	105.46	7.54	228
2	121.87	8.71	379
3	135.12	9.66	605
4	161.83	11.57	15
Overall House Average/Inc	125.35	8.96	1,243

Shared Ownership

The rent increase applied to Shared Ownership properties is CPI plus 1%. CPI at September 2023 was 6.7% therefore the rate of increase is 7.7%. This results in an average weekly rent of £48.78 and an average weekly rent increase of £3.49 for flats, and £47.98 average rent for Houses with the average increase being £3.43. The Council's average share in 14 Shared Ownerships properties is 48%.

Flats

No of Bedrooms	Average Rent £	Average increase £	No of Properties*
1	45.40	3.25	6
2	55.54	3.97	3
Overall Average/Increase	48.78	3.49	9

Houses

No of Bedrooms	Average Rent £	Average increase £	No of Properties*
1	45.99	3.29	4
2	55.96	4.00	1
Overall Average/Increase	47.98	3.43	5

Affordable Rents

The average rent increase applied to affordable rents is CPI plus 1%. CPI at September 2023 was 6.7%, therefore the rate of increase is 7.7%. This results in an average weekly rent of £238.93 for houses with an average weekly increase of £17.08. Flats have an average rent of £211.35 and average increase of £15.11

Houses/Bungalows

No of Bedrooms	Average Rent £	Average increase £	No of Properties
1	181.14	12.95	4
2	231.37	16.54	9
3	254.15	18.17	17
4	259.22	18.53	2
Overall Average/Increase	238.93	17.08	32

Flats

No of Bedrooms	Average Rent £	Average increase £	No of Properties
1	181.26	12.96	4
2	211.68	15.14	11
3	269.72	19.28	2
Overall Average/Increase	211.35	15.11	17



COMMITTEE TITLE: Housing, Health and Community

DATE: 18th December 2023

REPORT TITLE:	Leasehold Major Works Payment Options
REPORT OF:	Lauren Stretch

REPORT SUMMARY

In 2023, we saw an increase in section 20 notification of works to leaseholders and some of these were anticipating bills in excess of £20,000. Although we reviewed the Leasehold payment options policy in 2022, we have come to realise that due to the level of bills, the timescales attached to some of the payment options, may not be viable for a high number of leaseholders.

In addition to the above, we have also been approached by a higher than expected numbers of leaseholders asking if we will buy their property back due to financial concerns further highlighting that residents are struggling with the cost of living.

In order to assist with the financial pressures, we are proposing to review the payment options policy one year early to include additional options which we hope will ease the pressure.

SUPPORT ING INFORMATION

1.0 BACKGROUND INFORMATION

Over the last few months, the housing service has had an increased focus on improving and reviewing the stock condition information to enable us to create a 5-year planned maintenance programme.

This has highlighted, along with some recent major works projects, that there are more large projects coming that will affect leaseholders.

As a Leaseholder, the resident as part of their lease is responsible for paying for their apportionment of any major works projects. Historically these have been relatively low or have not been charged due to the pausing of the planned programmes.

In 2023, we saw an increase in section 20 notification of works to leaseholders and some of these were anticipating bills in excess of £20,000. Although we reviewed the Leasehold payment options policy in 2022, we have come to realise that due to the level of bills, the timescales attached to some of the payment options, may not be viable for a high number of leaseholders.

In addition to the above, we have also been approached by a higher-than-expected numbers of leaseholders asking if we will buy their property back due to financial concerns further highlighting that residents are struggling with the cost of living.

In order to assist with the financial pressures, we are proposing to review the payment options policy one year early to include additional options which we hope will ease the pressure.

Once reviewed, we will enter consultation with leaseholders and members before bringing the final draft to committee for approval in March 2024.

If approved the policy would then apply to all major works bills already issued as well as any future ones and is in line with the corporate objective to increase income maximisation

2.0 OTHER OPTIONS CONSIDERED

We have considered leaving the current policy in place, however, we met with residents affected by the balconies works and took on board their concerns over increased payments during an already difficult financial climate and therefore leaving the policy as it is would put additional pressure on the leaseholders.

We can discretionarily review each case on its own merits, but this creates issues with standardisation of payments across all cases.

The option to review the current policy to improve the payment options is the most effective way to assist all leaseholders in best way for them.

3.0 RELEVANT RISKS

Being that the current policy is restrictive for those with larger bills, there is a risk that many will choose to add a charge to the property. If this option is chosen, the Council would not receive the major works payments until the property is sold and this could be a number of years away.

By increasing the options available, more money is likely to be paid in instalments meaning income to the council in a timely manner.

4.0 ENGAGEMENT/CONSULTATION

We propose to consult with all leaseholders and Members via the corporate Engagement HQ system.

5.0 FINANCIAL IMPLICATIONS

Name & Title: Tim Willis, Director – Resources & Section 151 Officer
Tel & Email: 01277 312500 / tim.willis@brentwood.rochford.gov.uk

Failure to have a sufficient policy in place will result in a loss of income to the Housing Revenue account along with increased legal fees to chase arrears.

The policy take into consideration the risk of loss and balances this with the financial pressure of the leaseholder.

Where payments are not made, measures have been taken to charge interest to encourage payment on time.

6.0 LEGAL/GOVERNANCE IMPLICATIONS

Name & Title: Claire Mayhew, Acting Joint Director – People & Governance & Monitoring Officer
Tel & Email 01277 312500 / Claire.mayhew@brentwood.rochford.gov.uk

7.0 EQUALITY & HEALTH IMPLICATIONS

Name & Title: Kim Anderson, Corporate Manager - Communities, Leisure and Health
Tel & Email 01277 312500 kim.anderson@brentwood.gov.uk

The policy has been reviewed to ensure it encompasses all and allow them to live in their homes with financial reassurance.

8.0 ECONOMIC IMPLICATIONS

Name & Title: Phil Drane, Director - Place
Tel & Email 01277 312500 / phil.drane@brentwood.rochford.gov.uk

?

9.0 ENVIRONMENTAL IMPACT

Name & Title: Henry Muss, Sustainability & Climate Officer
Tel & Email 01277 312500 henry.muss@brentwood.gov.uk

None

REPORT AUTHOR: Name: Nicola Marsh
Title: Corporate Manager Housing Estates
Phone: 01277312 981
Email: nicola.marsh@brentwood.gov.uk

APPENDICES

Appendix A: Leasehold Payment Option Policy 2022-2025

BACKGROUND PAPERS

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Brentwood 2022-2025

Leasehold Payment Options Policy

Where everyone matters





Introduction

Where the Council owns the freehold of the building that the flat or maisonette is in, and is responsible for the upkeep of it. Leaseholders are required to contribute towards the cost of maintaining the structure of the building and common areas under the terms of their lease.

Leaseholders pay for the smaller works (e.g. cleaning and general day-to-day repairs) as a part of their annual service charges.

Where the service charge is payable for larger scale works, these charges are commonly referred to as 'major works' charges. These kinds of work can include (but are not limited to):

- Decoration of the block.
- Window and door replacement.
- Roof replacement/refurbishment.
- Lift replacement/refurbishment.
- Insulation work.
- Communal re-wiring.
- Fire Safety upgrade works.

The Council has a duty to maintain its housing stock, and as such leaseholders are required to make a contribution towards repairs and improvements carried out in their flat block. In doing so, the Council must ensure that the full costs for works under any major works programme are fully recovered as soon as possible.

It is important that a range of payment options are available to assist leaseholders, and that any failure to pay does not unduly impact upon other residents who have paid their contributions.

In order to make sure that these costs are recovered in an efficient way, the Council has adopted a comprehensive approach to recovering costs due from leaseholders, and in doing so is committed to ensuring that all leaseholders are aware of the range of options available to them and the actions that the Council will take to recover major works contributions.

This policy:

- Covers the range of payment options for major works which will be offered on behalf of the Council.
- Recognises and reflects the need for a variety of options to assist leaseholders to pay.
- Acknowledges the importance of recovering full costs of services so as to prevent delay to future services and works programmes.
- Is compliant with the terms of the lease and the relevant legislation.
- Takes into account good practice guides.



Consultation

There is legislation in place around service charges and leasehold consultation, to ensure that landlords act reasonably at all times. Under Section 20 of the Landlord and Tenant Act 1985 as amended by the Commonhold and Leasehold Reform Act 2002, leaseholders must be consulted before the landlord carries out works above a certain value, and when entering into certain long term contracts for services (Qualifying Long Term Agreements).

The Council is obliged to follow these requirements and will ensure that prior to any major works proceeding; full consultation with leaseholders will take place in accordance with the regulations. Within the prescribed consultation requirements, leaseholders will receive an estimate in advance of any works starting, informing them of their likely contribution.

If leaseholders need help to pay, an officer of the Council will go through the payment options available with them.

The Council is not able to offer financial or legal advice and leaseholders should seek their own independent financial and legal advice.

Cost Recovery

The Council has a duty to collect monies for work that has been carried out. The Council is mindful of the impact on leaseholders but has an obligation to maintain the homes of its residents and to collect all monies due in respect of major works.

The Council staff will treat people with respect at all times when dealing with payments and any associated enquiries and will ensure supporting documentation is supplied upon demand or, in the case of larger documents, ensure arrangements and facilities allow customers to access and inspect these.

Leaseholders can make payments towards major works costs from the point at which a Section 20 is served. This will build a credit on their account which will be offset at the point at which the invoice is issued. The invoice will only be issued at completion of works or no later than 18 months after the initial cost is incurred by the Council, which ever is earliest.



Payment Options

The following payment options will be made available to leaseholders to repay the cost of major works.

Option 1 – Full Payment by Leaseholder

The leaseholder can pay the invoice in full within 30 days of the invoice date. This may involve the leaseholder making their own loan arrangements with their mortgage lender, bank or building society.

Leaseholders will be advised to seek independent financial and legal advice before entering into any agreement to secure a mortgage or a loan on their home. This option applies to all Leaseholders.

Option 2 – Discretionary Payment Agreement

Where leaseholders are unable to pay the full amount within 30 days of the demand for payment, the Council may, on a discretionary basis, allow deferred, interest-free payments by instalment over specified time periods, as outlined below:

- Up to 12 months (12 equal payments) on major works bills under £2,500
- Up to 24 months (24 equal payments) on major works bills over £2,500

Leaseholders wishing to pursue this payment option, should contact the Council at the earliest opportunity once demands for payment are received to prevent arrears enforcement actions. This will also enable the Council to carry out an affordability assessment and suitability for this type of arrangement on a case-by-case basis.

Where deferred payment arrangements are established, leaseholders will be required to set up Direct Debits to cover the amounts outstanding in equal monthly payments within the timescales agreed (as outlined above).

If leaseholders' circumstances change they may cancel the Direct Debit and settle the outstanding amounts in full at any time.

Where leaseholders default on payment schedules without explanation or agreement, the Council reserve the right to commence arrears recovery actions.



Option 3 – Statutory Loan Scheme (Right to a Loan)

This is a loan governed by statute and is available to those leaseholders of a lease of a home granted under the Right to Buy scheme in the last 10 years. The right to a loan is a right to leave the whole or part of the service charges outstanding. The following applies:

- When the Council sends out an invoice for major works, it will ensure that the invoice states if the Council believes that a leaseholder is eligible for a statutory loan and what he/she must do to claim it.
- The leaseholder has 6 weeks from the date of the invoice to exercise the right to a loan. The Council must then tell the leaseholder the terms of the loan and the time allowed to accept it. The leaseholder then has 4 weeks to accept the Council's offer.
- The Council is obliged to secure statutory loans by way of a mortgage.
- The mortgage will be secured on the property (whether or not the property is adequate security). This will involve placing a charge via the Land Registry.
- The Council will charge a set administrative fee to the leaseholder.
- This administrative fee is limited to £100. This may be added to the amount of the loan if the leaseholder wishes.
- Monthly repayment instalments are required via direct debit.

Option 4 - Deferred Payment Option

For resident leaseholders that are facing severe hardship and are unable to secure funding for a High Street Bank/Building Society, the Council offers a deferred payment option secured by a charge on the property for the actual amount. The loan is repaid on the sale of the property. The charge is noted at the Land Registry and the property cannot be sold unless the amount owed is redeemed. This option may be available if there is sufficient equity to cover the debt.

Option 5 - Purchase of the Leasehold Property by the Council

Options include for the Council to purchase the property and will be determined on a scheme by scheme basis. This is also subject to the availability of funds.

Option 6 - Purchase Equity share by the Council

The Council can offset major works service charges by taking an equity share in the leaseholder's property, by way of a shared ownership lease (i.e. equity share scheme). The Council would need to complete a valuation of the property to estimate the works cost as a percentage of the value.



Non-Resident leaseholders

Where leaseholders do not reside in the property, only payment options 1 and 2 are available.

Non-payment of invoice

If the leaseholder does not make payment as required and has not contacted us within 6 weeks to confirm how they will pay the invoice, the Council will pursue the debt and will consider options including:

- Recovery action as a civil debt via the courts.
- Seeking payment from the leaseholders mortgage lender.
- Securing a charge on the property via the courts.
- Seeking forfeiture of the lease.



Appeals

Where a leaseholder does not agree with the payment options offered, they can make an appeal against the decisions by placing this in writing to the Council. Another member of the housing team will review the original decision and write to the leaseholder providing the detail of the review's outcome.

Leasehold Advisory Service

For information and independent advice leaseholders are advised to contact the Leasehold Advisory Service (www.lease-advice.org.uk).



Contact us

☎ 01277 312 500

✉ housing@brentwood.gov.uk

🌐 brentwood.gov.uk



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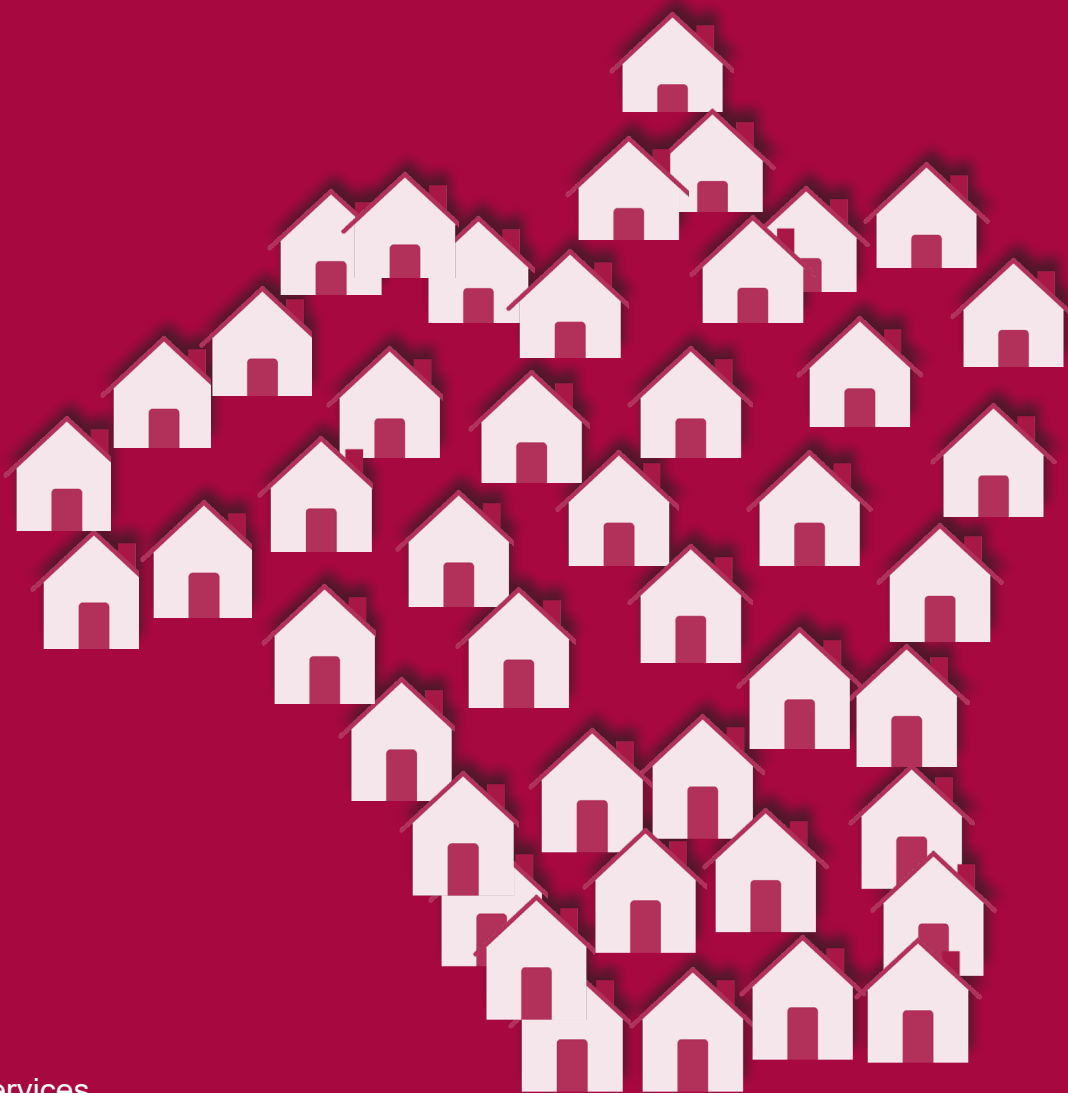
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Housing Services

Brentwood Borough Council
Town Hall
Ingrave Road
Brentwood
Essex
CM15 8AY



COMMITTEE TITLE: Housing, Health, and Community

DATE: 18th December 2023

REPORT TITLE:	Housing Grounds Maintenance Review
REPORT OF:	Lauren Stretch

REPORT SUMMARY

Grounds Maintenance services to the Housing Stock has historically been provided by the depot. However, the last known service level agreement (SLA) was drawn up in 1991, over 30 years ago.

Being that the service level agreement is dated, it has become difficult to accurately note the time and activity on site and the original requirements have somewhat changed.

This means, at present, we are unable to recharge the service charge to Leaseholders which is impacting on the income to the Housing Revenue Account.

As such, a decision was taken to review the specification of works to all housing sites, including garages, amenity greens and communal gardens.

In order to price against the specification, the depot requested a bill of quantities that housing was unable to provide due to a lack of mapping on site.

An external mapping company has since been appointed to conduct an exercise to log all boundaries of HRA land as well as note the number and size of greens, hedges, and shrubs etc.

Once this is received, the depot will be in a position to reprice for the whole HRA contract and importantly break it down site by site to allow Housing to charge the correct service charges to both leaseholders and Tenants.

SUPPORT ING INFORMATION

1.0 BACKGROUND INFORMATION

Housing Grounds Maintenance has always been provided by the depot. However, the last known formal review of the service level agreement was in 1991, over 30 years ago.

Over this time, many changes have been made as residents groups took over certain communal garden maintenance, and then as these groups have ceased, the works were never picked back up by the depot.

This has created a decline in some of our housing sites that has resulted in an increase in complaints from residents.

In addition to the decline in condition of our sites, as there has never been a formal method of recording time and activity on site, this means that the Housing Service are unable to charge Leaseholders a service charge and the Tenant charge is limited.

The lack of charging has an impact on the Housing Revenue Account (HRA) and if it was to continue, would mean a cut back in services due to lack of funding.

Many conversations have taken place over the years to find a solution to improve the grounds maintenance service, however these have failed due to lack of resource.

In the summer of 2022, Housing embarked on a full review of the Grounds Maintenance service and engaged an external consultant to write a specification for all activities. This prompted conversations with the depot management as to whether this service could continue to be provided by them.

It quickly became evident that a bill of quantities would be required before any decision on the depots future delivery of the contract could be made.

As such, we have engaged a mapping company to undertake a large exercise of mapping all housing sites including garage sites and amenity greens.

This will provide an accurate boundary of each estate which is required to correctly bill residents, as well as detail on the size and location of greens, shrubs, hedges etc.

It is expected that this task will be completed by the end of December 2023 and then the depot will have all information required to enable them to confidently quote for ongoing grounds maintenance works.

Examples of the detail provided as part of the mapping service can be found at Appendix A, and 2.

2.0 OTHER OPTIONS CONSIDERED

Over the last 2 years it has been considered in detail as to whether an external contractor would be more beneficial in delivering the service.

As we engaged in conversations with our consultants, it was decided that being such a small housing stock, we may struggle to find suitable bidders.

It was also considered that by going to an external contractor, would mean the depot lose the contract and this would significantly impact the depot.

During final discussions with senior management, it was agreed that the contract would remain with the depot subject to their pricing of the contract in line with the specification drafted.

It was noted that some minor changes to the specification would need to be made for the depot to be able to deliver the service, but these did not pertain to a drop in required service.

A final option was to leave the current service level agreement as it was, however, with the loss in service charges to the HRA and increasing level of complaints, this was discounted.

3.0 RELEVANT RISKS

4.0 ENGAGEMENT/CONSULTATION

Tenant Talkback will be consulted on the specification of works and will be invited to view the mapping for the sites and provide any comments.

5.0 FINANCIAL IMPLICATIONS

Name & Title: Tim Willis, Director – Resources & Section 151 Officer
Tel & Email: 01277 312500 / tim.willis@brentwood.rochford.gov.uk

If the contract was to be awarded to an external company that is not the depot, this would have a significant impact on the depot and its future delivery.

Likewise, the costs provided by the depot must be reasonable to cover the services and be able to be met by the Housing Revenue account.

The cost of services has an impact on residents and therefore a future consultation on service charges should be considered to allow full recovery of costs.

6.0 LEGAL/GOVERNANCE IMPLICATIONS

Name & Title: Claire Mayhew, Acting Joint Director – People & Governance & Monitoring Officer
Tel & Email 01277 312500 / Claire.mayhew@brentwood.rochford.gov.uk

The service level agreement should be formally logged and review dates agreed to avoid lengthy gaps between reviews.

7.0 EQUALITY & HEALTH IMPLICATIONS

Name & Title: Kim Anderson, Corporate Manager - Communities, Leisure and Health
Tel & Email 01277 312500 kim.anderson@brentwood.gov.uk

None

8.0 ECONOMIC IMPLICATIONS

Name & Title: Phil Drane, Director - Place
Tel & Email 01277 312500 / phil.drane@brentwood.rochford.gov.uk

None

9.0 ENVIRONMENTAL IMPACT

Name & Title: Henry Muss, Sustainability & Climate Officer
Tel & Email 01277 312500 henry.muss@brentwood.gov.uk

Consideration should be considered to environmental schemes in the borough such as rain gardens which can assist with flooding.

REPORT AUTHOR: **Name: Nicola Marsh**
Title: Corporate Manager Housing Estates
Phone: 01277 312 981
Email: nicola.marsh@brentwood.gov.uk

APPENDICES

Appendix A: Mapping example 1

Appendix B: Mapping example 2

BACKGROUND PAPERS










None

SUBJECT HISTORY (last 3 years)

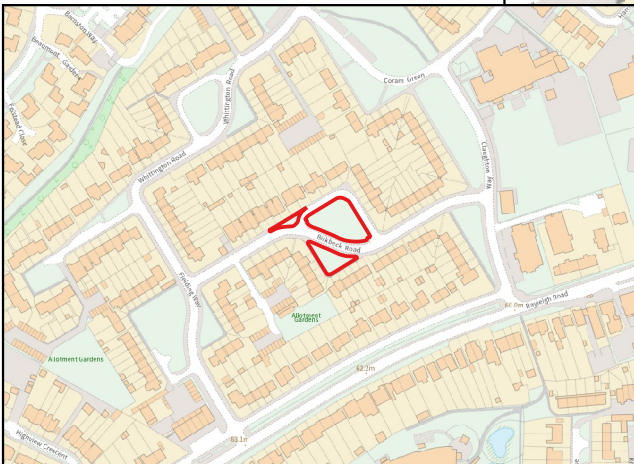
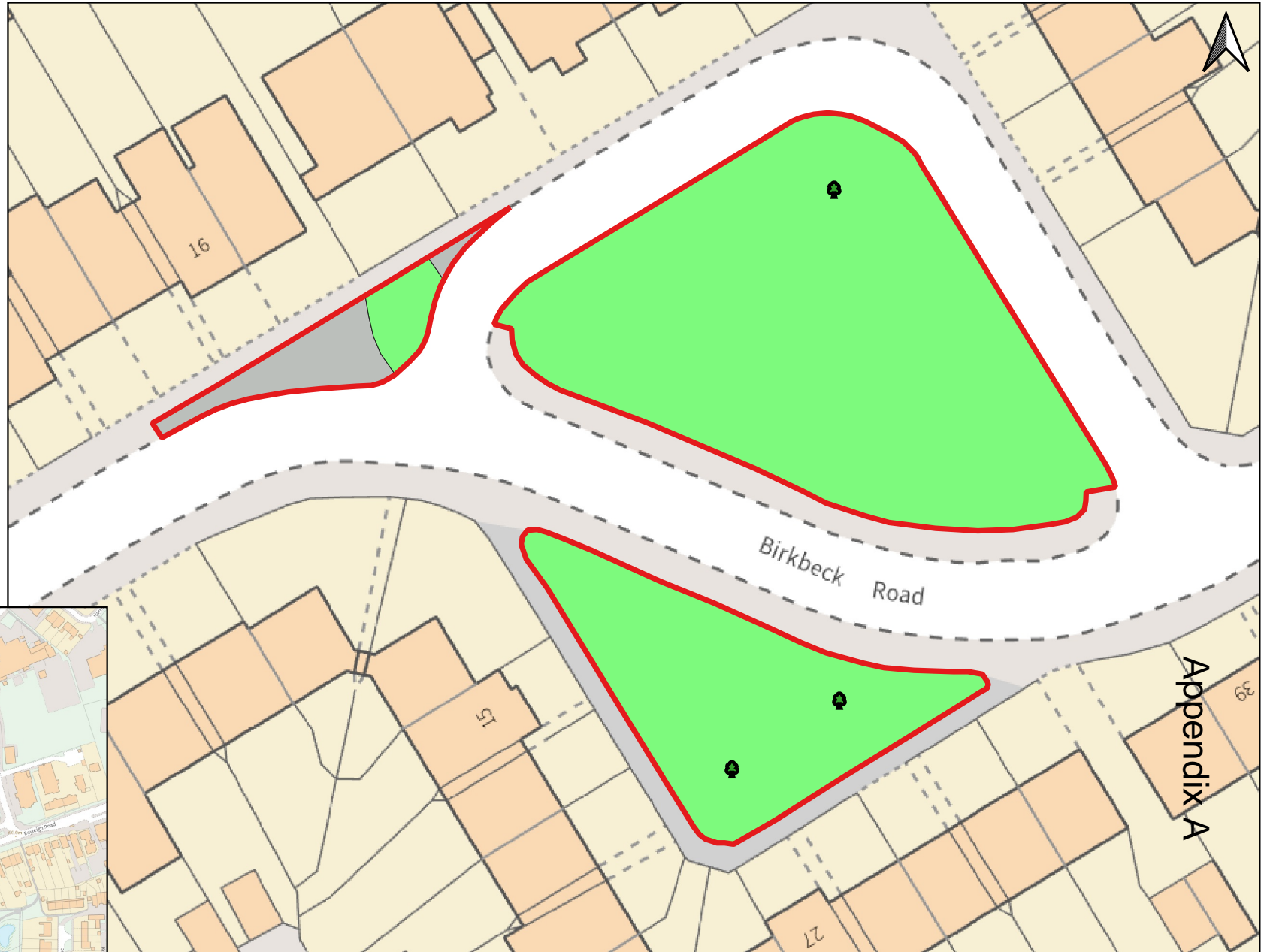
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Birkbeck road

Key

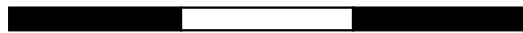
	Site Boundary	
	Tree	3
	Flower Bed	0 m ²
	Grass	1290.26 m ²
	Hard Surface	66.83 m ²
	Hedge	0 m ²
	Shrubs	0 m ²
	Water	0 m ²
	Woodland	0 m ²

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Appendix A

0 10 20 30 m












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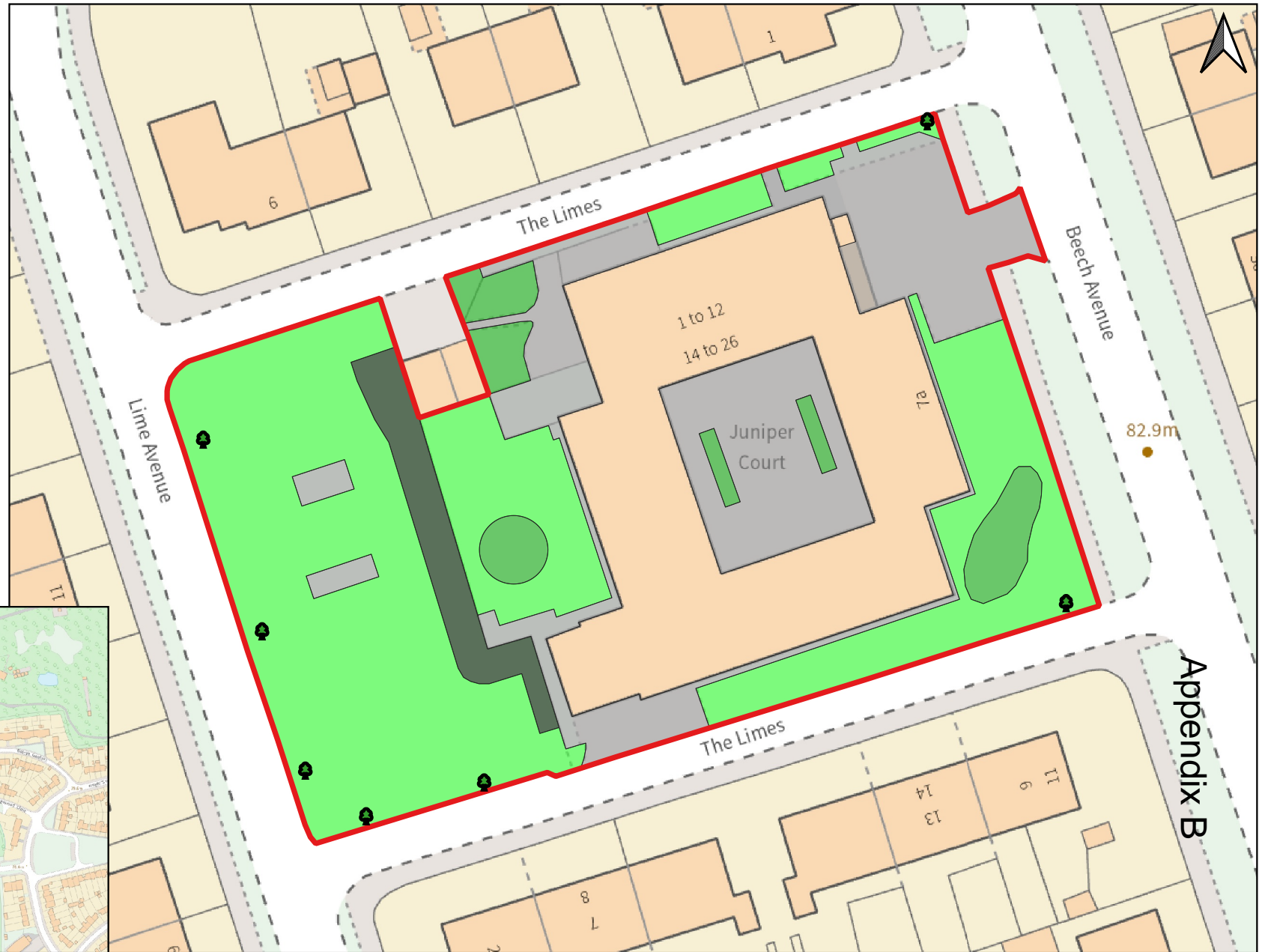
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1-26 Juniper Court

Key

	Site Boundary	
	Tree	7
	Flower Bed	0 m ²
	Grass	1515.03 m ²
	Hard Surface	814.25 m ²
	Hedge	137.15 m ²
	Shrubs	173.22 m ²
	Water	0 m ²
	Woodland	0 m ²

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Members Interests

Members of the Council must declare any pecuniary or non-pecuniary interests and the nature of the interest at the beginning of an agenda item and that, on declaring a pecuniary interest, they are required to leave the Chamber.

- **What are pecuniary interests?**

A person's pecuniary interests are their business interests (for example their employment trade, profession, contracts, or any company with which they are associated) and wider financial interests they might have (for example trust funds, investments, and asset including land and property).

- **Do I have any disclosable pecuniary interests?**

You have a disclosable pecuniary interest if you, your spouse or civil partner, or a person you are living with as a spouse or civil partner have a disclosable pecuniary interest set out in the Council's Members' Code of Conduct.

- **What does having a disclosable pecuniary interest stop me doing?**

If you are present at a meeting of your council or authority, of its executive or any committee of the executive, or any committee, sub-committee, joint committee, or joint sub-committee of your authority, and you have a disclosable pecuniary interest relating to any business that is or will be considered at the meeting, you must not :

- participate in any discussion of the business at the meeting, of if you become aware of your disclosable pecuniary interest during the meeting participate further in any discussion of the business or,
- participate in any vote or further vote taken on the matter at the meeting.

These prohibitions apply to any form of participation, including speaking as a member of the public.

- **Other Pecuniary Interests**

Other Pecuniary Interests are also set out in the Members' Code of Conduct and apply only to you as a Member.

If you have an Other Pecuniary Interest in an item of business on the agenda then you must disclose that interest and withdraw from the room while that business is being considered

- **Non-Pecuniary Interests**

Non –pecuniary interests are set out in the Council's Code of Conduct and apply to you as a Member and also to relevant persons where the decision might reasonably be regarded as affecting their wellbeing.

A 'relevant person' is your spouse or civil partner, or a person you are living with as a spouse or civil partner

If you have a non-pecuniary interest in any business of the Authority and you are present at a meeting of the Authority at which the business is considered, you must disclose to that meeting the existence and nature of that interest whether or not such interest is registered on your Register of Interests or for which you have made a pending notification.

Housing, Health & Community Committee

The functions within the remit of the Housing, Health & Community are set out below:

1. Community and Localism Initiatives including Assets of Community Value
2. The Voluntary Sector and community partnerships
3. Leisure and cultural initiatives
4. Parish Council Liaison
5. Health and Wellbeing
6. Grants to organisations/voluntary organisations.
7. Parks, open spaces, countryside, allotments
8. Affordable housing
9. Housing strategy and investment programme where the Finance, Assets, Investment & Recovery Committee does not decide to exercise such functions as the superior Committee.
10. The Housing Revenue Account Business Plan where the Finance, Assets, Investment & Recovery Committee does not decide to exercise such functions as the superior Committee
11. Housing standards, homelessness, homelessness prevention and advice
12. Housing needs assessment
13. Housing benefit - welfare aspects (was this going to (Finance, Assets, Investment & Recovery Committee)
14. Private sector housing and administration of housing grants
15. Tenancy Management and landlord functions

16. To make recommendations to Finance, Assets, Investment & Recovery Committee on the setting of rents for Council homes.

17. Food safety

18. Health & Safety

19. To take the lead on community leadership and consultation with stakeholders.

20. To implement working parties as required.