

HOUSING SCRUTINY SUB-COMMITTEE

Monday, 19 March 2018 at 6.30 p.m.

MP702 - Town Hall Mulberry Place

SUPPLEMENTAL AGENDA

This meeting is open to the public to attend.

Contact for further enquiries:

The Committee Services Officer

Town Hall, Mulberry Place, 5 Clove Crescent, London, E14 2BG

Tel: 020 8364 5554

E-mail: rushena.miah@towerhamlets.gov.uk

Web: <http://www.towerhamlets.gov.uk>

Scan this code for
an electronic
agenda:



For further information including the Membership of this body and public information, see the main agenda.

**PAGE
NUMBER(S)**

3 .1 Self Build

3 - 20

The Committee will receive a presentation on this topic at the meeting.

3 .2 Anti Social Behaviour

21 - 28

The Committee will receive a presentation on this topic at the meeting.

3 .3 Void Properties - What is the Council doing to bring them into use?

29 - 48

The Committee will receive a presentation on this topic at the meeting.

LBTH Self Build and Custom Build Housing Forum

Page 3

Housing Overview and Scrutiny Committee

Monday 19th March 2018

Martin Ling – Housing Strategy Manager

Agenda Item 3.1

Format

LB Tower Hamlets Strategy

Self Build Regulations

Self Build demand in LB Tower Hamlets

Progress since June 2017

Next Steps

2016 – 2021 Housing Strategy

The Four themes:

- Delivering affordable housing, economic growth, and regeneration
- Meeting people's housing needs
- Raising private rented housing standards
- Effective partnership working with residents and stakeholders.

http://www.towerhamlets.gov.uk/ignl/council_and_democracy/consultations/past_consultations/Housing_strategy_consultation_second_stage.aspx

2016 – 2021 Housing Strategy

Action 6 - Self-build and custom housing

- The Self Build and Custom Housing Act 2015 requires the council to hold a register of individuals and associations of individuals who are seeking serviced plots of land The council will be maintaining such a list as required by law and will monitor interest in this form of housing.

Action 6: Analyse the register of self-builders in line with statutory requirement in order to inform the Local Plan and respond to self and custom build demand.

Self Build - Regulations

‘To keep and have regard to a register of people who are interested in self build or custom build projects in their area’.

Page 7
In order to:

‘Inform the council of the level of demand for self build and custom build plots in the borough and help the council develop a strategy for matching people to plots in their area.’

Self Build - Regulations

Have a three-year deadline from 31st October 2016 to grant planning permission with respect to a sufficient number of serviced plots for self-build and custom housebuilding (based on demand).

Page 8

- For the purposes of section 5 of the Act the specified requirements for a serviced plot of land are that the plot has—
 - (a) access to a public highway; and
 - (b) connections for electricity, water and waste water.

Self Build - Regulations

The Self-build and Custom Housebuilding Act 2015 places a duty on the Council to have regard to the self-build and custom housebuilding register when carrying out its planning, housing, land disposal and regeneration functions.

Page 9

Government issued guidance **suggests** ways in which the duty may be demonstrated in carrying out each function.

Self Build - Regulations

Planning

- The planning functions of an authority may include both plan-making and decision-taking functions. Relevant authorities with plan-making functions should use their evidence on demand for this form of housing from the registers that relate to their area in developing their Local Plan and associated documents.

Housing

- Local housing authorities who are under the duty to have regard to registers that relate to their areas should **consider** the evidence of demand for self-build and custom housebuilding from the registers when carrying out their housing functions.

This **includes** when preparing their local housing strategies and in developing plans for new housing on land owned by the local housing authority.

Self Build - Regulations

Land disposal

- Authorities who are under the duty to have regard to registers that relate to their areas should **consider** the evidence of demand for self-build and custom housebuilding in their area from the register when developing plans to dispose of land within their ownership.

Regeneration

- When developing plans to regenerate their area, local authorities who are under the duty to have regard to registers that relate to their areas should **consider** the demand for self-build and custom housebuilding.

Self Build – LBTH Demand

Page 12

- As of January 2018, 169 people have completed the self-build register application on the Tower Hamlets website.
- Most people who said they were interested in self-build currently live in Tower Hamlets
- The majority of those registered are living in the private rented sector.
- The majority of those who have registered an interest in self-build are between 25 and 39 years old, they are not on the council's housing register.

Tower Hamlets has a history of self build



Machonochies Wharf E14 - Circa 1987

Tower Hamlets has a history of self build

Page 14



Vallance Road E2 Circa 1985

The most common forms of Self Build

Self build one-off home	Contractor built one-off home	Kit home	Independent community collaboration	Supported community self build group
<p>You manage the design and construction process and undertake a fair proportion of the actual building work too.</p>	<p>You manage the design process, select a contractor and then they take care of the construction work.</p>	<p>You select your preferred kit home. You may have to organise the foundations; the kit home company then erects the house.</p>	<p>You work with others to acquire a site to split up into plots, then organise the design and construction of your own home</p>	<p>A social landlord or the Community Self Build Agency helps you build a group of homes together.</p>

Self Build issues in LB Tower Hamlets

- High land values – expensive to build
- Suitable site availability
- LBTH HRA programme and Mayor's 1000 Council home target
- High GLA housing targets
- High density building favoured to achieve vfm/financial return

LBTH - Self Build Forum - Progress

- Cllrs invited everyone on the Register to attend an open Forum – 25 – 35 attendees
- Forum has met 3 times and will meet again in May 2018
- Mix of individuals and an emerging Co-Housing group who have met independently
- Mainly young professional, some with housing/development backgrounds.

LBTH - Self Build Forum - Progress

- Council has agreed to look for suitable HRA sites
- 3 small pilot sites identified,
- Expressions of interest made by self builders on 'types of sites'
- Aim to involve self builders in local consultation
- Working up a viability model covering land disposal, finance etc – Market/affordable housing issues
- Will aim to work with GLA Co Housing information Hub/GLA small sites programme

Where to look for further information

<https://www.gov.uk/guidance/self-build-and-custom-housebuilding>

<http://www.communityselfbuildagency.org.uk/>

<http://www.selfbuildportal.org.uk/>

This page is intentionally left blank

ASB Update

19/03/2018

Background

- Police data shows LBTH has the highest number of reported ASB incidents across London
- Research carried out by Housemark in 2015/16 showed that THH has by far the highest number of ASB cases- with the average housing provider reporting 5 times less cases
- ASB is the amongst the foremost concern of residents-a survey of 160 residents in April 2017 showed
- 83% saw drug dealing as a minor or major problem in their Neighbourhood
- 57% had reported ASB in the last 12 months
- Loitering by large groups seen as a problem by 48% of respondents.

What our LBTH residents wanted

- Calls for THH to be “more strict” in the management of ASB
- Improve upon the feedback given to those who have complained
- The need to work in Partnership more effectively with Community Police Officers
- A view that ASB team members should be available at nights and assigned to certain estates or areas.
- A 24 hour service to report ASB rather than ASB being reported in “specific windows”.
- More officer power to tackle ASB
- Quicker response times.
- Reach out to the community to identify suspects

What we have done

1) Re-structuring of ASB team

- Re-organisation of new team into an Estate Based Team and Tenancy specialism
- A new specialist liaison role that enables all first reports/calls from residents to be dealt with by an ASB specialist from 1st April
- Additional Management capacity to cope with the number of reports and a new set of procedures
- Staggered hours with ASB availability in the evenings
- Able to procure additional legal support to manage increased casework-from March

2) New Police team

- Gained agreement from the Mayor's Office for Police and Crime (MOPAC) to fund additional Police a cost of 1.4 million over 3 years
- Staffing numbers consist of 2 Sergeants and 12 Police Officers
- Earlier roll-out with a smaller team from October 17 with full establishment beginning in January 18
- Initially providing patrols in high profile areas
- Evidence gathering that supports increased legal action bolstered by funding for a new Solicitor
- Acting on intelligence provided by Parkguard services
- Highly encouraging start for new team –see later

3) Use of Parkguard Security

Developing Community re-assurance based on a model used in Ealing

- Appoint Police accredited Security service with capability of being delegating Police powers
- Schedule high-visibility patrols in high ASB areas with an emphasis on gathering information and intelligence .
- Handing over results of the exercise that will inform future action to the THH ASB team and the Police team in taking enforcement action
- This will include intelligence on perpetrators of anti social activity/gangs/drug dealing
- Targeted joint action with Police teams

Early successes- since September 2017

- 75 arrests, 600 ASB warnings and 385 stop and searches- as well as 9 vehicles seized
- Shutting down of a crime den masquerading as a barber shop as well as Cannabis farm closure in an LBTH flat
- Caretaking team reporting significant reduction in drug use, prostitution and rough sleeping in the Chicksand area
- Focus of operations in Shadwell and Sidney areas- Operation Continuum- 3 warrants executed on 11th December- 2 arrests- a further 14 injunctions either served or being prepared
- A 2nd operation targeting drugs and ASB focused in Stepney used information from Police, Partners and other sources- 8 arrests for money laundering, robbery, firearms and possession of a class A drug

Innovation and Diversionary work

- Use of Closure Notices and Partial Premises Closure Orders at Bentworth Court and Solander Gardens
Targeted early morning estate visits with LBTH Drug support/counselling team to talk to rough sleepers engaged in substance abuse.
- Working with Streets of Growth -60 young people from Shadwell, Sidney and Chicksand at high risk of offending are to receive targeted intervention aimed at changing life trajectories
- All of these developments have taken place in the 5 months since the start of the new arrangements

Void (Empty) Properties - What is the Council doing to bring them into use?

Page 29

Martin Ling
Housing Strategy Manager
19 March 2018

Agenda Item 3.3

What is an empty home?

- A home left empty by a developer
- A 'buy to leave' property
- A home owned by an overseas investor
- A home awaiting demolition
- A flat above a shop
- A home which is a derelict building
- A second home
- A home subject to probate settlement
- A home which is for sale
- A home used for short term letting

What is an empty home?

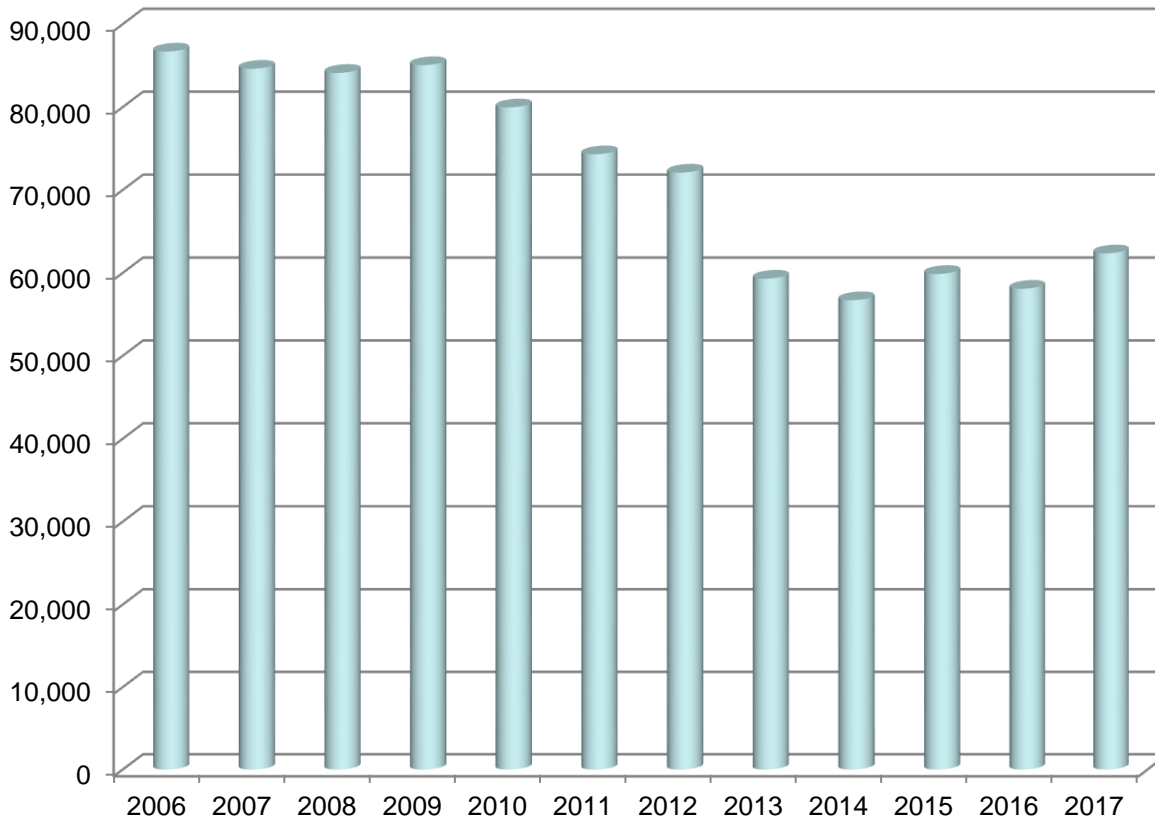
Department of Housing, Communities....

- Council Tax Records
- A dwelling unoccupied for six months or more excluding...

- ✗ owner is in hospital, prison, or care
- ✗ repossessions
- ✗ probate
- ✗ 'second homes'

Empty homes in London

Page 32



‘When is a ‘Dwelling not a ‘Dwelling’

Page 33



Commercial



Uninhabitable

1,565 homes empty for less than 6 months

Page 34



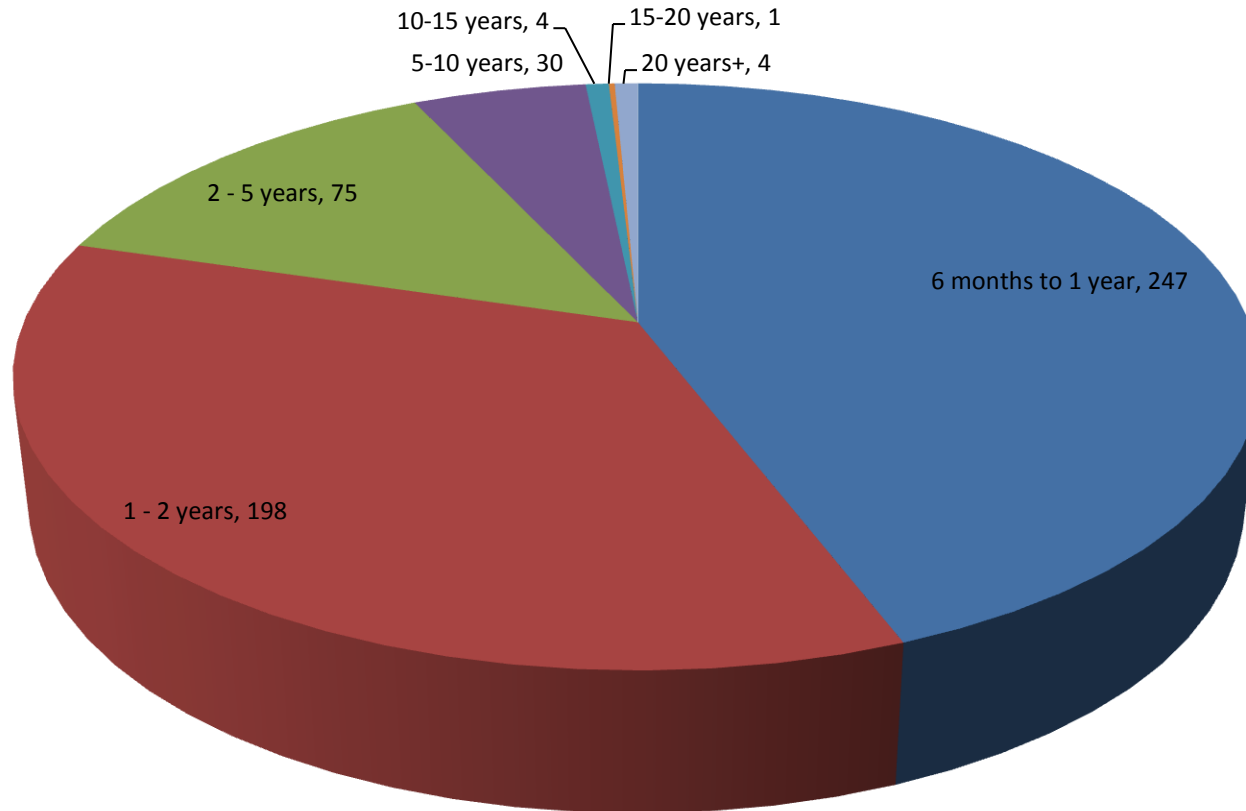


1,264 Second Homes

190 for between 5 & 10 years

19 for more than 10 years

559 Homes have been empty for more than 6 months



Council Tax

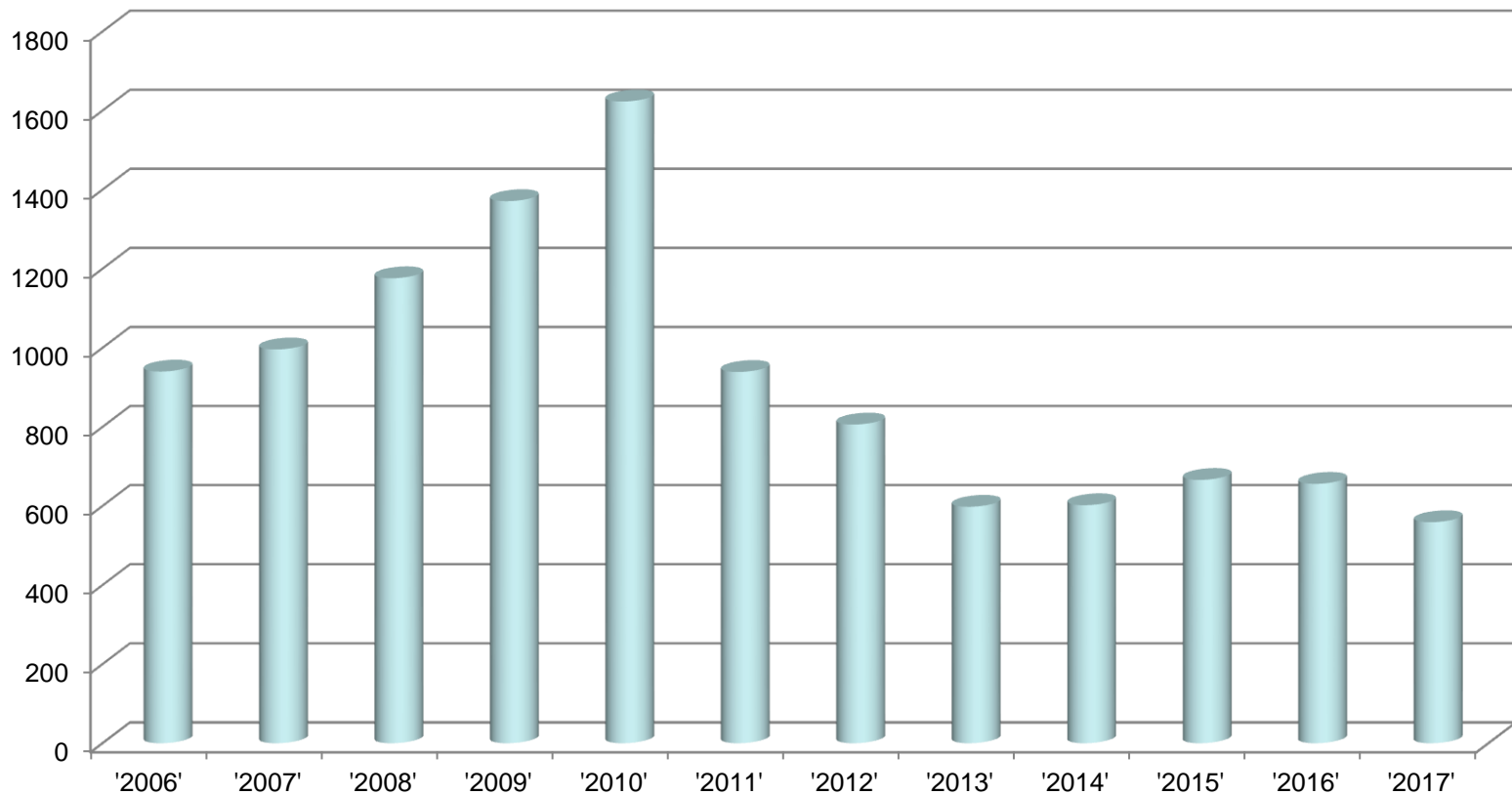
- Empty Homes – 1.5 x CT after 2 years
- 2nd Homes – Standard Council Tax

Chancellors Autumn 2017 budget:

"I want to address the issue of empty properties. It can't be right to leave property empty when so many are desperate for a place to live. So we will give local authorities the power to charge a 100pc council tax premium on empty properties."

Empty homes in Tower Hamlets

Page 38



Who owns empty homes?

Of the 39 homes empty in November 2017 for more than five years :

Private ownership	19
Registered company: letting and operating real estate	2
Registered company: Development of building projects	3
Gateway Housing Association	2
Poplar Harca	1
Genesis Housing Trust	1
Salvation Army	4
No longer empty	7

What brings homes back into use?

- 3% - enforcement action
- 11% - the threat of enforcement action
- 6% - grant aid
- 58% of properties were brought back into use using a combination of advice and guidance.

And.... Market forces



What is the council doing?

Casework

- Housing Strategy and Private Housing investment Team
- Caseloads – consistent engagement with owners, Council tax, planning and enforcement
- Advice, information, assistance is key
- Mail-outs to owners
- CPOs considered but not recently used
- No use of EDMOs

Empty Homes Grants

In return for letting through housing options at LHA rate for five years :

- Up to £20,000 for one bedroom
- Up to £25,000 for two bedrooms
- Up to £30,000 for three bedrooms or more

Compulsory Purchase Orders

- **Town and Country Planning Act 1990** - to facilitate the development, redevelopment or improvement on or in relation to the land and buildings
- **Housing Act 1985** - for the provision or improvement of housing. Can only be used as a last resort: “*a compelling case in the public interest*”

Substantial unrecoverable costs *in addition to the market value of the property*

EDMO Amendment Order 2012

- Council must demonstrate:
 - Anti-social behaviour
 - community support for EDMO
 - Empty for at least two years
- three months' notice before interim order
- Interim EDMO of twelve months before
- Final EDMO - strict cost recovery limits

Questions?

Page 46



Housing Act 2004: Empty Dwellings Management Orders

- First-Tier Tribunal can authorise an interim EDMO if dwelling empty for six months; and
- no reasonable prospect of it becoming occupied in the near future

Where consent to letting cannot be obtained, the interim order may be replaced with a final EDMO

Coalition view on EDMOs:

‘These draconian and heavy-handed state powers have allowed councils to seize private homes in perfect condition, including their fixtures and fittings, just because the homes have been empty for a short while.

Page 48

The Coalition Government is standing up for the civil liberties of law-abiding citizens. Fundamental human rights include the right to property’

Eric Pickles..**2011**