

## Appendix 4.

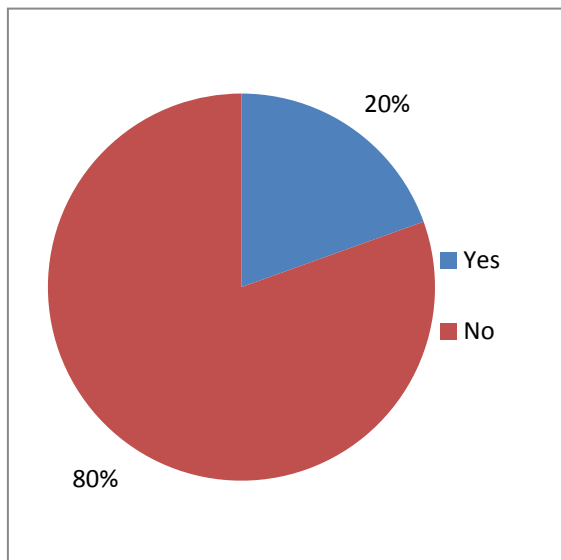
### Draft Housing and Homelessness Strategy 2018-21

#### Consultation Feedback

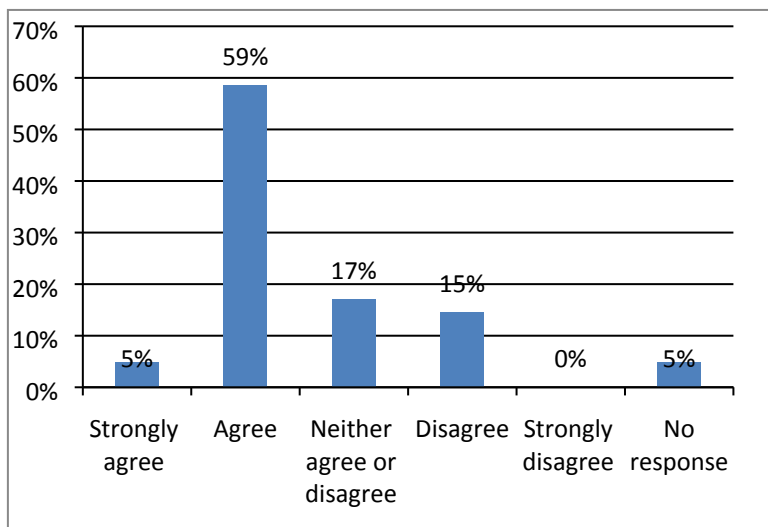
1. At its meeting on 19 September 2017, the City Executive Board approved the publication of the draft Housing and Homelessness Strategy 2018-21, Action Plan and Appendices for a 6 week period of Public consultation. This document sets out a summary of the consultation feedback, along with officer responses.
2. The consultation period ran from 21 September to 3 November 2017 and the process involved consultation with the general public, internal officers to the Council, external stakeholders and statutory consultees such as the Police, Health professionals, Oxfordshire District Councils, County Council, Registered Providers, Housing related Support Providers, voluntary and community groups who operate in Oxford, Councillors and people with lived experience of homelessness.
3. Opportunities for people to get involved with the consultation included: an online consultation questionnaire available through the City Council's website – this was publicised through posters, online and in the media; public drop-in sessions arranged at Temple Cowley Shopping Centre, the Town Hall, and Oxford's Leisure Centres; Officers also attended meetings of groups who have protected characteristics (age, ethnicity, gender etc.); and met with groups who have lived experience of street homelessness and supported housing pathways. Officers arranged workshops at the Town Hall and St Aldates Chambers to consult with City Council Tenants and internal/external Stakeholders. A Member Briefing was also held on 31 October 2017.
4. Overall there was a mix of around 152 individuals and organisations who responded during the consultation period (of which approximately 26% responded via the online survey). This is a reasonable response within the 6 week timescale.
5. The feedback has confirmed that the majority of people responding either strongly agree or agree with each of the main priorities set out in the draft strategy, and the actions set out in the strategy action plan. There was also strong support (98%) for the City Council to take formal action to bring empty properties back into use. Generally, people either strongly agreed or agreed (91%) that the Council should work in partnership and collaboration with statutory, voluntary sector and public services to successfully prevent homelessness and tackle rough sleeping. This feedback is reflected in the amended strategy and action plan.
6. There were mixed views on the issue of Local Connection i.e. those who were homeless now, had been homeless or were currently living in supported hostel accommodation, felt that the City Council should not apply local connection criteria and should make the homeless pathways simpler. Other respondents indicated that local connection criterion was important for social housing, but in particular for people seeking intermediate housing (i.e. shared ownership/part rent part buy). The following pages show the feedback received in more detail.

## Housing and Homelessness Strategy 2018-21 Online Consultation responses summary

**Q1 Are you responding on behalf of an organisation?**

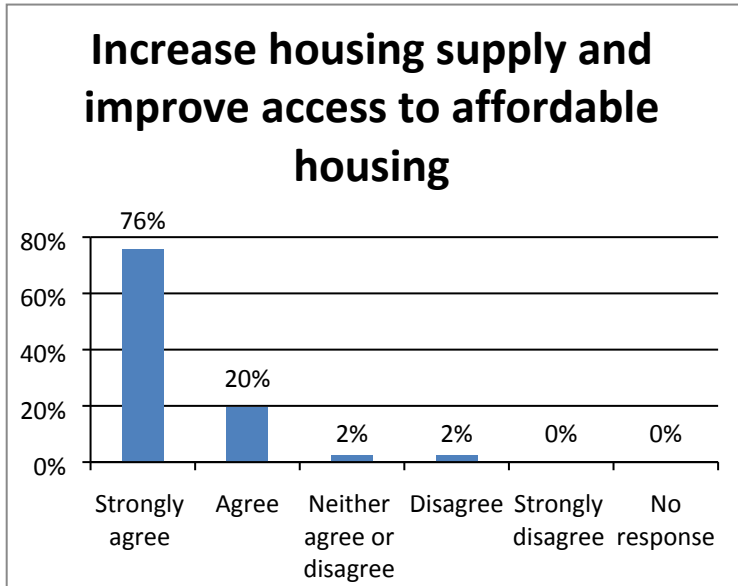


**Q3 To what extent do you agree or disagree that the strategy has been written in a format that is straightforward to follow and understand?**

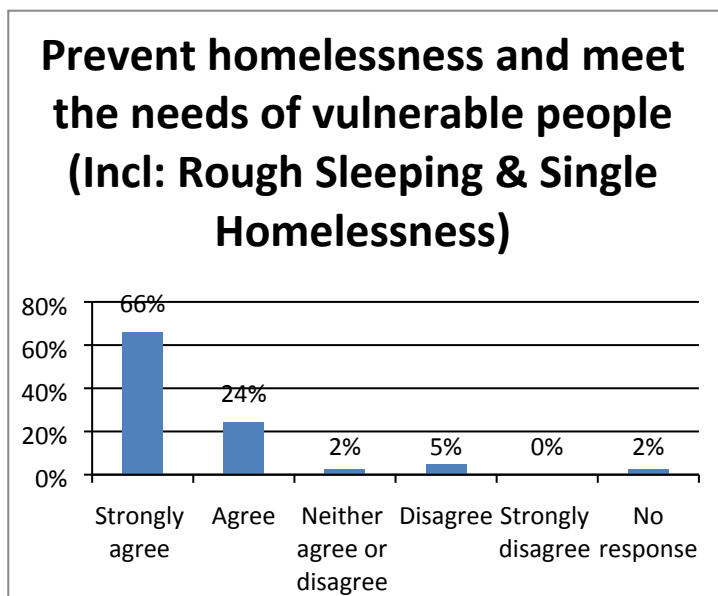


**Q5 To what extent do you agree or disagree with the Council's priorities in the Strategy?**

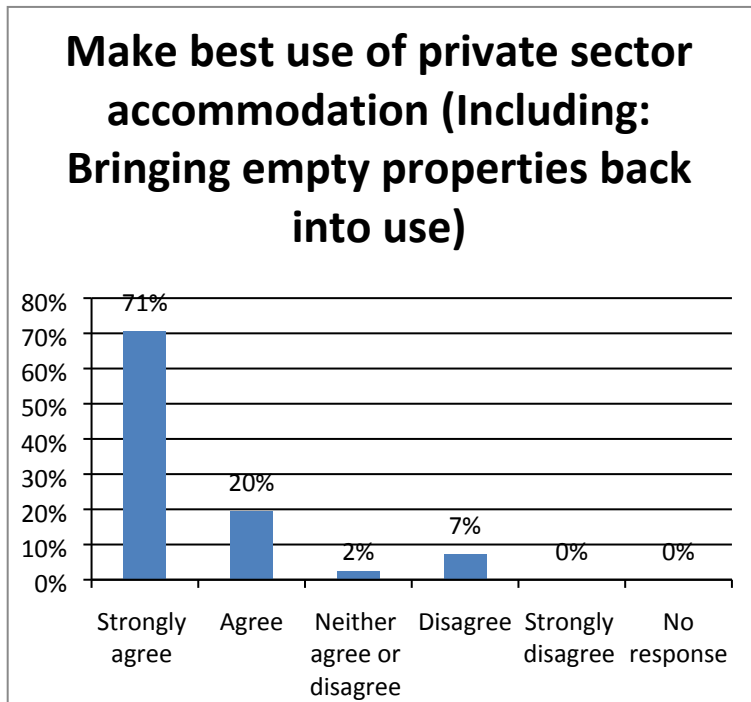
**Increase housing supply and improve access to affordable housing**



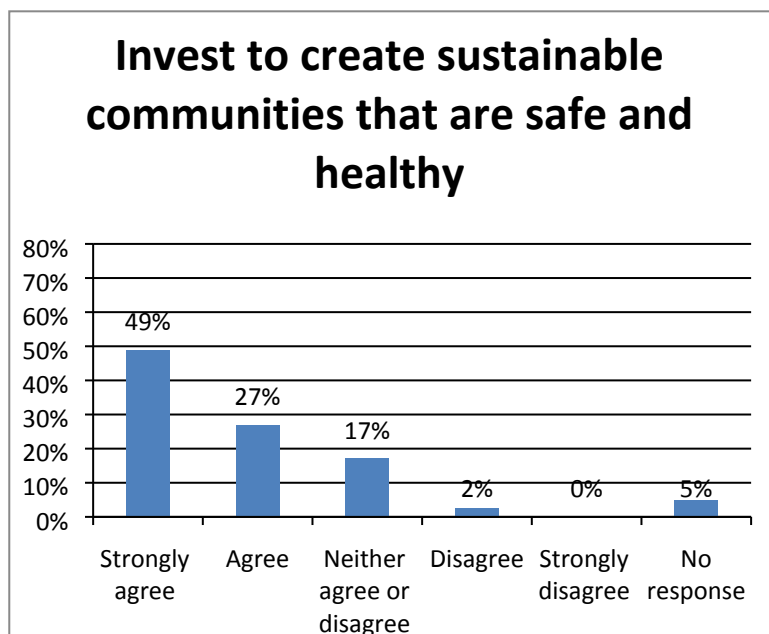
**Prevent homelessness and meet the needs of vulnerable people (Including: Rough Sleeping & Single Homelessness in the City)**



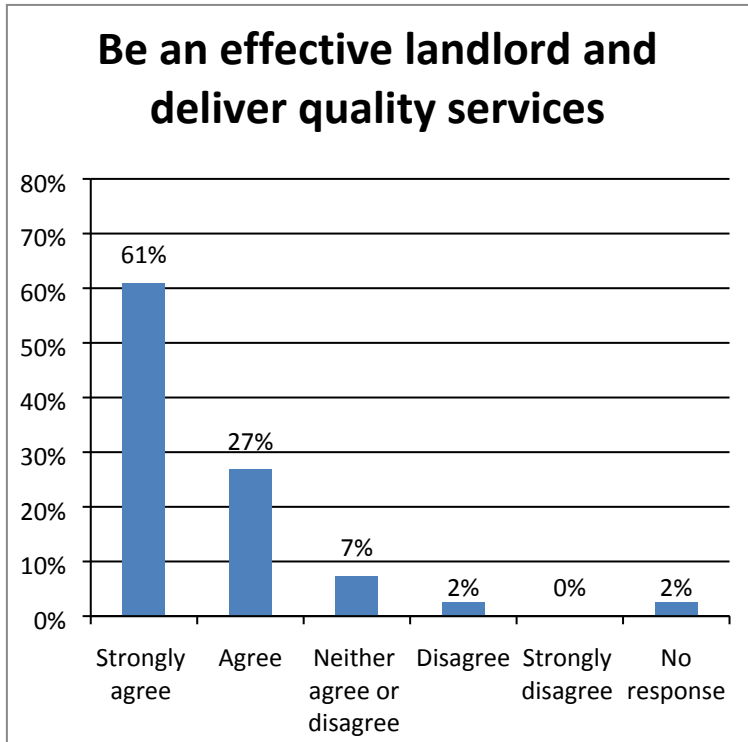
**Make best use of private sector accommodation (Including: Bringing empty properties back into use)**



**Invest to create sustainable communities that are safe and healthy**

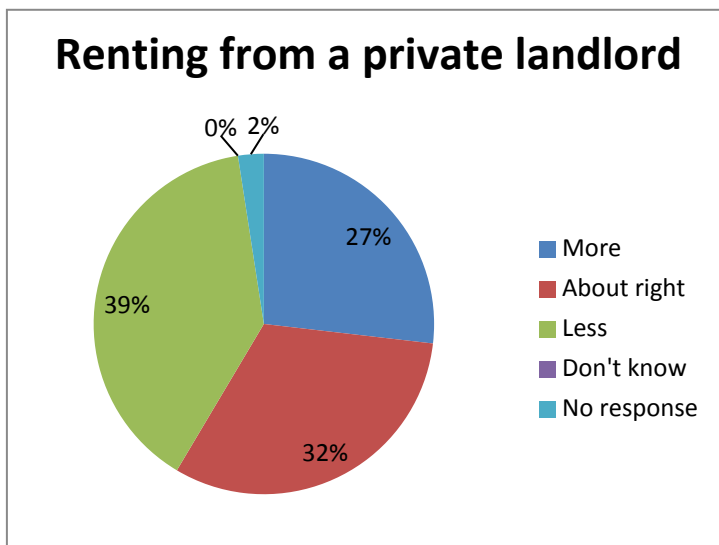


**Be an effective landlord and deliver quality services**

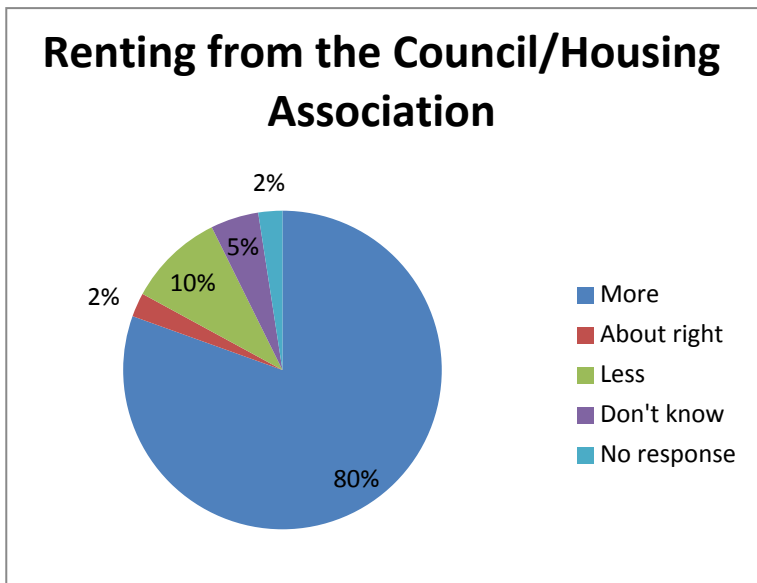


**Q7 Do you think there is a sufficient choice of tenure types (see list in the table below) available to meet the needs of the community of Oxford? Please indicate if you think there needs to be more of a particular tenure type, less of a particular tenure type or whether you think the current level is sufficient**

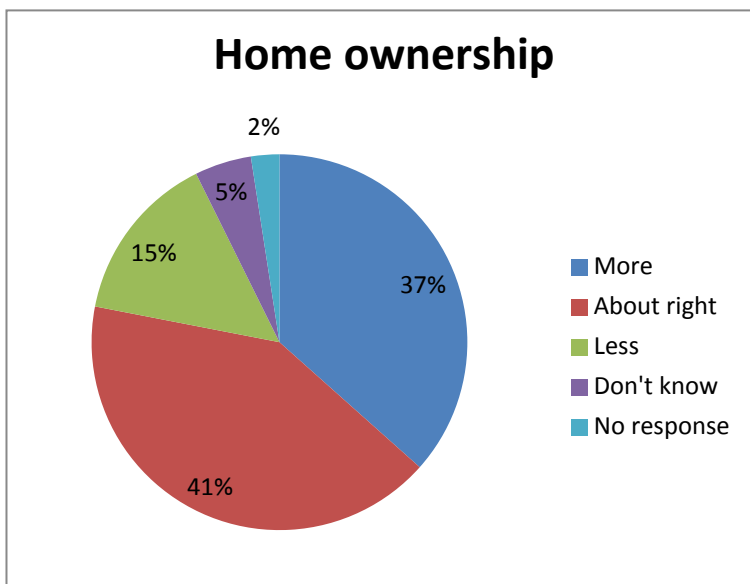
**Renting from a private landlord**



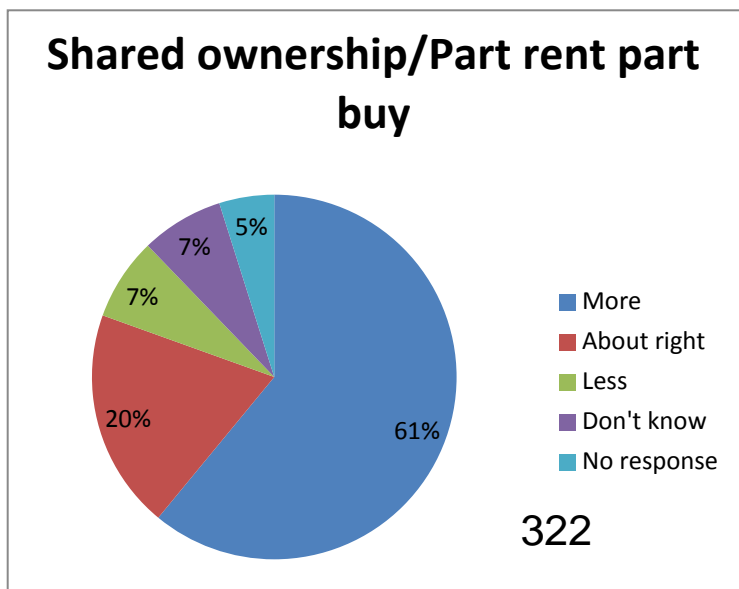
**Renting from the Council or a housing association**



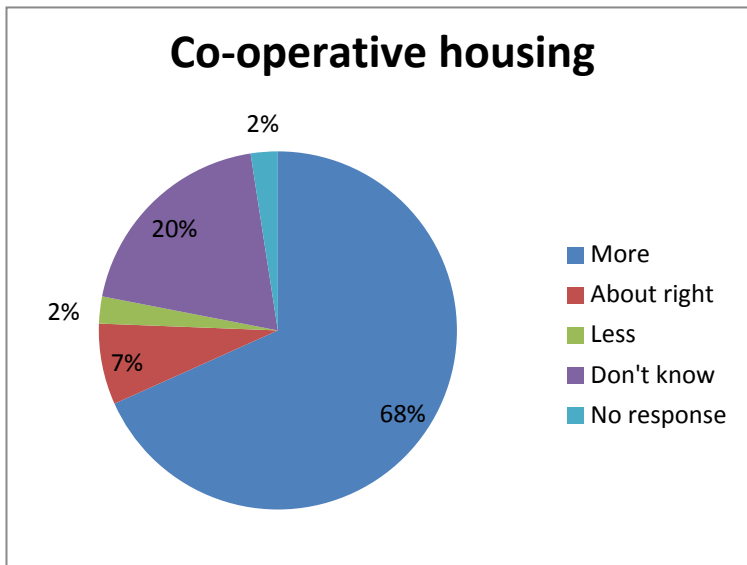
**Home ownership**



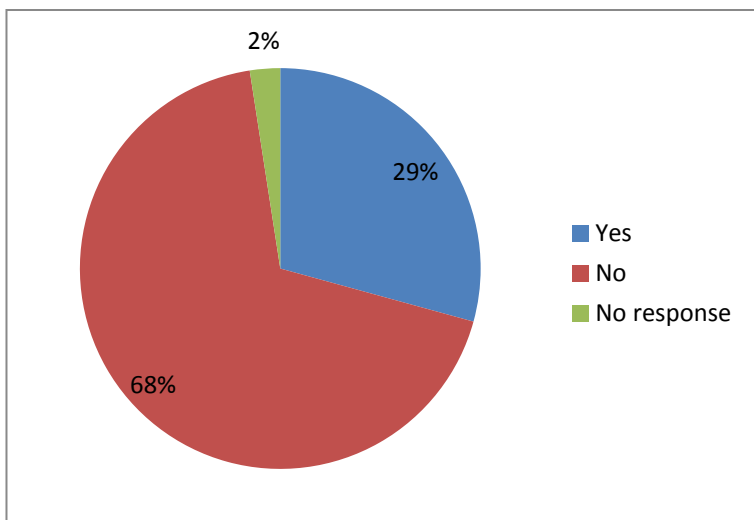
**Shared ownership/Part rent part buy**



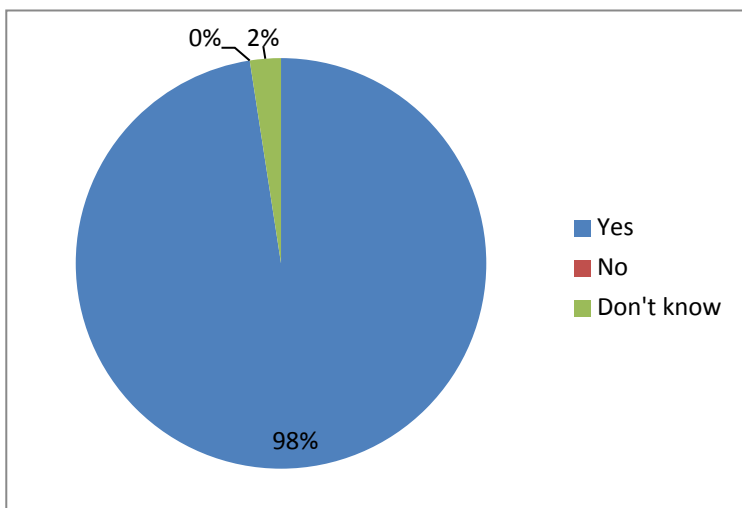
**Co-operative housing**



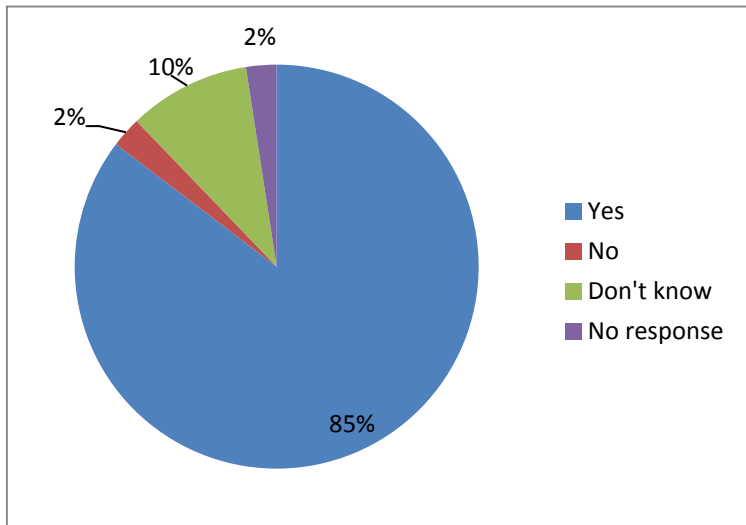
**Q8 Do you know of an empty dwelling in your area?**



**Q9 Do you think empty dwellings should be brought back into use?**

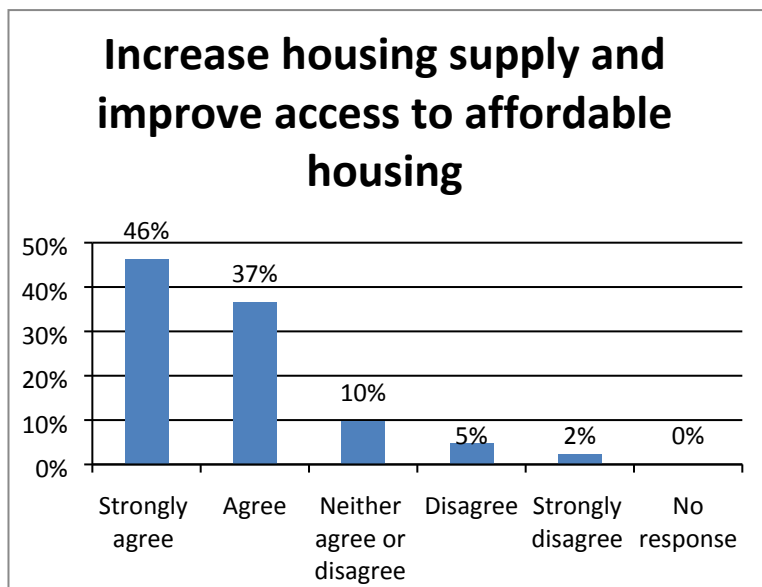


**Q10 If an owner is unwilling or unable to bring a dwelling back into use do you think the Council should take formal action to ensure it is occupied?**



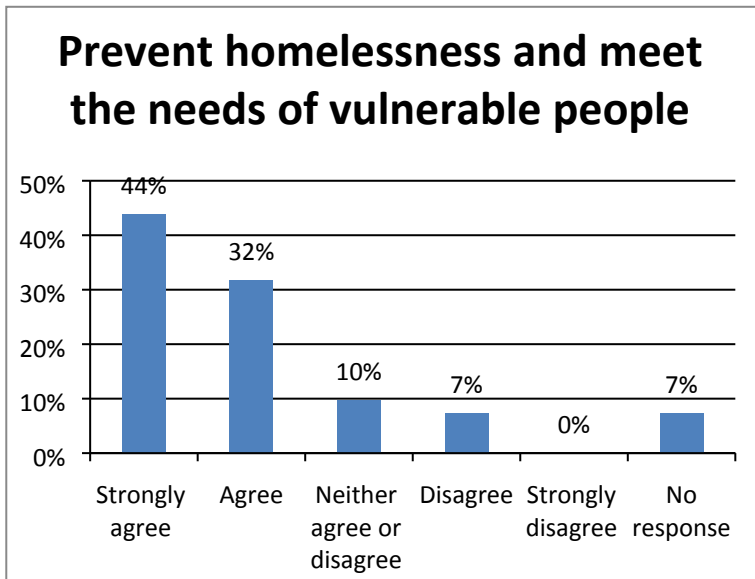
**Q11 In your opinion to what extent do you agree or disagree that the actions in the Action Plan (Appendix B) meet the priorities of the draft Housing & Homelessness Strategy 2018-21?**

**Increase housing supply and improve access to affordable housing (Chapter 4)**

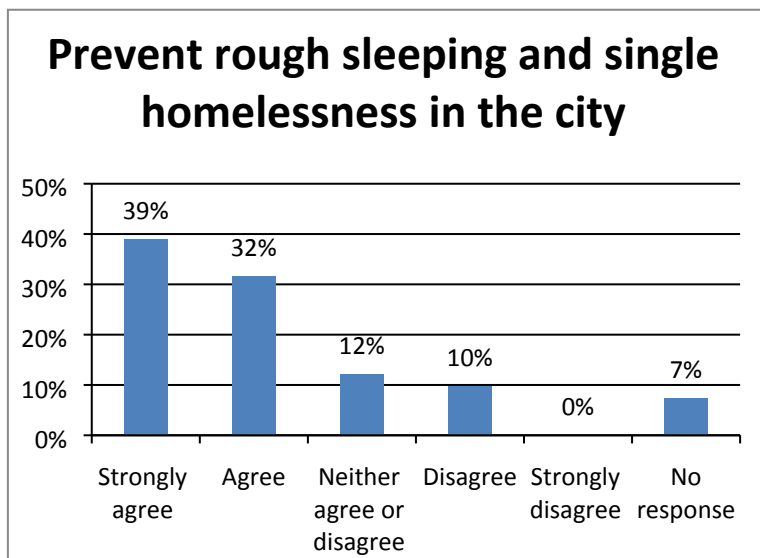




**Prevent homelessness and meet the needs of vulnerable people (Chapter 5)**



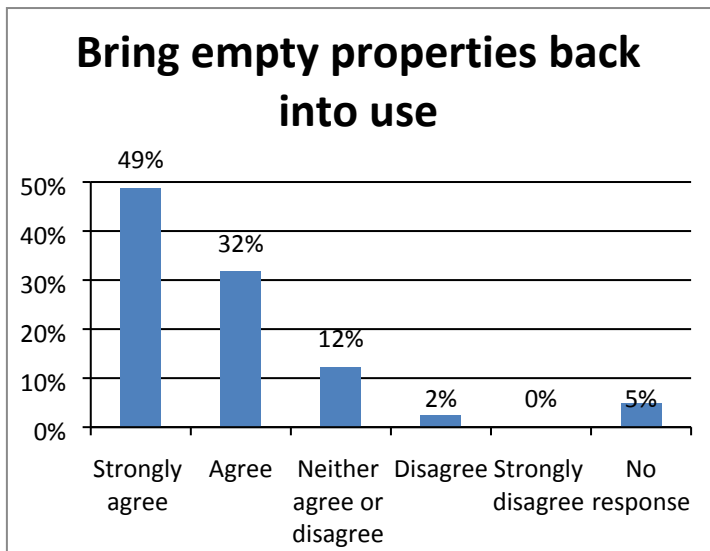
**Prevent rough sleeping and single homelessness in the city (Chapter 5)**



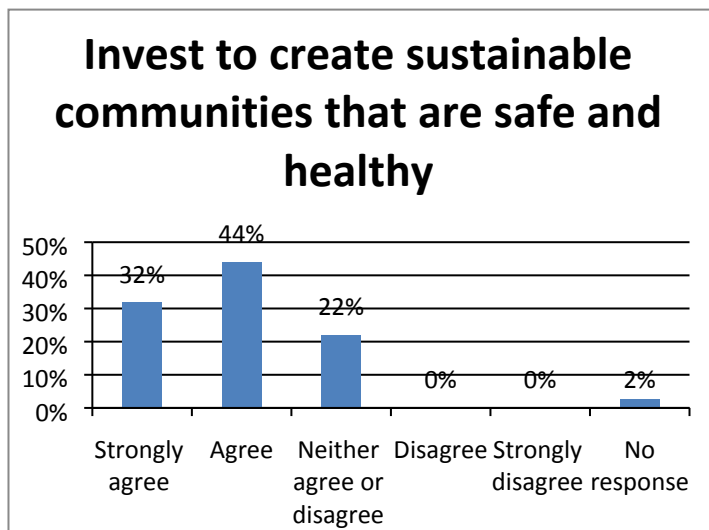
**Make best use of private sector accommodation (Chapter 6)**



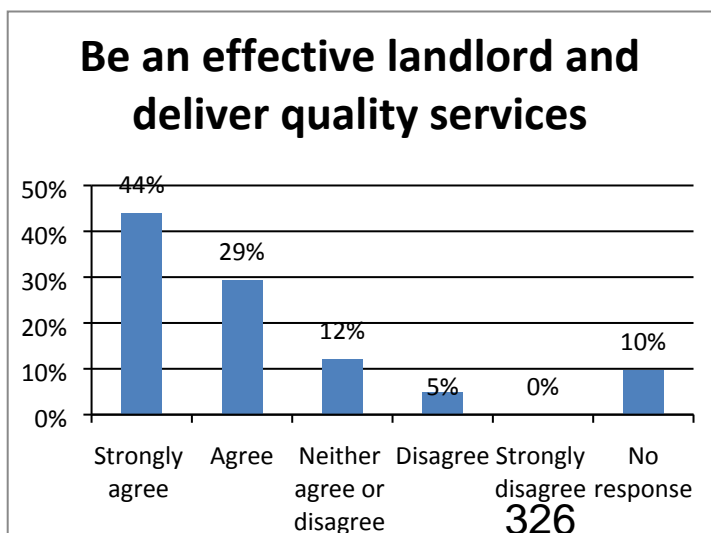
**Bring empty properties back into use (Chapter 6)**



**Invest to create sustainable communities that are safe and healthy (Chapter 7)**

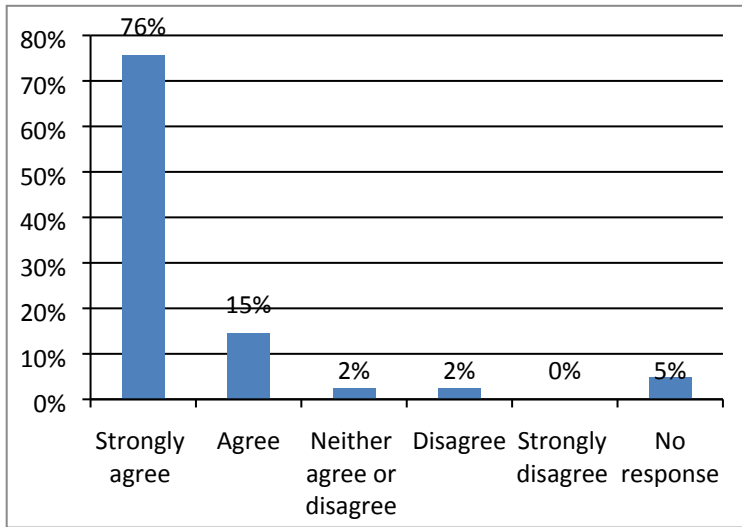


**Be an effective landlord and deliver quality services (Chapter 8)**



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**12c To what extent do you agree or disagree that it is important that the Council works in partnership and collaboration with statutory, voluntary sector and public services to successfully prevent homelessness and tackle rough sleeping.**



The next section of this document sets out the feedback received from attendees of the workshops, public drop-in sessions and the meetings attended by City Council Officers during the 6-week public consultation period for the draft Housing and Homelessness Strategy 2018-21.

The feedback has been recorded under each of the strategy priorities. Additional comments have also been recorded along with officer responses to the issues raised.

**Housing and Homelessness Strategy 2018-21**

**Priority: Increase housing supply and improve access to affordable housing**

Comment	Officer Response
Majority agreed in part	Noted
Are some of the 5 priorities more important than the others going by the sheer number of actions?	We need to work across all of the priorities to ensure all housing solutions are explored.
<b>Building more homes</b> causes more pressure on the infrastructure & more cars	Noted. More homes are needed to meet current and future housing needs and to facilitate growth for the city. Considerations as to the extra demands placed on infrastructure & parking from new housing developments are considered as part of the planning application process and in consultation with statutory consultees such as the County Council/ Highways Agency.

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## Housing and Homelessness Strategy 2018-21

### Priority: Increase housing supply and improve access to affordable housing

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Comment	Officer Response
<p>Majority responses supported more Council/Housing Association properties and accommodation to meet specialist needs (including mental health, and hostels for low needs and short stays). There was more positive support for houses (but less 3 storey houses) and flats, but mixed views about providing more bungalows. There was support for different construction methods (modular build, higher densities, well sound-proofed and better design). Shared Ownership tenure was not particular supported - depends upon the model.</p> <p><b>Hostel</b> - equal mixed response between less and more required.</p> <p><b>Supported/Independent Accom</b> - majority stated more required to include accommodation for rough sleepers. <b>Specialist Housing</b> - Majority state more required to manage complex needs - mental health, drugs and alcohol use.</p> <p><b>Other</b> - Housing Options for young professionals 35 and under (shared housing, high spec, rent the same idea as students). The view on provision of more <b>private rented accommodation</b> was mixed. The view was that there should be less shared houses and more housing for key workers.</p>	<p>Noted. Changes made to Chapter 4 (para 4.25) to make clear that there is commitment to provide specialist accommodation where there is evidence of need.</p>
<p>More Council and Housing Assoc. and homeownership properties required</p>	<p>Noted. Already covered in Chapter 4.</p>
<p>Ref - Private renting - mixed response as to whether more or less required, although would benefit affordable PRS</p>	<p>Noted.</p>
<p>More access to part rent/part buy schemes with requirement to move on after 90% purchase is reached.</p>	<p>Noted however, it is not to specify a requirement to move on after 90% purchase is reached.</p>
<p>Ref - Homeownership - Mixed opinion, has been stated that more 1 and 2 bed starter homes needed</p>	<p>Noted. Addressed in paras 4.26 - 4.30</p>

## Housing and Homelessness Strategy 2018-21

### Priority: Increase housing supply and improve access to affordable housing

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Comment	Officer Response
Ref-Shared Ownership/Part rent/Part buy - Majority stated more required but to be under a different model for Oxford to make it more affordable with better regulated control. Also, affordable home ownership for people with a local connection.	Noted. Changes to para 4.30. To ensure the units can be sold and occupied, it will be important to include a local connection 'cascade' or 'concentric ring' approach e.g. Oxford City Local Connection as a priority but if not sold within a specific timescale then a wider local connection to Oxfordshire Districts etc. Eligibility criteria will apply.
Ref - Other - More - discounted sales, flats above shops, temporary homes (modular homes, static homes), student housing, extra care housing for older adults, POD style low cost temporary accommodation for single people, host housing, conversion of empty public houses, use of commercial buildings to provide more accommodation. Less - student accommodation, provide student accommodation outside Oxford with access to public transport.	Noted. No change. Paras 5.68-5.69 identify how the City Council will work collaboratively with partners (and service users) to co-design responses to rough sleeping. See also Ref 20 in the strategy Action
More Co-operative living accommodation	Noted. A needs assessment will be undertaken as part of the Community-led Housing research project.
Increase the supply of more affordable pet friendly accommodation.	Provision of pet-friendly accommodation will depend upon the housing management policy of the developing organisation e.g. Council, Housing Association, community-led housing organisation etc.
Developers seem to be taking over build opportunities rather than the council	No change. The Council has set up a Housing Company - see para 4.38
Concern for space standards	No change. Planning Policy currently prescribes minimum space standards for development in Oxford City.

## Housing and Homelessness Strategy 2018-21

### Priority: Increase housing supply and improve access to affordable housing

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Comment	Officer Response
Accommodation needs to be dispersed, integrated into the community, education required to assist.	No change. This forms part of the regeneration projects and also density of affordable housing on sites is addressed through planning policy/development control.
New forms of support i.e. Bus conversions, PODS, Prefab, adaptable spaces and warehouses.	No change. Paras 5.68-5.69 identify how the City Council will work collaboratively with partners (and service users) to co-design responses to rough sleeping. See also Ref 20 in the strategy Action Plan - a measure of success is that 'new approaches/ projects are in place that are co-designed and delivered". This could include new initiatives but ones that are designed and delivered with the support of partners.
Developers should be clearly told that the Council's policy for the percentage of 'affordable' units to be built in a scheme is mandatory and they need to allow for that when buying the land. This would stop the developers claiming schemes are not 'viable' at the planning application stage. Oxford City Council should join with other councils that have similar problems with maintaining their quota of affordable units in private developments (Local Government Association etc.) to lobby central government to end the viability get-out.	Noted. No change to the strategy. The Council's Planning policy requirements are published on the City Council's website. Viability Assessments are considered as part of a planning application. The Local Plan review preferred options consultation process provided an opportunity for suggestions on Local Plan Policy changes.
We ask the Council to ensure that this strategy reads across the Council's Local plan and encourage the Council to consider a more flexible approach on some windfall sites and particularly on opportunities for flats over shops with the new Westgate development where there may be some new opportunities to bring forward new supported housing or key worker housing.	Chapter 4 of the Housing and Homelessness Strategy, identifies strategic and operational links to planning. See paras 4.20 - 4.25

## Housing and Homelessness Strategy 2018-21

### Priority: Increase housing supply and improve access to affordable housing

Comment	Officer Response
<p>Consider Oxford colleges combining with HAs and setting up shared ownership quality homes. These could be: a) age related, b) health related, c) mentally supported units and other similar housing for specified people. These properties would be important to Oxford City Council + colleges</p>	<p>See the start of chapter 4. Also paragraphs 4.42 &amp; 4.43. As we are working to meet the needs of workforce, there are also opportunities to secure general needs affordable housing (including affordable intermediate and specialist housing) as part of any planning obligations. Specialist accommodation needs are highlighted in paras 4.20, 4.25. Change made to Ref 6 in Action Plan.</p>
<p>The Council needs to be much more robust in delivering good quality socially rented property. It must work with others to get policy changes to allow it to borrow to build and to challenge regressive housing legislation. It needs to find land in the City that is not being productively used and avail itself of its powers to buy at existing use value.</p>	<p>Noted. No change to the strategy. The focus of the strategy is to prevent homelessness and increase delivery of housing in various forms to meet needs. The strategy recognises the impact of legislative requirements, new powers (i.e. through Housing &amp; Planning Act - CPO) and recent housing policy changes, but also highlights the opportunities to work in partnership, work across boundaries to attract investment and improve delivery of more housing and economic growth (Growth Board, City Deal etc.) These issues and the City Council's approach are explained further in Chapter 4, in the Action Plan and in Appendix C of the strategy.</p>
<p>There is merit in widening the choices for people struggling to buy a home. The Council should support shared ownership held by an RSL or locally approved community-led housing organization, especially where there is no right to staircase to full ownership. Similarly starter homes could be pegged at a maximum of 80% of open market value in perpetuity (or preferably a lower percentage if a local definition of affordability is agreed) with subsequent sales to be approved by the council, RSL or community-led housing organization. There could be a requirement to sell to a person with a local connection to Oxford.</p>	<p>Intermediate housing is secured as part of the developer's affordable housing contribution on suitable development sites. Some intermediate affordable models are not affordable in Oxford due to local incomes and high house prices. However, modelling and affordability of housing going forward, is being explored as part of the review of Affordable Housing Policies within the Local Plan review process.</p>

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## Housing and Homelessness Strategy 2018-21

### Priority: Increase housing supply and improve access to affordable housing

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Comment	Officer Response
OCC could buy back leasehold flats in OCC blocks where landlords have bought to rent and are not themselves occupying.	No change to the strategy. This is being considered as part of regeneration schemes - a criterion applies and any arrangements are subject to available resources.
Unless the Council is prepared to use radical ideas in its new Housing/Homeless Strategy, the City's housing crisis will only worsen.	Paras 4.26 to 4.30 of the strategy consider tenure and affordability. Social rented accommodation is the most affordable accommodation to rent. However there are other forms of affordable tenure and an indication of affordability has been provided in the strategy e.g. one third of their gross median household income. Within the strategy, the Council has committed to undertake further affordability testing as part of the policy developments within the Local Plan 2036.
Define 'affordable' for each subtype of property (e.g. an 80 sq.m. 2 bedroom, 1 bathroom flat), or for each council tax band, if that is the preferred method. Or, if linking prices to income, the express affordability in terms of local Gross Disposable Housing Income (GDHI). In Oxford this was approx. £28k in 2015. Council tax bands may be useful to capture some variation, i.e. 'very affordable', 'affordable', 'market value' but will be a blunter tool for defining affordability.	As above
Colleges and Universities should take more responsibility to build homes to meet needs and contribute more. Persuade OU, NHS, Network Rail, TVP, etc. to use some of their land for key worker housing. Housing Association involvement in purchasing land. In view of the University's clear problems in maintaining its estate or even using some parts of it, press the University to release some of its sites for housing	Noted. No change to the strategy. See paras 4.42 & 4.43.

## Housing and Homelessness Strategy 2018-21

### Priority: Increase housing supply and improve access to affordable housing

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Comment	Officer Response
<p>Too many units of student accommodation being built instead of general needs accommodation. This has an effect on the community where students live in Houses in Multiple Occupation - especially where the students don't look after the gardens or ensure that rubbish is cleared or put into bins.</p>	<p>No change to the strategy. The number of student accommodation units is monitored through planning and development control. Any environmental issues linked with a HMO or other property can be reported to the Environmental Development Team or waste disposal/recycling team for investigation and resolution where possible.</p>
<p>Work closer with Oxford University and Colleges with regards to improving the condition of their properties and keeping rent levels affordable. Increasing rents v impact of welfare reform, plus the damp conditions of some of their properties can have a detrimental effect on health of the tenant and an increased potential for homelessness due to rent arrears etc.).</p>	<p>See para 5.68 and 5.69 - part of the collaborative working includes working with Universities and Colleges (and other partners) to look at early intervention and homelessness prevention - this issue could be picked up as part of the 'City Conversation'. In the interim, Housing and Environmental Development Officers (Tenant Liaison Officer) can provide advice and assistance to prevent homelessness and improve property conditions.</p>
<p>Growth and expansion of Oxford University - should be treated like a business by OCC which should challenge assumptions. Student accommodation is a problem.</p>	<p>Noted. No change. See above comments &amp; responses.</p>
<p><b>Community-led</b> housing (CLH) needs to be supported in Oxford but it can be difficult to secure appropriate sites where there is competition for them. There should be some support to help secure the sites.</p>	<p>The CLH research project will be completed by December 2018 and the outputs from this will inform future decision making, including any additional actions that the Council may need to take in order to support delivery of CLH to meet identified needs for this type of housing.</p>
<p>Pleased to see the emphasis on working in partnership with others. Community-Led Housing has a significant role to increase supply of affordable housing with its ability to use Community Land Trusts to maintain affordability in perpetuity.</p>	<p>Noted. No change.</p>

## Housing and Homelessness Strategy 2018-21

### Priority: Increase housing supply and improve access to affordable housing

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Comment	Officer Response
<p>Action Point 7 in the Action Plan recognises the importance of the Community-led Housing (CLH) research project in the city that is being funded through the Community-Led Housing Fund. We would like to see further action points to support efforts to deliver CLH.</p>	<p>The CLH research project will be completed by December 2018 and the evidence and outputs from this will inform future decision making, including any additional actions that are to be included as part of the strategy Action Plan review (mid-point of the strategy term).</p>
<p>We would like to see the City follow the example of East Cambridgeshire (ECDC), which has done the following to tackle the barriers faced by CLH groups: Start-up costs; Pre-development costs; Lack of specialist knowledge; Planning barriers; Suitable development partner.</p>	<p>The CLH research project (ref paras 4.44-4.45) will be completed by December 2018 and the outputs from this will inform what models could work and what support is required to facilitate CLH in Oxford City.</p>
<p>See how ECDC have sought to address the barriers: £5,000 start-up grant funding; £40,000 revolving loan fund, repayable, with success fee, on completion; Specialist organisation, CLT East, established to support groups; SPD adopted and Community-led Development Policy written into Local Plan; Palace Green Homes set up as potential development partner.</p>	<p>No change to the strategy. The research project referred to in para 4.45 of the strategy, will test models of community-led housing and what will work in Oxford. Any development will need to be planning policy compliant therefore representations on this issue should be made via the Local Plan Review consultation process.</p>
<p>In a bullet point at the start of chapter 4, the draft policy commits to "Continue to facilitate the development of more housing and affordable housing through the Local Plan and partnership working (e.g. with Universities, Public bodies, land owners etc.)". Community-Led Housing to be included here.</p>	<p>Change made to the bullet point.</p>

## Housing and Homelessness Strategy 2018-21

### Priority: Increase housing supply and improve access to affordable housing

Comment	Officer Response
<p>The proposed policy in the new Local Plan offers flexibility to the University and other employers to develop staff accommodation that has a high proportion of intermediate housing. If this policy is confirmed, we would like at least this level of flexibility for community-led housing. It is suggested that "Locally approved non-registered providers such as Community Land Trusts (CLT) and other community-led housing organisations that meet agreed criteria" should be included in this policy.</p>	<p>Not considered to be within the scope of this strategy. Representations should be made via the Local Plan Review consultation process. The Council already provides pre-planning advice services and also open book discussions.</p>
<p>It is significant that Cohousing can free existing family homes onto the market, as it is proving particularly attractive to older people, most of whom are down-sizing. Note that cohousing community will be the households who will live on the site, but before they move in they will be scattered. It is a problem if "Community-led housing development" is defined narrowly as being controlled by residents of a specific existing neighbourhood.</p>	<p>Noted. No change. The CLH project is referred to in para 4.44 &amp; 4.45. Outcomes will inform future decisions.</p>
<p>Provide more emergency accommodation such as hostels.</p>	<p>Provision of emergency accommodation is covered in detail in Chapter 5 of the strategy. No change.</p>
<p>Make best use of sites available by building to higher densities where possible.</p>	<p>No change. Density of developments will be addressed through the Local Plan review. Housing Officers are working with planning officers and contributing to the development of Local Plan policy developments.</p>

## Housing and Homelessness Strategy 2018-21

### Priority: Increase housing supply and improve access to affordable housing

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Comment	Officer Response
<p><b>Essential staff</b> - Qualifying for new build schemes like Barton - priorities should be given to essential employees like nurses, teachers, police etc.?</p>	<p>No change. See paras 4.42 &amp; 4.43. Affordable Housing should also meet the needs of those households on the Council's Housing Register.</p>
<p><b>Partnership working</b> - What is Oxford doing to ensure its partnership with other districts works? Engage help of local MP's to deliver 'co-operation of other councils' through changes in legislation which REQUIRE co-operation.</p>	<p>No change. 'Duty to co-operate' is part of planning legislation. Work with the Growth Board has also highlighted successful partnership agreements. Trailblazer is a countywide project with support of other districts. Any mandatory requirement to co-operate would need to be prescribed in legislation.</p>
<p><b>Involve</b> older people who are in large homes (social housing) to become part of the "social responsibility discussion".</p>	<p>No change. Age UK run a scheme to rent rooms etc. Evaluation of the scheme is awaited. Discussions are held and incentives are currently offered to Council and Registered Provider tenants to promote downsizing to smaller homes where possible and appropriate.</p>
<p>More provision for people on lower, or even average and above stage incomes. The solution has to include greater flexibility around policies like percentages of "intermediate" housing, density, balance of dwellings, innovative types of design and ownership.</p>	<p>Noted. No change. See comments already made.</p>
<p>Greater use for housing should be made of land within the city currently safeguarded for employment</p>	<p>Noted. No change to the strategy. Planning policy requirement to protect/ safeguard some land for employment purposes, particularly to support economic growth within the city.</p>
<p>The strategy should acknowledge the Government's recently-issued revised methodology for calculating housing numbers.</p>	<p>Noted. Change to para 3.9 &amp; Appendix C</p>

## Housing and Homelessness Strategy 2018-21

### Priority: Increase housing supply and improve access to affordable housing

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Comment	Officer Response
The NPPF makes clear that Green Belt is permanent. The strategy should restate that position and any exceptional case for allocating greenbelt should be supported by communities. The strategy should contain a commitment to proceeding only on that basis.	No change. Greenbelt matters are an issue for the Local Plan review and not within the scope of this strategy.
New supply to be accessible to homeless people.	Already included in the strategy - see para 5.28
More development of shared housing using social stock, in order to meet a need for affordable housing where the PRS cannot match the demand (for both under 35s and overs who are interested in sharing).	See para 3.21-3.25. See Ref 6 in the strategy Action Plan.
OCC and partners should encourage the universities to recognise their responsibility in creating opportunities to ameliorate the housing market for low income households.	Already covered. See also Ref 9 in the strategy action plan.
OCC should explore contributions that the universities can make through their corporate social responsibility functions.	Already covered. See ref 20 in the strategy action plan.
Explore the benefits of community led housing specifically for older groups alongside the Older Persons Housing Review	See Ref 7 in the strategy action plan. The need for CLH, plus the suitable and feasible models of CLH that can be delivered in Oxford will be explored as part of this project.
Would recommend including something specific in the strategy around tenancy training as a prevention activity e.g. Renting Ready training	No change. See para 6.14. Tenant Ready schemes are already offered and housing applicants can be referred to available courses as part of homelessness prevention. Partnership working to prevent homelessness is also part of the Gold Standard Challenge 2.
Would like to see more homes available for social rent, home ownership, shared ownership and co-operative housing but less private rented accommodation.	Noted.

## Housing and Homelessness Strategy 2018-21

### Priority: Prevent Homelessness and meet the needs of vulnerable people.

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Comment	Officer Response
Mixed response but majority of consultation responders agreed with this as a priority.	Noted.
The strategy needs to make clear the links with the Care Act and other legislation relating to children & families	Change made to para 4.25
Ref 14 - Please revise the timescales, we are in October and the work has not started yet.	Ref 14 in Action Plan amended
More flexible appeal system.	No change to the strategy. Decisions are made in accordance with legislation and agreed protocols/criteria. The respondent has not made clear what is not clear or specifically needs to change or is inflexible.
Actions/activities need to be presented in a logical timeline order, very difficult to understand current format.	No change made. The activities are set out under each of the strategy priorities. Timelines for each activity are provided as a guide and to assist in measuring performance/ delivery of objectives.
Ref 18 - Mentions care leavers though accommodation and support is needed for ALL young people particularly those with mental health and LD issues. There is a lack of provision here.	Change to Ref 18 in the strategy Action Plan
Homelessness points 18 and 20 - ADD "informal organisations" to stakeholders.	No change required as 'voluntary and community sector organisations' already included.
<b>Glossary</b> - Reduce jargon - "alternative giving", "TA" etc. Include a definition of 'Vulnerable'. This is especially important where the meaning of 'vulnerable' differs from legislation. The term "vulnerable and priority" - women v men?	Glossary added.

## Housing and Homelessness Strategy 2018-21

### Priority: Prevent Homelessness and meet the needs of vulnerable people.

Comment	Officer Response
<p><b>Local connection</b> - The Council should give priority to people with a local connection when allocating housing and not provide homes for others who have no local connection.</p>	<p>No change to the strategy. The City Council's Allocations Policy sets out how it applies Local Connection criteria when allocating social housing units.</p>
<p>Clearer definition of local connection so that people understand their eligibility/review peoples local connection who are or have been in the pathway (where they legally have no local connection to any LA area).</p>	<p>See changes to Ref 17 in the strategy Action Plan.</p>
<p>The strategy needs to specify how people with no local connection can become eligible for Oxfordshire services, and how they can then access accommodation and the homelessness pathway. Without a clear strategy defining who can access support, it is likely that few in this group will see much improvement in their current drifting life style.</p>	<p>Eligibility to access homelessness services and access Homeless Pathways is already set out in the various legislation and pathway protocols. It is not for this strategy to set this out again. However, see changes to Ref 17 in the strategy Action Plan.</p>
<p><b>Support</b> - More support required to ensure the homeless feel wanted.</p>	<p>This could be explored as part of partnership working.</p>
<p>Mental Health problems - prioritise suitable support and accommodation</p>	<p>Support needs are assessed at the point of contact and referrals made to the relevant support service or supported housing scheme. Work is ongoing to improve links with Mental Health and building a countywide Champions Network falls within the Trailblazer initiative.</p>
<p>Work with the homeless rather than against them.</p>	<p>Noted. The strategy emphasises a focus on working with/including people who have lived experience of rough sleeping or homelessness pathways in developing homelessness prevention services and solutions.</p>



## Housing and Homelessness Strategy 2018-21

### Priority: Prevent Homelessness and meet the needs of vulnerable people.

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Comment	Officer Response
Help vulnerable individuals that come out of prison. Provide ongoing support to become a part of the community and not leave them homeless with no help.	The Trailblazer initiative and Champions Network aims to improve joint work and protocols with partners in relation to discharges from prison. See para 3.42 of the strategy.
Day service (24hrs) for homeless to get support/advice - i.e. a hub or central 'one stop shop' for all support/advice services.	Could be considered as part of recommissioning of homelessness and rough sleeping services.
City Council to back / support local charities more and reinvest in support	The City Council already awards grant funding to local organisations (charities, voluntary and community sector) to ensure holistic support and training opportunities are provided to those in need of these services. No change to the strategy.
Isolated areas - transport infrastructure to incentivise moving out of Oxford, and/or subsidise travel for those on low income.	Public transport subsidies are not within the City Council's remit and not within the scope of the Housing & Homelessness Strategy. Infrastructure funding is part of the wider growth agenda highlighted within the strategy - see Chapter 4 and Appendix C
Spread awareness about the Homeless Outreach service/phone #, so that students and residents will assure that rough sleepers are reaching out as soon as possible	Noted. The Outreach details are on the City Council's website and have already been promoted to various groups (including students). No change to the strategy. This can be picked up in the City Conversation.
Provision of safe storage facilities ( cages in warehouse or similar) for homeless people to leave possessions instead of blighting the city centre	Noted. This would require additional resources from a range of agencies. However, could be considered as part of commissioning arrangements in the future. To be agreed.

## Housing and Homelessness Strategy 2018-21

### Priority: Prevent Homelessness and meet the needs of vulnerable people.

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Comment	Officer Response
If we did not have so many facilities many would return to their own communities.	Opinion noted. No change to the strategy.
<b>Alternative Giving Scheme</b> - Suggestion made for local employers to promote/offer a salary deduction scheme to employees so that employee donations would help local charities' work in reducing homelessness / Rough Sleeping in the City.	No change to the strategy. To be considered as part of Ref 23 in the strategy Action Plan.
Survivors of homelessness to be more involved in engaging with current rough sleepers.	This is something that could be considered within the Trailblazer initiative as part of asset based solutions and capacity/resilience building.
Engage supermarkets in providing surplus fresh produce/food to the homeless	Foodbanks have been set up across Oxford.
Provide a registered area for pitching a tent within the city.	This is likely to require planning approval for a formal site and additional resources to run and manage it. Not within the strategy currently.
Establish "Samaritans" type hotline for people fearing imminent/becoming "rough sleepers"	No change to the strategy. The City Council provides an Out of Hours Service for people who are imminently homeless or threatened with homelessness. The Outreach Team also provides services.
One stop shop for private renters - links to highlighting those who don't know how to access PRS and it's an early flag to OCC for an imminent referral.	The City Council has a Private Rented Sector Housing Team who are able to advise on all of the available options to access the private rented sector - this is discussed in Chapter 6 of the strategy.

## Housing and Homelessness Strategy 2018-21

### Priority: Prevent Homelessness and meet the needs of vulnerable people.

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Comment	Officer Response
Put more pressure on the colleges to engage in this problem. They recently got the students to agree to donate a £1 from each ball ticket to the homeless in Oxford but what are the actual colleges donating? There should be more transparency and more pressure placed on them to lead in this issue.	This is addressed within the strategy - see para 5.68. Also, ref 20 in Action Plan.
Prevention/Reduction - Earlier action and prevention required from the council Identify people who may be at risk of becoming homeless earlier	Noted. This is part of the Trailblazer initiative.
Increase accessibility pathway for people with complex needs and look at them holistically	Noted. This could form part of the recommissioning of services.
More could be done to inform people of their rights and availability of services.	The City Council (as part of the priority 'Be an effective landlord and deliver quality services.') has committed to improving information on its website and communicating effectively. See Chapter 8.
Raising awareness from agencies at an early stage - re housing, any needed? Any intervention required? The council needs to lead an honest conversation with the local community - Who are our homeless people? Why are they homeless? How could we help?	Part of the Trailblazer initiative and part of the City Conversation already mentioned in the strategy - see Ref 20 in the Action Plan.
Not having to sleep on the streets as evidence for 3 to 4 nights just to get a bed to stay and hot food.	Noted. This will be monitored as part of the commissioning of Outreach services.
Make it easier to enter services (not such harsh criteria) - help, not hassle, homeless people.	The homeless pathway criteria and protocol is agreed with partner agencies involved in delivery. Support is already available and provided for homeless people.
Accessing the service is too confusing and complex. Preferable to have initial individual assessment to then be directed to appropriate service and to be more user friendly.	Part of the assessment hub suggestion made by another respondent to the survey. Partnership working and commissioning of services going forward may provide opportunities to consider any necessary changes in approach.

## Housing and Homelessness Strategy 2018-21

### Priority: Prevent Homelessness and meet the needs of vulnerable people.

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Comment	Officer Response
Connect every homeless organisation group as one - all have different ways of dealing with people, should connect to understand individual needs and direct them on to the right pathway linking with services as and when. It takes too long to find settled accommodation, it can be confusing, and there is conflicting support/advice given, therefore easier for everyone and more efficient as one organisation.	Part of the assessment hub suggestion made by another respondent to the survey. The City Conversation and Trailblazer initiatives (Champions Network) may assist in providing consistency in approach and advice across different partner agencies.
Clear information to be given as to the process of going through hostels to getting somewhere to live, it's confusing, too complicated, cannot succeed when referred, all stepping on each other's toes not knowing who is who including non-commissioned providers i.e. library advice agencies, housing assoc's etc.	Part of the assessment hub suggestion. The City Conversation and Trailblazer initiatives will assist in exploring this further.
Focus on vulnerable groups - disabilities and learning difficulties.	Covered in the strategy already
Less top down approach, social and psychological needs better led by individuals bottom up. The needs are so different for each individual.	The strategy focuses on including people with lived experience of homelessness and/or rough sleeping when co-designing homelessness prevention services. This would initially be part of the City Conversation. Ref 20 in Action Plan
Family intervention to support transitioning from family homes for young people with complex needs.	See para 3.21 onwards.
Early diagnosis and intervention with "at risk" families generational homelessness.	See para 3.31 onwards.

## Housing and Homelessness Strategy 2018-21

### Priority: Prevent Homelessness and meet the needs of vulnerable people.

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Comment	Officer Response
<p>Understand individual needs better and their personal stories - "Humanitarian Offer" 3 months support with a one team approach. Develop the offer as a single coherent offer with additional possibilities of linking to work/training and/or reconnection.</p>	<p>Reasons for homelessness and the journey can be explored further as part of the Trailblazer initiative (identifying upstream prevention and as part of asset based solutions and capacity/resilience building). See also chapter 5 of the strategy. The City Council already supports City schemes to enhance opportunities to access training, education and employment.</p>
<p>Take a strategic approach to dealing with non-engagement with support services.</p>	<p>See chapter 5 of the strategy to explain the work that the City Council does with partner organisations and individuals to engage with services and reduce street homelessness.</p>
<p>Direct rent payments to prevent rent arrears.</p>	<p>The opportunity is already in place to pay direct to landlords, especially where there is a vulnerability.</p>
<p>Pre-eviction protocols</p>	<p>Pre-eviction protocols are already in place but enhancement of understanding between professionals and individual service users will form part of the Trailblazer initiative (Champions Network).</p>
<p>We feel that although there is a target for preventing homelessness and meeting the needs of vulnerable people, it is actually two targets and they need to be separated out. Ideally there should be an overall target within the housing supply target of providing 10% of new supply for supported housing so that other vulnerable groups such as those with learning disabilities also get access to supported accommodation and that supported accommodation is appropriately planned for with the lack of sites within Oxford and the increasing complex needs of the population.</p>	<p>Noted in relation to the separation of priorities however no change has been made as the majority of consultation responses on the strategy supported the priorities as they are written. The supply of new affordable housing (including specialist need accommodation) is addressed in Chapter 4.</p>

## Housing and Homelessness Strategy 2018-21

### Priority: Prevent Homelessness and meet the needs of vulnerable people.

Comment	Officer Response
<p>From April 2018, there will be extended duties on local authorities in relation to care leavers. These include publishing a local offer setting out what services are available to care leavers, and also extending the support from a Personal Advisor to all care leavers up to the age of 25. Currently support for care leavers ceases at 22, and only those in education, training and employment continue to receive support to 25. Oxfordshire has around 400 care leavers, of which 215 are in Oxford. As a result of the introduction of these extended duties, it will be important to review the current move-on arrangements for care leavers and ensure they encompass care leavers aged up to 25 and explore other creative ways of responding to our collective Corporate Parenting responsibilities</p>	<p>Noted. This is recognised in the strategy para 3.26 onwards.</p>
<p>We ask City to bring forward the proposed review of the Social lettings scheme. Its impact on move on from short term accommodation has been negligible so far.</p>	<p>The Allocations Scheme will be reviewed as needed, in light of legislative changes. There are individual factors to be considered for each case before suitable move-on accommodation is found or can be offered. In addition, there is generally a short supply of suitable social rented accommodation in the city and a limited number of re-lets each year, limiting the opportunities for move-on to happen.</p>
<p>There is no mention of the needs of refugees and asylum seekers. Many people fall through the system and sleep rough or end up sofa surfing. When people are very vulnerable/ suffering from PTSD they will often choose to sleep rough in Oxford than enter the NASS scheme and be relocated a long way from friends/ family/ community and organisations such as RR who have been helping them. The needs of this group could be looked at more sympathetically as we are a city of sanctuary.</p>	<p>Housing need is assessed based on individual circumstances and needs of the household, their eligibility and recourse to public funds in accordance with legislation. The City Council works with Asylum Welcome and other support agencies as needed.</p>

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## Housing and Homelessness Strategy 2018-21

### Priority: Prevent Homelessness and meet the needs of vulnerable people.

Comment	Officer Response
No mention of discharging duty into the private sector	See para 5.20 (also 3.7 and 6.14)
Will you purchase TA outside of the City -if so will you have discussions with the relevant District Council	Yes, See Ref 16 in the Action Plan.
To continue with rediverting financial support through campaigns to reduce begging and drug use, to continue support agencies who assist those who are vulnerable.	This has been included in the strategy. See Ref 23 in the Action Plan.
<b>Hostel</b> - Ensure hostels and supported accommodation is maintained to meet supply and demand.	This is covered in Chapter 5
Mix of people with mental health, drugs and alcohol within a hostel environment does not work, makes people agitated, those with mental health issues get picked on.	Noted. The strategy recognises the complex needs of individuals and identifies that there is a continued need to work in partnership and commission services to address issues. See chapter 5
Creating a safe environment for scared people to help ascertain their needs.	The City Council operates a Sanctuary Scheme. Support providers will assess the individual's needs and will work with them accordingly.
Look at more long term solutions like "the Foyer" schemes which integrate housing with jobs and training.	There are schemes operating in Oxford where accommodation and access to employment and training are linked. Social enterprise schemes are also in existence in the City. Asset-based solutions could be explored via the Trailblazer project.

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## Housing and Homelessness Strategy 2018-21

### Priority: Prevent Homelessness and meet the needs of vulnerable people.

Comment	Officer Response
Opening up shelters for people (especially women) sleeping rough. There are several women living rough that I see every day in Oxford and it is extremely important that they are given safe shelter. I have seen more than one with very painful looking bruising and being hassled by men who are also living on the streets. We are not doing enough for them. Their need is immediate.	Individuals can approach the City Council's Options Duty service to seek advice and emergency accommodation where there is an identified need. Hostel provision can accommodate females.
Expand SWEP to all nights below 0, that is a humanitarian crisis	See para 5.73
<b>Empty Properties</b> - Use of empty dwellings incl. commercial to be used as temporary accommodation used to help homeless	Already covered in the strategy.
<b>Education/Training</b> - Get to the root cause of the problem understanding that different individuals have different needs, ask individual what they need to address their homelessness.	The root causes to homelessness to identify upstream prevention will be part of the Trailblazer initiative although the City Council records the reason for homelessness as individuals approach the Housing Options duty service for advice. Whilst not in the strategy for 2018-21 (within current strategy), the City Council is currently preparing an educational DVD to enhance young people's understanding of housing and homelessness issues and managing expectations.
Up to date education - "more back to basics" with budgeting, managing/caring for themselves, implications of drug/alcohol use, the impact of homelessness on people. Start at 11yrs of age?	See response above
Pilot and evaluate "Tenancy literacy courses" via employers, schools, colleges, banks, libraries etc. To include young vulnerable groups i.e. leaving care.	See response above for young people and vulnerable groups. Also the City Council promotes a Tenant Ready scheme as a homelessness prevention tool.

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## Housing and Homelessness Strategy 2018-21

### Priority: Prevent Homelessness and meet the needs of vulnerable people.

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Comment	Officer Response
Communication Strategy - Education, support and access to services especially around mental health, mortgage, debt and council tax arrears	This is covered within the strategy throughout chapters 5, 6 and 8.
Social workers to be trained on legislation regards recourse to public funds	Noted. Trailblazer Champions Network could help to support the spread of understanding.
Would a number of retired skilled people be utilised to become volunteers to work and liaise with all agencies on behalf of vulnerable people?	There are already volunteering opportunities across many charitable and voluntary support services.
<b>Partnership working</b> - OCC to enable and work together with all agencies to engage churches and community - more community integration and growing social support networks, not to be service focused i.e. not marginalising.	See Ref 20 in the Strategy Action Plan.
All councils to work more closely together - better communication	See Ref 20 in the Strategy Action Plan.
Pressure districts to pool resources and take responsibility for providing complex needs accommodation/support living to relieve the burden upon Oxford. (Voluntary Sector city council media pressure?)	See Ref 2 in the Strategy Action Plan.
Shared visits and management in housing people with complex needs - safe houses for people who use drugs. Health and Housing (incl mental health) care needs to be integrated together i.e. Health worker doing housing visits.	The City Council already operates a joint visiting arrangement where there is a need. Health Visitors are involved to support families placed in Temporary Accommodation. Safeguarding protocols are in place. Referrals are made to and from health services where there is an identified need and with agreement of the customer.

## Housing and Homelessness Strategy 2018-21

### Priority: Prevent Homelessness and meet the needs of vulnerable people.

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Comment	Officer Response
<b>Health &amp; Wellbeing</b> Influence mental health services and CCG to use homelessness as a measure (health indicator) as BMI is at the moment.	This would be a decision of the County Council's Health and Wellbeing Board.
<b>Trailblazer</b> case review - identify patterns & triggers, why are people coming to the city	No change to the strategy. This will be part of the baseline data collected to inform the Trailblazer homelessness prevention project.
Oxford City should combine with other cities selected to receive Trailblazer funding, to press the Government to (a) increase Trailblazer resources and (b) stop the further roll out of universal benefit until it can be better managed, in particular by reducing the 6 week period between application and receipt of this benefit, and by providing emergency payments during those interim weeks and a long 'claw-back' period for such payments.	The Trailblazer project is for 2 years but has a focus on developing solutions that are sustainable in the longer term (i.e. without the need for funding). However, evaluation of initiatives introduced throughout the project, may assist in identifying future funding needs. The project should provide the Government with statistical data and case studies to support any further funding decisions should these be required in the future. UC roll out - this is not within the City Council's control.
Para 5.2 Preventing homelessness is clearly important but the two main priorities are preventing homeless occurring in the first place, and getting people back into secure accommodation once they find themselves homeless - suggest wording change	Change made.
Para 5.6 becoming homeless leads to stigmatisation and loss of dignity and agency.	Change made

## Housing and Homelessness Strategy 2018-21

### Priority: Prevent Homelessness and meet the needs of vulnerable people.

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Comment	Officer Response
<p>Para 5.30 - The role of mental health and the lack of adequate mental health services needs to be placed far more centrally in overall strategy. The truth is that for a large number of people sleeping rough, inadequate mental health services means finding a route off the streets is just not going to happen.</p>	<p>The para already highlights that discussions with mental health (MH) and support providers will continue, and recognises potential changes to MH legislation. Slight change to para wording.</p>
<p>Para 5.44 could be worded more sensitively</p>	<p>Change made.</p>
<p>Para 5.48 - Failure to recognise the "real figure" of those sleeping rough on any particular night puts the whole rough sleeping strategy on a back foot from the word go. No-one believes the "official" figure is accurate. We need to acknowledge that actual numbers are higher than the official figure if we're to get the support of the public here.</p>	<p>Change made.</p>
<p>Para 5.50 Local connection - application of the local connection process is opaque, hard to scrutinise and leaves people on the streets for months and years. Matters will not change unless the council reviews the "local connection" policy.</p>	<p>Local connection is mainly prescribed in legislation. See para 5.53 re exploration of options for those with no LC or recourse to public funds.</p>
<p>Para 5.60 - why are Acacia and Housing First projects not absolutely central to the homeless strategy? These are a major part of the solution to homelessness. At least 20 Housing First units should be provided as part of the strategy to cope with the demand out there on the streets.</p>	<p>There is a commitment in the strategy to double the current number of Housing First units but anything further would need to be aligned with the City Council's budgets and within the capacity, support and resources of partner agencies. See change to ref 21 in the strategy Action Plan</p>

## Housing and Homelessness Strategy 2018-21

### Priority: Prevent Homelessness and meet the needs of vulnerable people.

Comment	Officer Response
OCC should make the most of change brought about by the Homelessness Reduction Act to agree new and consistent ways of working across the district.	See Ref 13 in the Strategy Action Plan - this will also be part of the Countywide Trailblazer project (Champions Network).
OCC could consider making the case for, or funding, a district wide coordinator to support negotiations and partnership between the districts.	The City Council and District Partners have employed a Homelessness Champions Network Co-ordinator as part of the Countywide Trailblazer project
OCC should work with their registered providers to ensure that allocations policies are not adversely affecting single homeless people, and work with RPs on reviewing their allocations policies particularly with restrictions based on affordability, history of rent arrears, antisocial behaviour and criminal convictions in mind.	ORAH agreements are already in place to secure arrangements with Registered Providers on allocations policies. See also action 39 in the strategy action plan - this highlights the work to mitigate the impact of Welfare Reform and Universal Credit on Under 35 year olds.
The Action Plan states a success measure of rough sleeping reduced from 2016/17 levels. Interested to learn what level of reduction would be considered a success.	See change to Ref 13 in the Strategy Action Plan
OCC may wish to share best practice with London boroughs Hackney, Tower Hamlets and City of London about their No First Night Out programme which includes an agreement to accommodate those at risk of rough sleeping for the first time (but where no statutory duty is owed) in local authority Temporary Accommodation, until PRS has been secured.	See change to Ref 13 in the Strategy Action Plan

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## Housing and Homelessness Strategy 2018-21

### Priority: Prevent Homelessness and meet the needs of vulnerable people.

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Comment	Officer Response
<p>In terms of exploration of options to accommodate homeless people who have no recourse to public funds, would recommend considering engaging community and faith groups in this consultation, and build on learning from emergency accommodation options provided as part of severe weather protocols as well as exploring cross-subsidy models to provide funding streams for accommodating people who are destitute. Any accommodation models should be closely linked with employment support (where the right to work in the UK exists) in order to create sustainable solutions.</p>	<p>Noted. This will be part of the 'Big Conversation' ref 20 in the Action Plan. Also amends made to Ref Ref 17 of Action Plan for clarity and to ensure links with employment support.</p>
<p>Action Plan Ref: 20. People with lived experience of homelessness should be represented on OCC's stakeholder list. OCC could borrow learning from Manchester's Homelessness Charter on how to deliver services that have been co-produced with homeless people.</p>	<p>Change to Ref 20 in the strategy action plan.</p>
<p>The City Council should draw up a list of minimum requirements to meet the needs of RSs – this should include a substantial increase in shower facilities, possibly at drop in centres like the Gatehouse, and provision of clothes for interviews.</p>	<p>No change. Service provision is in place and is highlighted to those in need.</p>
<p>The H&amp;HS needs to include an appendix, continually updated, of accommodation available for rough sleepers in cold weather. The point at which 'severe weather' provision is triggered is currently three successive nights at freezing temperatures. This should be reconsidered – a fridge runs at approx. 4 degrees C so no one should be expected to sleep safely outside at that temperature.</p>	<p>No change to the strategy. Severe Weather Emergency Provision protocols are changed/updated annually prior to the cold weather forming. Information about Severe Weather provision is publicised when the emergency provision is made available. Provision of suitable day services is also being explored currently.</p>

## Housing and Homelessness Strategy 2018-21

### Priority: Prevent Homelessness and meet the needs of vulnerable people.

Comment	Officer Response
<p>The churches and other institutions offering crisis accommodation should be given ongoing training and support, and additional places should be sought. A sit-up room is not adequate.</p>	<p>No change needed. Advice and support is provided to any organisation providing Severe Weather accommodation as part of the operational process of setting up the arrangements.(para 5.65 &amp; 5.73)</p>
<p>The H&amp;HS Draft makes no mention of community protection notices, and refers to the imposition of penalties on rough sleepers in the most minimal terms: para 5.78: ‘as a last resort (the Council) will explore the use of various legislations’.</p> <p>The Strategy should include a clear set of rules, establishing the criteria upon which CPNs could be issued. An individual CPN would have to be authorized in writing by the Legal Department and by the Head of Service in each case.</p> <p>The use of other punitive measures e.g. Anti-Social Behaviour Orders, Public Spaces Protection Orders, should be subject to the same set of rules as PCNs.</p>	<p>No change. This is within the remit of the Anti-social Behaviour Team. Any orders and notices are served in accordance with the criteria set out in legislation and in the interest of public protection/safety. The details do not need to be repeated within this strategy. Officers will work closely with statutory agencies to ensure any individual is able to access the necessary support that s/he needs.</p>
<p>Establishing a Stakeholder/Partnership Forum - this is an important idea that needs to be expanded on in the strategy. Which institutions e.g. large/small businesses, colleges, are to be approached? Is the creation of this forum underway? Advertise this project widely and encourage the forum to come forward with new initiatives.</p>	<p>Amendments made to Ref 20 in the strategy Action Plan and to paragraph 5.68 in Chapter 5 of the main strategy.</p>
<p>Assure that increasing "safety" does not lead to tensions/problems between rough sleepers/vulnerable people and law enforcement due to, for example, increased policing</p>	<p>See 5.77 to 5.79</p>

## Housing and Homelessness Strategy 2018-21

### Priority: Make best use of private sector accommodation (including bringing empty properties back into use)

Comment	Officer Response
Majority agree with taking informal action to bring empty properties back into use.	Noted.
Majority agree with taking formal action to bring empty properties back into use.	Noted.
Use more EDMO's	EMOs are used where it is possible to do so and where it is financially viable. It can be cost prohibitive to serve an EDMO where extensive works are required to bring a property into use.
<b>Empty Properties</b> - we need the properties to live in. Use them for the homeless, let the homeless do the properties up to develop skills etc.	Noted. Schemes are run locally to link employment skills training with accommodation, and owners of empty properties are provided with information on maintenance services run by these schemes.
Use of empty dwellings incl. commercial to be used as temporary accommodation.	Noted. No change. Commercial sites have been included in the current Empty Property Strategy and the Council has been involved in encouraging owners to consider change of use, including potential short term temporary accommodation where appropriate. In September 2017 a report to CEB also explored this element of empty property work and commercial sites.

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## Housing and Homelessness Strategy 2018-21

### Priority: Make best use of private sector accommodation (including bringing empty properties back into use)

Comment	Officer Response
Should be zero tolerance to bring back empty properties (to consider including non-residential also e.g. offices, shops, hotels etc.) Introduce fines for empty homes - higher fines for corporations, lower for home owners (sliding scale) all monies to go towards homelessness	Noted. Commercial properties have been included in the strategy already. Whilst it is not in the Councils control to fine owners of empty properties it has implemented a series of changes to Council tax charges to discourage owners from leaving their dwelling empty for too long. Such as an additional 50% Council tax on properties unoccupied for longer than 2 yrs.' and reducing the discount period on empty dwellings to 1 month.
More publicity to advertise empty properties - where to report etc.	No change. National Empty Homes week is run annually and publicity campaigns are promoted - including how to report empty properties via the link on the City Council's website.
£10K match payments to empty home owners to bring property back into use so as to rent to people in need e.g. Stoke City Council	The Council is currently working towards introducing an Empty Home Loan which will be administered within the Home Improvement Agency Team (subject to available resources).

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## Housing and Homelessness Strategy 2018-21

### Priority: Make best use of private sector accommodation (including bringing empty properties back into use)

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Comment	Officer Response
<p>A greater appeal to the community to report empty housing. Currently there is no general awareness of empty housing as an issue. An easily Googleable option for a proactive citizen ('report empty house oxford') could bring up the telephone number for the Empty Properties Officer, who could then be contacted by email or phone.</p>	<p>There is an annual National Empty Homes Week which the Council endorses through its own publicity campaign about what we can do with unoccupied and unsightly properties, using the local media, tenant newsletter and internal information to staff. Other services have been involved in presentations by the Council to highlight assistance the Council can provide in respect of anti-social behaviour and sign posting for vulnerable adults associated with empty properties. The Government has a 'report a derelict or abandoned building' on its website, which directs you to your nearest local authority. Oxford City Council also has a 'Report it' link which facilitates reporting of empty properties in Oxford.</p>
<p>A visible PR campaign, encouraging residents to report empty housing, and thereby develop a consciousness of the issue, would be effective, and in particular would stimulate landlord awareness.</p>	<p>As above. Also the empty property officer raises awareness through the Private Sector Landlord's Forum.</p>
<p>A greater number of officers needed. Our expectation would be that, as soon as the council gets in touch with landlords, things would begin to happen. In this scenario, there would need to be an increased number of officers to engage with landlords.</p>	<p>No change. The City Council has a dedicated Empty Property Officer who works in partnership and with the support of other officers/departments across the Council. Bringing empty properties back into use can take time, especially where there are complex issues such as probate or multiple ownership to deal with.</p>
<p>Conversion of derelict industrial estate buildings and land into housing, where long-term empty.</p>	<p>The Council has identified within the strategy, the need to look at housing provision through change of use of commercial sites providing planning restrictions do not apply.</p>

## Housing and Homelessness Strategy 2018-21

### Priority: Make best use of private sector accommodation (including bringing empty properties back into use)

Comment	Officer Response
Compulsory purchase of long term empty shopfronts/spaces above shops for housing.	The Council is committed to ensuring dwellings are brought back into use and compulsory purchase is an option. The Council has applied for a compulsory purchase order.
Council should force sales of empty properties	During negotiation with owners, the suggestion of selling or renting the property is put forward as an option to consider in order to bring the property back into use. Information on house/rental values is also provided. As above, compulsory purchase may also be considered where necessary and appropriate.
I do not feel that the strategy fully covers empty properties and unused/derelict land (not on green belt) whereby more can be done to press for powers to put them into use	Noted, however the strategy does explain all of the informal and formal action that can be taken, and the complexities around bringing empty properties back into use. Powers under the Housing and Planning Act could enhance opportunities to secure appropriate development land in the future.
Bringing any empty properties back into use in the shortest time possible is essential.	Noted

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## Housing and Homelessness Strategy 2018-21

### Priority: Make best use of private sector accommodation (including bringing empty properties back into use)

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Comment	Officer Response
<p><b>Universities/Colleges</b> - Work closer with Oxford University with regards to condition of their properties and the rent levels as this has detrimental effect on health and the high potential of becoming homeless.</p>	<p>Noted. There are mechanisms already in place to address poor conditions in private rented properties e.g. formal notices and inspections etc. The strategy highlights the focus on working in partnership and this will enhance opportunities for such discussions on property conditions and rents where needed.</p>
<p>Make universities understand their social responsibility - develop more student accommodation to reduce impact on PRS.</p>	<p>No change - see strategy paras 3.8, 5.68 and text in boxes at start of Chapter 4 - also Ref 9 and Ref 20 in Action Plan.</p>
<p><b>OCC</b> - City Council to manage private rented properties to support private landlords. Guarantee to keep use and renovation of void (continuous use of property)</p>	<p>No change. The current schemes offered by the City Council are listed in Chapter 2 (text box) under Housing Strategy: Priority 3; Paras 5.20 ad 6.16.</p>
<p>Social lettings Agency - cross subsidise to plug the gap between LHA and market across portfolio.</p>	<p>See above</p>
<p>Use councils "buying power" to target PRS &amp; offer 20 yr leases (e.g. Church Properties).</p>	<p>No change. See chapter 6 - A review of the impact and the social investment (via the National Homelessness Property Fund) of the Real Lettings Scheme and also the Rent Guarantee Scheme will demonstrate the effectiveness of outcomes and value for money. Lessons learned from the evaluation processes can help to inform future investment or change.</p>
<p>Query planning permission re change of use of properties for HMO status</p>	<p>No change - Any change of use would have to be compliant with current, and any emerging, planning policies through the Local Plan review 2036.</p>

## Housing and Homelessness Strategy 2018-21

### Priority: Make best use of private sector accommodation (including bringing empty properties back into use)

Comment	Officer Response
More outreach to people in multi occupancy properties to check that they are in safe conditions and that landlords are carrying out proper maintenance	No change. See text box at start of Chapter 7. Para 7.27 and Ref 35 in Action Plan regarding increasing intervention and regulation of private rented sector properties to secure improved property conditions
Introduce a licence scheme for ALL private landlords like the HMO scheme to ensure standards are improved and that the landlords are responsible for their tenants living conditions/welfare. Put more investment in prosecuting rogue landlords quickly and efficiently.	No change. See above response and Chapter 7 of the strategy, in particular paras 6.21, 7.23, 7.27.
Bad Private landlords need to be punished more severely. Unfortunately the bad ones give the good ones a bad name too. Don't penalise the private landlords that care about their properties. Focus more on those that illegally let out places (not homes) not fit to house rats, let alone people and especially families, and crack down on extortionate rents.	No change. See above responses and Chapter 7 of the strategy

## Housing and Homelessness Strategy 2018-21

### Priority: Make best use of private sector accommodation (including bringing empty properties back into use)

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Comment	Officer Response
<p>The City Council should lead a public conversation about the role of private sector landlords in addressing housing shortage and affordability of housing in the City and how they could be supported to do more towards community tolerance and cohesion</p>	<p>No change to the strategy. The City Council already hosts a Landlord's Information Exchange which is a free biannual training event for landlords and agents in Oxford. The aim of these events is to help landlords and agents keep informed and up-to-date on changes to Oxford's private rented sector. The City Council specifically focuses on any changing legislation and guidance, updates on the HMO licensing scheme and promotes grant opportunities. The forum also provides an opportunity for landlords to talk to the City Council professionals and together, shape the way the Council enforces and improves the private rented sector in Oxford. This suggestion could be part of the discussions.</p>
<p>The Council should not 'promote' private rental to try to reduce demand for social housing as it states in the Strategy document. Rents are not capped whereas Housing Benefit is, and there are serious problems attached to the introduction of Universal Credit. This will lead to problems for the Council in maintaining its Rent Deposit and Rent Guarantee schemes. Using private landlords in the present climate of rising rents just contributes to the problem.</p>	<p>No change. See para 1.12.1, 3.6, 3.7 and 5.22. Private Rented accommodation, whilst not affordable for everyone, does provide an alternative housing solution for those who can afford it with some support. This may be the only independent housing option for people who would not be considered as having a high or priority need for social rented housing.</p>

## Housing and Homelessness Strategy 2018-21

### Priority: Make best use of private sector accommodation (including bringing empty properties back into use)

Comment	Officer Response
<p><b>PRS Landlords</b> - Prioritise refugees, build more safe towers to include flats of good, spacious design, educate private landlords about tenant aspirations and to encourage rent reduction</p>	<p>No change. Good design is addressed in Chapter 4 in terms of new-build. Education of Private Landlords is addressed in Chapter 6. See para 6.16. also</p>
<p>Positive promotion to PRS landlords re taking HB/UC claimants</p>	<p>See chapter 6</p>
<p>Incentivise landlords to agree rent caps e.g. model agreements, rent for 10yrs, fixed rent increases ref CPI +1% and rent to those in need by giving free HMO licences and landlord accreditation membership.</p>	<p>No change to the strategy. See para 6.16. Also, as part of discussions with Private Sector landlords (through the Private Rented Sector Team to access additional dwellings or through Housing Options as part of homelessness prevention) Officers will discuss with landlords the possibility of reducing their rents to help affordability and also providing longer-term tenancies for tenant security of tenure. The Landlord Accreditation Scheme is a voluntary scheme that private residential Landlords and Letting Agents are encouraged to join. There is an administrative and regulatory obligation on local authorities in terms of Licensing Schemes and therefor they are not currently offered for free but the costs are reduced where the landlord is voluntarily registering at the earliest point and without action having been taken.</p>

## Housing and Homelessness Strategy 2018-21

### Priority: Make best use of private sector accommodation (including bringing empty properties back into use)

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Comment	Officer Response
Need to utilise private sector team resources offering a scheme where grants cover more than the property e.g. carpets and curtains etc., given in exchange for LHA rent and council nominations.	An evaluation of the Rent Guarantee and Deposit Schemes, that have already been put in place by the City Council, will be undertaken and any additional incentives will be considered at that point - additional provision would be subject to available resources.
Grants available for improving properties and improving energy efficiency	No change to the strategy. Already covered in paras 7.16 - 7.19
Discounts for landlords on own council tax payments for their house if they charge lower rents and take on those from the housing register	No change as not within the scope of this strategy. This would require a change to the Council Tax reduction scheme nationally due to some landlords living outside of the areas where they have property to let.
Different offer to landlords to allay fears of damage to property e.g. free re-decoration/link to social enterprise repairs service.	No change to the strategy - see 6.16 and details on the 'rent guarantee service for landlords' page of the City Council's website. <a href="http://www.oxford.gov.uk">www.oxford.gov.uk</a> . This includes a damage bond of up to two months' rent for the landlord. See responses recorded earlier re- schemes being run locally to link employment skills and training with accommodation/empty homes.

## Housing and Homelessness Strategy 2018-21

### Priority: Make best use of private sector accommodation (including bringing empty properties back into use)

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Comment	Officer Response
Allay landlord concerns on support - better linking to floating support to properties	See earlier comments/responses - the rent guarantee service also includes reassurance that all tenants attend tenancy training and receive support to improve financial stability and quality of life, including support to ensure utility bills and council tax are set up. In addition to this, the City Council can refer to other support agencies to secure sufficient support (floating or otherwise) for tenants who require this to sustain their tenancies.
Attract landlords/agents to a social purpose - a corporate social responsibility	As above.
Live In Landlords - promote options to them and what they are eligible for. Clarify what actions they can take to remove people from their property. Have a "Rent a room" scheme.	Advice and information can be found nationally via the <a href="http://www.gov.uk/rent-room-in-your-home">www.gov.uk/rent-room-in-your-home</a> or <a href="http://sparerroom.co.uk">sparerroom.co.uk</a> websites.
Use of Direct Services to improve properties as a cheaper solution for private landlords.	Any business opportunities would need to be explored/considered by the Local Authority Housing Co. Not within the scope of this strategy.
Discourage HMOs with more than 3 or 4 people	HMO Licence conditions and Fire Safety Regulations must be met and therefore enforcement of such conditions may assist in regulating occupancy.
Support cohousing schemes, which encourage the sharing of space e.g. by providing guest rooms that can be booked by community members, thus reducing the need for spare rooms in individual homes.	The need and viability of such schemes in Oxford can be considered within the scope of the project referred to in paras 4.44-4.45.
<b>Prospective PRS tenants</b> - Housing advice/support available at courts	Duty Court Service, Housing Options and Private Rented Team can provide the necessary advice and support if homeless or threatened with homelessness.



## Housing and Homelessness Strategy 2018-21

### Priority: Make best use of private sector accommodation (including bringing empty properties back into use)

Comment	Officer Response
20% reduction in PRS for client, OCC pays the difference to encourage more PRS LL's.	DHP top-ups can assist with shortfalls in rent. What is suggested here is not within the scope of this strategy.
100% guarantor of rent by the council on behalf of the client / pay rent quarterly in advance	Rent Guarantee and Deposit Schemes have already been put in place by the City Council. See earlier responses provided.
Tenancy Ready Schemes - certificate of evidence that client is suitable for PRS	No change to the strategy. Already provided - see chapter 6. (6.14)
Cheaper home insurance for private rented sector tenants to be in line with council tenants. Helps affordability	Not currently offered by the City Council other than to Council Tenants. This could be explored as part of the evaluation: Ref 27 in the Action Plan.
Under 35's are negatively impacted by PRS and affordability.	Already addressed within the strategy - paras 3.22 - 3.55 and Ref 39 in Action Plan.
Would recommend OCC undertaking market research to inform their offer to landlords. OCC could consider grants and loans to bring properties back up to standard in exchange for nominations, as well as advice on how landlords can do this. This could be a programme of activity to engage the universities with.	OCC has recently consulted on its Housing Assistance and Disabled Adaptations Policy which includes proposals for an Empty Homes Loan. The City Council already uses financial resources to secure EDMOs and to repair/make safe empty properties and facilitate occupation.

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## Housing and Homelessness Strategy 2018-21

### Priority: Make best use of private sector accommodation (including bringing empty properties back into use)

Comment	Officer Response
<p>The PRS team is clearly vital in maintaining relationships with existing Landlords and in encouraging others to take tenants on housing/universal benefit. Advice on all these schemes should be clearly set out and widely available in community centres, libraries etc. The Council needs to consider whether this team needs to be increased in size to match the growth in homelessness from tenancies terminated in the private sector.</p>	<p>No change required to the strategy. Suggestion on ways to promote and provide advice on the PRS schemes offered by the City Council is noted. Whilst the schemes are promoted widely, more can be done.</p> <p>In terms of expansion of the team, any increase in demand for homelessness prevention services will be monitored and service provision aligned, within available resources, to support any extra demand.</p>
<p>The Council should set an ambitious target to increase the number of HMOs which are properly licensed by 500 a year in each of the next three years. Meeting that target would still not ensure that all HMOs in Oxford are licensed, but would represent a substantial improvement on the present situation.</p>	<p>This falls within the Private Sector Housing Policy (2016-19). New target setting will be subject to available resources. Licensing of HMO's is already addressed in 6.18 and 7.22 etc.</p>
<p>Good use can be made of the new powers introduced by the Housing and Planning Act 2016 for local authorities to impose civil penalties. These powers are more time-consuming to operate than a prosecution in the magistrate's court, but can ensure meaningful penalties of up to £30,000, the proceeds of which can be retained by the local authority (unlike fines imposed after conviction in court). Imposition of substantial civil penalties should enable additional staff to be funded to ensure the enforcement of the licensing provisions and other laws relating to safety of rented housing, and should also encourage many more landlords to register voluntarily.</p>	<p>Noted. Suggestion to be considered by Private Sector Team colleagues as part of additional regulation of dwellings.</p>

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## Housing and Homelessness Strategy 2018-21

### Priority: Make best use of private sector accommodation (including bringing empty properties back into use)

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Comment	Officer Response
<p>As well as campaigning for better-regulated HMOs the Council should promote better quality HMOs as a good choice for young working people wanting to live in Oxford.</p> <p>The Council should encourage the supply of HMOs. This should include new build HMOs, given that HMOs can be particularly effective at using space well.</p>	<p>New-build would have to be planning and building control compliant and not at the expense of other strategic housing priorities in the City e.g. social rented housing provision. Issues of affordability for under 35 year olds who single and living in PRS accommodation have already been considered within the strategy - see earlier comments to consultation feedback.</p>
<p>University and College owned HMOs are exempted from consideration in the H&amp;HS. It would be helpful in creating an accurate picture of how HMOs are spread across the City if University/College HMOs could be listed and included in the overall figures, preferably on a ward basis.</p>	<p>No change to the strategy. The strategy refers to HMO's in general. Any HMO's used as student accommodation, would be registered as such. In terms of licensing, the HMO property register is available to view on the City Council's website.</p>
<p>Oxford should adopt a similar approach to London, requiring AirBnB and other short term rental companies to limit the number of days per year that a property can be rented on the platform (max 90). This would be a reasonable compromise: allowing property owners to make income when not residing in the property, while limiting the desirability of buy-to- short-let properties. Short-let rentals that are properly registered in terms of planning would of course be exempt.</p>	<p>No change to the strategy - short term rentals do not give the security of tenure that housing applicants want. In addition, they provide for transient, rather than sustainable and settled communities. The City Council already holds sufficient levels of Temporary Accommodation to meet identified short-term needs (subject to availability)</p>

## Housing and Homelessness Strategy 2018-21

### Priority: Invest to create sustainable communities that are safe and healthy

Comment	Officer Response
Majority agreed in part to this priority.	Noted.
Should add 'efficiency and economy' (e.g. solar power) to the priority title.	No change to the strategy. Energy efficiency is addressed through the chapter and falls within 'sustainable communities' part of the priority title.
<b>SUPPORT</b> - Survivors of homelessness to be more involved in engaging with current rough sleepers.	Some arrangements already exist within voluntary and community sector organisations. This would also fall within the remit of the Trailblazer project as part of developing asset-based resilience.
Increase accessibility to the pathway for people with complex needs, incl more assertive Outreach to engage people.	Addressed in the strategy - see paras 2.5 (under priority 3), 5.59, 5.74 and Ref 18 & 19 in the Action Plan.
Facilitate people being able to "tell" someone of their problem.	Existing services provided by the City Council, day centres, outreach team, stakeholders and other support providers (including faith groups and voluntary sector organisations), create opportunities for people to seek advice and information as well as to 'tell' someone their problem.
Improved ongoing support to ensure tenancy sustainability	Already addressed within the strategy - see paras 6.14, 6.16. 6.18, 7.46-7.47, 8.7 etc.
Day service (24hrs) for homeless to get support/advice	See para 5.65 - Service provision has been included in the City Conversation discussions with partner agencies. Ongoing provision of day centres will require resources and agreement of other partner agencies to support.

## Housing and Homelessness Strategy 2018-21

### Priority: Invest to create sustainable communities that are safe and healthy

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Comment	Officer Response
Mix of people with mental health, drugs and alcohol within a hostel environment does not work, makes people agitated, those with mental health issues get picked on.	Noted. Any issues will be taken into account as services are commissioned.
Work with the LGA to represent Oxford's challenges and influence change to produce more affordable homes.	The recent announcement from Government in relation to the outline Housing & Growth Agreement with Oxfordshire will help to influence change and produce more affordable homes to 2031.
<b>ASB</b> - More police to tackle drug/alcohol issues	The City Council liaises with the Police, Outreach Team, Drug and Alcohol Team and support providers to support those with drug and alcohol dependencies and reduce ASB. It is not within the scope of this Housing and Homelessness Strategy to secure more policing.
ASB/Neighbourhood Safety - link other strategies, learn from other strategies (best practice), consider particular needs ref dementia and autism	'Dementia Friendly' programmes are being included within the Barton Health Newtown project and best practice learned from this will inform further roll-out of schemes (what works well etc.)
To continue with rediverting financial support through campaigns to reduce begging and drug use, to continue support agencies who assist those who are vulnerable. Seasonal begging from other cities - therefore need more signs on roads about begging in various languages near known hot spots. Get messages about begging to Student Unions at Brookes & OU.	Alternative Giving scheme already addressed in the strategy. See para 5.68, 5.79 and Ref 23 in the Action Plan.
ASB, especially petty neighbour disputes need to be tackled. Repeat 'offenders' should be penalised by reducing their opportunities to move and create more issues wherever they go, or hit them financially.	The Council's Anti-social Behaviour Team works closely with Tenancy Management and Tenancy Sustainment Officers to reduce the frequency and impact of neighbour disputes. There are already penalties in place for breaching tenancy agreements e.g. eviction, behaviour orders etc.

## Housing and Homelessness Strategy 2018-21

### Priority: Invest to create sustainable communities that are safe and healthy

Comment	Officer Response
<b>Tenancy Fraud</b> - investigate this and make best use of existing social housing stock.	Amendment made. New paragraph 8.10 included.
<b>Energy</b> - Negotiate reduction in gas and electricity as a group user.	Reducing fuel poverty is addressed within the strategy (particularly para 7.25). Methods to do this will be determined by the team and in the best interest of residents.
Sustainable energy for all properties - solar.	See para chapter 7 but particularly para 7.18
Spaces for cafes, gyms, amenities like bike parks i.e. Berinsfield. Green spaces/parks and gardens to build communities	The Council's Great Estates and Regeneration programmes already look at the opportunity to improve the environment, sustainability and customer satisfaction within existing estates. In terms of new-build, planning policies require developers to include open space, amenities etc. as part of their master plan for development sites (where appropriate).
Encouraging employers to give incentivised schemes for healthy living i.e. cycling schemes, discounted help for access to accommodation.	The City Council and other large employers within Oxford offer schemes to staff. Also, lessons learned from the Barton Healthy New Towns Project and other similar projects elsewhere will inform future activities.
Creating social events to bring communities together i.e. music festivals	Part of the work of the Council's Communities Team.
More explicit reference to the Health and Wellbeing agenda should be made as this is also about prevention. Links to their priorities need to be made and stated.	The H&WB Strategy is referenced in Appendix C of the strategy. Improving health and wellbeing is supported throughout the strategy document.
Wet garden - (for rough sleepers with alcohol dependency)	Best practice will be explored as part of the process for service commissioning.

## Housing and Homelessness Strategy 2018-21

### Priority: Invest to create sustainable communities that are safe and healthy

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Comment	Officer Response
<b>Policy</b> - Ensure that approaches to landlords are not confused/conflicting procurement against enforcement, joined approach from council depts.	Not clear what this is specifically referring to.
<b>Strategy</b> - Strengthen with reference to the Care/Crime Acts.	Noted. See paras 6.18, 5.78 & 5.79, 4.25, 8.10
<b>Building communities</b> - Too many units of student accommodation being built instead of general needs accommodation. This has an effect on the community where students live in Houses in Multiple Occupation - especially where the students don't look after the gardens or ensure that rubbish is cleared/in bins.	Noted. No change - see strategy para 3.8, also Ref 9 in Action Plan. Formal notices can be served if the dwelling causes health hazards/risks such as vermin etc.
There is a difference between Blackbird Leys and Greater Leys. Activities at Blackbird Leys Community Centre are disjointed and there is no cohesiveness.	Noted. No change to the strategy. The City Council's Communities Team works with neighbourhoods to promote activities to improve cohesion.
When housing is developed, it needs to include a mix of housing (not just flats), providing for mixed communities and diversity.	No change. Current Planning Policy provides for a mix of dwellings. Also, see strategy paras 4.20 & 4.21.

## Housing and Homelessness Strategy 2018-21

### Priority: Invest to create sustainable communities that are safe and healthy

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Comment	Officer Response
<p>More consideration needs to be given to intergenerational schemes e.g. not just building older persons housing in one location. People like to live as part of a wider community with all ages provided for. There was some concern expressed about the Bradlands scheme not being accessible or part of a community. There was a feeling that if tenants had had more of an input at earlier stages of development discussions, then this would have provided a different view and more useful comments on the design or appropriateness of the scheme in that location before building was approved.</p>	<p>As above regarding mix of dwellings. However, where plans include provision of specialist accommodation e.g. Extra Care, then the units are more likely to be developed at scale to ensure they are viable and well managed with shared areas and lift etc.</p>
<p>It is important to not just build some kinds of accommodation in huge blocks – a mix of property types is needed to help build ‘communities’</p>	<p>As above re mix of dwellings, see strategy paras 4.20 &amp; 4.21.</p>
<p>Good design will help reduce crime and improve safety</p>	<p>Noted - this is mentioned in 3.19 and is considered as part of the planning application process for new developments.</p>
<p>Cohousing has much to offer towards this objective, as cohousing communities are designed to promote neighbourliness and mutual support. Since cohousing counts as custom build, greater support for self- and custom-housebuilding would benefit cohousing projects. It would be particularly helpful if support was given for integrating affordable housing into the development (the Oxford register seems unable to take account of desires to include permanently affordable homes within a scheme).</p>	<p>Establishing the needs for such accommodation and models of delivery is expected to form part of the community-led housing research project referenced in paras 4.44, 4.45 and also as 'self-build' in para 4.46.</p>



## Housing and Homelessness Strategy 2018-21

### Priority: Be an effective landlord and deliver quality services.

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Comment	Officer Response
Not enough social housing being provided in the City.	Noted and addressed in Chapter 4 of the strategy.
Add "To be effective and encourage investment in housing (affordable and social)." to the priority title.	Whilst this suggestion is noted, no change has been made as attracting investment for more social and affordable housing is covered in Chapter 4 and in the separate funding chapter. The majority of responses from the consultation have supported the priorities as they are.
<b>Training</b> - Provide staff training. Monitor if policies are being practiced	Staff are provided with training and this will be ongoing as the City Council prepares for the implementation of the Homelessness Reduction Act 2017 and revised practices/procedures to ensure that new legislative requirements are being met.
<b>Research</b> the effects of cuts.	Included in the strategy in Chapter 5. This explains how the City Council will re-provide the bed spaces no longer funded by the County Council. This also links with the Trailblazer project going forward i.e. to examine triggers for homelessness and their potential solutions - this may pick up on the impact of cuts on homelessness.
<b>Support</b> - Improved ongoing support to ensure tenancy sustainability	No change. Already covered within the strategy. See also paras 5.65, 7.42, 7.45, 8.7
Discussed the opportunity to promote digital access and any training available from OCC and partner agencies as officers carry out their work.	See paras 8.17 and 8.20

## Housing and Homelessness Strategy 2018-21

Priority: Be an effective landlord and deliver quality services.

Comment	Officer Response
There are opportunities for officers, when working with/assisting Council Tenants, to promote the opportunity for tenants to become more involved in the development of Council policies/services and refer the customer details to the Tenant Involvement Team so that they can access the necessary training and information to facilitate this to happen.	Addressed in paras 8.5 and 8.6 in the strategy (i.e. Tenant Specialists)
Support tenants to gain employment or access better paid employment and work with them to ensure they're ready to move into affordable housing, shared or home ownership. This will in turn free up more social accommodation for households in high housing need.	Addressed in paras 3.34, 5.15 and 7.41 in the strategy
<b>Communicate</b> with Tenants	See new paras 8.18 - 8.20
More face to face delivery of services for officers and customers. Building an understanding is important.	See new paras 8.18 - 8.20
When communicating, use more laymen's terms and have more consideration for people who are less able to understand the complexities	See new paras 8.18 - 8.20
Let tenants know and make clear that there are two tiers of Local Authorities (City & County Councils) and that each of them have different responsibilities, budgets and rules	See new paras 8.18 - 8.20

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## Housing and Homelessness Strategy 2018-21

**Priority: Be an effective landlord and deliver quality services.**

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Comment	Officer Response
Be clear about what can or cannot be done (e.g. include detail in the tenancy agreement)	See new paras 8.18 - 8.20
Make clear in what timescale the service will be delivered and do it by the date promised.	See new paras 8.18 - 8.20
Consultation and information sharing. Use all ways of consultation and make these methods inclusive.	See new paras 8.18 - 8.20 - an example in practice is the draft strategy consultation held in October 2017
Provide tenants with IT training if you want to go digital with more services.	See new paras 8.18 - 8.20 and paras 8.5 and 8.6.
Involve tenants when planning development in their area. Barton Park – give the right communication to manage expectations.	See new paras 8.18 - 8.20 and paras 8.5 and 8.6.
Make people more aware of what the council can or cannot do. Provide more council people to help with IT.	See new paras 8.18 - 8.20 and paras 8.5 and 8.6.
The City Council, as a major landlord, should engage more effectively with partners when considering new developments, future use of their existing stock and how it could be used more effectively such as reusing difficult to let sheltered housing for other vulnerable groups.	Engaging with tenants - addressed in paras 8.5 and 8.6 in the strategy (i.e. Tenant Specialists). New developments will include consultation with a range of partners on proposals. See also Chapter 4 i.e. work with Registered Providers and public bodies.

## Housing and Homelessness Strategy 2018-21

### Priority: Be an effective landlord and deliver quality services.

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Comment	Officer Response
<p>Improve communications across the council to ensure each team is aware of what each other are doing to make more efficient use of resource, sharing the knowledge, working in collaboration gives better value for money.</p>	<p>The Housing and Property Team has a Communications Plan which is shared across other departments. This helps to provide proactive communications. There is also a culture promoted within the organisation to support working together/ in collaboration across different departments. The aim going forward is to work across Council departments as one team - 'Team Oxford'. Evaluations and 'Lessons Learned' approaches as set out in the strategy will help to inform best practice in future.</p>
<p><b>Customer Service and Delivery</b> - Use all services to spread the work of other departments (e.g. Direct Services need to give better customer service and follow up calls to check that the work or delivery has been completed as promised. )</p>	<p>Noted. Not within the scope of this Housing &amp; Homelessness Strategy. To be noted by the Local Authority Trading Company.</p>
<p>Maintenance improvements –deliver on time, as promised and communicate standards to operatives and tenants.</p>	<p>See new paras 8.18 - 8.20 re communications.</p>
<p>Prioritise properties e.g. Council owned, derelict properties etc. as accommodation for homeless people and volunteers</p>	<p>This is addressed in the strategy in chapter 5 and chapter 6.</p>
<p>May be an idea for the Council to prioritise installation of high level energy saving methods even if this is at a slightly higher cost, so that in the long term the properties remain 50% or more efficient than those without the higher level of energy saving methods (new types of energy efficient slates on the roof installed now, whilst more expensive, may save money retrofitting in the future).</p>	<p>Energy efficient measures are identified in chapter 7. See particular paras 4.20, 7.5, 7.12 and 7.15.</p>

## Housing and Homelessness Strategy 2018-21

### Priority: Be an effective landlord and deliver quality services.

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Comment	Officer Response
<p><b>Education</b> in schools – let young people know about who does what within Councils. Explain the two tiers, elections, service delivery etc. Relevant to Age 7+</p>	<p>Addressed in the strategy in para 5.31 and Ref 24 in Action Plan. The aim is to prioritise messages to the 'teen' age group in the short term but this can be rolled out to 7+ as needed.</p>
<p><b>Tenancy Fraud</b> - as a landlord, the City Council has a responsibility to investigate tenancy fraud and illegal use of social housing stock. The City Council needs to make sure that best use is made of its limited social housing stock.</p>	<p>Change. New paragraph added in Chapter 8. This work is embedded into operational activities and therefore no specific 'action' has been added to the strategy action plan.</p>
<p><b>ASB</b> - Why do tenants, leaseholders and neighbours sometimes have to put up with ASB from drug-users and others for years before the tenancy contract is enforced?</p>	<p>The aim is to work with tenants and secure the support they need. However, the City Council has a complaints procedure if the customer feels that his/her complaint has not been addressed properly.</p>
<p><b>Landlord Services</b> - Why do the housing officers keep changing their patches? Can you write to all tenants when they have a new housing manager? Stop the silly policy of removing all doormats and pot plants from communal areas! Can you collect email addresses of tenants and communicate with them that way? You could ask them to pass on messages to their neighbours who may not have internet access? Can you do more to encourage all tenants and leaseholders to register to vote? Why don't you make more and more effective use of introductory tenancies? If you told councillors and/or neighbours about each one, they could monitor the behaviour of the tenant (since you don't seem to have time to do this). Neighbours try to be tolerant for the first few months and only start to complain when it's too late!</p>	<p>Noted. 'Patch' changes are required to maintain audit requirements but also to cover staff changes. Noted. No change to the strategy. We already communicate with tenants by email where requested to do so. This could be part of the tenancy sign-up process. Consideration can be given to best practice. Tenancy Management and Accommodation Support Officers monitor introductory tenancies.</p>

## Housing and Homelessness Strategy 2018-21

### Priority: Be an effective landlord and deliver quality services.

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Comment	Officer Response
<p>A stronger commitment to exploring flexibility of tenure needs to be made, as well as emphasising better access to information and advice. In keeping with the Care Act 2015 a commitment could be made that this information and advice will not just be signposting and the success of this provision will be measured against how it has prevented homelessness</p>	<p>As the City Council implements the requirements of the Homelessness Reduction Act 2017, the homelessness prevention processes and procedures will be reviewed. (This is already identified in the strategy - aligning the service). This could be considered as part of that implementation process.</p>
<p><b>Other</b> - You mention extra care but will you also look at other means to encourage older people to free up family homes?</p>	<p>No change to the strategy. The City Council provides Sheltered Accommodation and also offers a Removals and Expenses Mobility Scheme (REMS) to Council tenants who are under-occupying family homes and wish to move (see para 3.16 and 8.8 in the strategy). The Allocations Scheme also allows a higher banding to be awarded to facilitate downsize moves. The Older Person Accommodation booklet also provides information on accommodation in Oxford and the assistance available (see <a href="http://www.oxford.gov.uk">www.oxford.gov.uk</a>).</p>
<p>Try sorting out the overcrowded properties and this will free up smaller properties. Deal with the banding system properly and give everyone a fair chance and don't pick and choose</p>	<p>No change to the strategy. See paragraph 8.8 on best use of stock. See also chapter 3. The Allocations Scheme is published and makes clear the criteria for allocation of social housing. The introduction of Fixed Term tenancies will allow more regular reviews of tenancies to take place and planned moves to happen as household circumstances change.</p>
<p><b>Allocations Scheme</b> - Ensure ORAH criteria is stricter especially in relation to those who have savings / access to a reasonable amount of money, house those who are poorer before those who have money available to them.</p>	<p>The Allocations Scheme is reviewed on a regular basis. No change to the strategy.</p>

## Comments received on issues that are not within the City Council's control

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Comment	Officer Response
Limit landlords owning multiple houses as dominating PRS	This is not within the Council's control or the scope of the Housing & Homelessness Strategy.
Private rents are too high for most people to afford in the city. Private Landlords are setting rents too high and there is no regulation of rent setting. House prices are also too high. The Council should be able to regulate the housing market to reduce housing and affordability problems.	This is not within the Council's control or the scope of the Housing & Homelessness Strategy. It would require a change in Government legislation.
Keep Oxford as it is, don't let it get like other large cities. Reduce the population.	This is not within the Council's control or the scope of the Housing & Homelessness Strategy.
Charge more council tax for empty properties to encourage the owner to use	In April 2013 Councils were granted the option to charge 50% Council Tax on dwellings unoccupied for more than 2yrs and at the same time apply a locally determined discount on properties undergoing major works. The Council reduced discount on properties undergoing major work to 25% instead of 100% for 12 months and again on empty dwellings to 100% for one month. Dwellings unoccupied for more than 2 yrs.' are now charged an additional 50% Council Tax. Ability to charge more Council Tax than is currently the case, would require a change in legislation.
School allocation policies	A review of school allocation policies is not within the City Council's remit and not within the scope of the Housing & Homelessness Strategy.
Public transport subsidies	Public transport subsidies are not within the City Council's remit and not within the scope of the Housing & Homelessness Strategy.

## Comments received on issues that are not within the City Council's control

Comment	Officer Response
Road Infrastructure	Whilst Local Plan policies address the need to provide adequate infrastructure to support new developments, Highways/Roads fall within the County Council's remit and therefore not within the scope of this Housing & Homelessness Strategy.
Safe cycling routes and pavements	This is usually considered as part of planning applications for new development - Not within the scope of this Housing & Homelessness Strategy
No pavement parking	Not within the scope of this Housing & Homelessness Strategy
Corporate responsibility from big energy companies	This is not within the Council's control or the scope of this Housing & Homelessness Strategy.
Reduce overcrowding standard	This is not within the Council's control - would require a change in legislation/Government Guidance.
<b>RISK</b> - large employers leaving Oxford after Brexit, can OCC help to mitigate?	This is not within the Council's control or the scope of this Housing & Homelessness Strategy.
We oppose the right to buy; we support the introduction of legislation to facilitate this. Retain social housing (don't sell council houses).	This is not within the Council's control or the scope of this Housing & Homelessness Strategy. It would require a change in Government legislation.
Important to support first time buyers and local people trying to up-size their homes. A policy prohibiting the sale of new-build houses and flats to people who will use them as second homes, or whose primary residence is outside Oxford's environs, would prevent Buy to Let and would stop holiday home owners out-competing local and first time buyers. Similar policies are being employed in Exmoor National Park and St Ives, Cornwall to good effect.	Noted. It is understood that such action in these areas is supported by specific legislation and protections provided to areas of SSSI and 'designated' areas (i.e. Coastal towns and National Parks). Restrictions on sale/occupancy are already applied in Oxford for social and intermediate housing but not for general private sale properties.



Comments received on issues that are not within the City Council's control

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Comment	Officer Response
<p>We should encourage better occupancy of property - higher rates on empty and significantly under occupied property could be adopted.</p>	<p>In April 2013 Councils were granted the option to charge an additional 50% Council Tax on dwellings unoccupied for more than 2yrs and reducing the period for Council Tax exemption on properties empty and those undergoing major works. The City Council already charges Council Tax on empty properties and offers a Council Tax reduction scheme in accordance with legislation. The City Council already provides incentives for tenants looking to downsize their property. A change of rates in general is not within this scope of this Housing &amp; Homelessness Strategy.</p>
<p>Good public transport, and public parks and gardens are vital if high density housing is to be successful.</p>	<p>Noted, although public transport is not a function of the City Council. Provision of quality open spaces will be considered as part of planning and development control decisions.</p>
<p>We need a policy on controlling Buy-to-let and foreign investors e.g. developers must be asked to sell only to local people for the first 6 months.</p>	<p>There can be controls around occupancy and sale of 'affordable housing' as defined within planning legislation. However, it is not within the Council's current power to dictate sales of market housing.</p>
<p>We have so many facilities that people come from all over Europe to Oxford, knowing we have all they need and this creates a problem for the indigenous community.</p>	<p>Oxford's economy is influenced by a number of factors, one of which is the number of visitors and students from other countries. Controlling in-migration and visitors to the City is not within the scope of this strategy. In terms of eligibility for housing, anyone seeking social or affordable housing would need to meet eligibility criteria before an allocation of housing could be made.</p>

## Comments received on issues that are not within the City Council's control

Comment	Officer Response
<p>Regulation of private landlords, not just in terms of quality and safety of accommodation but also contracts, e.g. regulate increases in rent when renewing properties, rent caps (possibly related to Sq. footage) and seasonal variations in properties on the market (more available but at higher cost at the start of the academic year)</p>	<p>This is not within the Council's control or the scope of this Housing &amp; Homelessness Strategy. It would require a change in Government legislation.</p>
<p>Make it compulsory for landlords of HMO to complete Household Enquiry forms for all residents in their properties so that they can be contacted to register to vote. This information could then be shared with the health authority to facilitate outreach projects to encourage residents to register with GPs and dentists etc. and hopefully reduce the pressure on A &amp; E dept. at the JR which is often used by people who do not have access to other medical services until it reaches a crisis</p>	<p>Noted. This would require a change in national legislation. The City Council collates occupancy data as part of processing HMO licences but Data Protection Act (DPA) rules would prevent sharing data with others unless the rationale for sharing met with DPA requirements.</p>
<p><b>Police</b> - We need police to be more visible. Cyclists in dark clothing with no lights. Cyclists on the pavements. Cars with faulty lighting. Vandalism on the cycle paths, with fencing being knocked down.</p>	<p>Some issues can be dealt with by Tenancy Management Officers if the property belongs to the Council. Anti-Social Behaviour Team can also deal with some general issues. However, the specific issues raised re cyclists, cars and vandalism should be directed to the police.</p>

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## General comments on the Strategy document and layout

Comments	Officer response
We believe there should be a sharper focus and targets. The key points identified in the strategy and the action plan should be broken down into clearer points with some of the business as usual items removed	Some changes made to the Action Plan
We think there are too many items within the action plan as there are 51 points and these should be broken down.	The strategy is for 3 years and therefore actions will start and finish at timescales across the plan. Some of the actions will start in 2017 and roll forward to 2018 for completion. Therefore, no change made to the number of actions in the Action Plan. The Action Plan will be reviewed in Summer 2019
Use a word other than sustainable - which usually has to do with ecology, energy savings. Do things that promote long lasting neighbourhoods & neighbourliness	'Sustainability' can mean different things in different context. In some parts of the strategy, it does mean long-term benefits or impact on communities, individuals and immediate neighbourhoods. No change needed.
This questionnaire didn't work properly at the start.	Noted. The functionality of the online survey was checked when this was raised. It may depend on a number of technical issues with individual's devices. No change needed.
It would be good to know what happens next to the document and how else we can get involved in the future. Also will there be some form of marketing and awareness raising strategy campaign? If there is going to be one this might need to be made reference to.	Once the CEB report and meeting minutes are made public we will be able to send a website link to all those who were involved with the consultation, along with a note to keep them informed. The City Conversation will also form part of ongoing engagement and publicity.

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