



PLACES OVERVIEW AND SCRUTINY SUB-COMMITTEE

Subject Heading:

Relationship between the council and housing associations

ELT Lead:

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Policy context:

Housing associations provide over 6,000 affordable homes to households nominated by the council.

SUMMARY

The report provides a briefing on the scale and nature of housing associations in the borough. It describes the interactions and arrangements in place to manage those relationships.

RECOMMENDATIONS

That Members note and comment on the contents of the report.

REPORT DETAIL

The relationship between the council and housing associations in the borough is multifaceted and involves collaboration on various aspects such as nominations, housing development, housing management, resident engagement, anti-social behaviour, and housing strategy. This report provides an overview of these relationships and the key areas of collaboration.

The regulation of housing associations and registered providers in England is overseen by the Regulator of Social Housing (RSH). This body ensures that social

Places Overview & Scrutiny Committee, 28th November 2024

housing providers, including local authorities and housing associations, adhere to specific standards and regulations.

The RSH maintains a statutory register of social housing providers, which includes both private registered providers and local authorities. This register is updated monthly and includes details such as the provider’s name, registration number, and designation (non-profit or profit-making)

The RSH sets consumer and economic standards for social housing providers. These standards cover areas like governance, financial viability, value for money, and tenant involvement.

Social Housing (Regulation) Act 2023 introduced significant changes, including increased regulation of social landlords and new rules to protect tenants from serious hazards. The Act empowers the RSH to take proactive enforcement actions, such as imposing fines and requiring performance improvement plans.

The new consumer standards took effect from April 2024, focusing on health and safety, landlord transparency, and housing management staff qualifications. These standards aim to ensure better living conditions and more accountability from social landlords. The Act includes provisions like Awaab’s Law, which mandates landlords to address hazards such as damp and mould within a fixed period. This law is named after Awaab Ishak, a two-year-old who tragically died due to exposure to mould in his home.

The table below shows the number of social housing units in the borough in 2024. LARP are council properties and PRP are housing associations. Approximately a third of all social housing in the borough is provided by housing associations.

Total social units by provision type in Havering					
			LARP Units	PRP Units	All Units
Low cost rental	General needs		8,153	4,243	12,396
	Supported housing/ housing for older people		756	680	1,436
Low cost home ownership (LCHO)			217	1,092	1,309
Total Havering			9,126	6,015	15,141
London			388,257	484,559	872,816
England			1,564,288	2,925,466	4,489,754
Source: SDR/LADR 2024					

The table below shows the average rents charged by the council and large housing associations in the borough.

<p>General needs (social rent)* Average weekly net rent (£ per week) and units for Havering, London and England - LARPs & Large PRPs</p>

Places Overview & Scrutiny Committee, 28th November 2024

	LARP Rents	LARP Units	PRP Rents	PRP Units	(in bar chart)
Average weekly NET RENT (£ per week) for Havering, London and England - Large PRPs	Net	Unit	Net	Unit	Average net
	rent	count	rent	count	rent
Havering	£112.78	7,713	£133.39	2,384	£117.64
London	£122.32	364,851	£139.53	288,052	£129.83
England	£99.75	1,412,224	£109.50	1,835,696	£105.22
<p>*Excludes Affordable Rent and intermediate rent but includes other units with an exception under the Rent Policy Statement. Source: SDR/LADR 2024</p>					

Appendix 1 shows the stock number of housing association in the borough. It shows the number of local authority areas in which the housing association operates and the number of units in Havering.

Nominations

The council has established nomination agreements with housing associations to ensure that affordable housing is allocated fairly and transparently. These agreements allow the council to nominate applicants for housing owned by housing associations. The process involves advertising available properties on the ELLC CBL system, where people on the housing register can bid for them. The top shortlisted applicants are then offered the property. Some housing associations have direct access to ELLC to be able to advertise their properties. Others have to send the details to the council who then advertises the property on ELLC. The housing association then arranges for the viewing and the offer.

This system ensures that the council maintains influence over housing allocations and supports sustainable communities.

Housing Development

Housing development is a critical area of collaboration between the council and housing associations. The council works with registered providers to identify opportunities for new homes delivery and align housing management services in communities. Additionally, the council collaborates with housing associations on Section 106 agreements to ensure that new developments meet the borough's housing needs.

Section 106 (s106) agreements are legal agreements between local authorities and developers, often used to secure contributions towards infrastructure and affordable housing as part of the planning permission process. These agreements are essential for mitigating the impact of new developments on the local community and ensuring that necessary infrastructure and services are provided.

In the context of housing associations or registered providers, s106 agreements play a crucial role in the delivery of affordable housing. These agreements often stipulate that a certain percentage of new housing developments must be allocated as affordable housing, which housing associations or registered providers can then manage and allocate to those in need.

Overall, s106 agreements are vital for ensuring that new developments contribute to the provision of affordable housing and other community benefits, working in conjunction with housing associations or registered providers to meet local housing needs. One current issue is the inability of developers to find a suitable HA to purchase the social housing on new developments. Associations are increasingly reluctant to purchase s106 properties for a variety of reasons – the asking price from the developer, the quality of the stock, the location or number of units. This has meant that developers are unable to fulfil their obligations under the s106 agreement or they have looked to for-profit registered providers (FPRP) to take the units.

The new entry of FPRPs have meant a greater variety of social housing in the borough however their rents tend to be even higher than traditional providers and the regulation more complex.

The council also get representations from housing associations to vary section 106 agreements, for example when they want to dispose of a property. These tend to go to different people in the Council depending on the request and the contacts the HA has in the council. This can lead to an inconsistent response.

Housing Management

Housing management involves the day-to-day operations and maintenance of housing properties. The council and housing associations share a common purpose of providing good quality, affordable housing. By working together, they can share resources, skills, and capacity to meet housing needs. The council's Housing Strategy & Partnerships service leads the development of this working relationship to achieve strategic housing programme outcomes. Regular meetings and forums are held to discuss nominations and lettings arrangements, ensuring effective communication and collaboration.

Resident Engagement

Resident engagement is a key focus area for both the council and housing associations. The council has developed a Resident Engagement Strategy to ensure that residents are actively involved in decision-making processes. This includes setting up leaseholder and resident panels, delivering roadshows, and consulting residents on major regeneration and housing schemes. The strategy aims to improve the housing service by working in partnership with tenants and leaseholders to make a positive difference in their communities.

Housing associations have a range of arrangements for tenant engagements depending on their size and the geographical distribution of their social housing.

The RSH Consumer Code does require associations to submit tenant satisfaction performance indicators however, these are not as yet publically available and we do not know if these will be available at a local authority level.

Anti-Social Behaviour

Addressing anti-social behaviour is a collaborative effort between the council and housing associations. The council's Housing Allocation Scheme includes provisions for dealing with unacceptable behaviour, such as issuing Community Behaviour Orders and Noise Abatement Notices. Regular meetings and forums with housing associations provide opportunities to discuss common approaches to anti-social behaviour and tenancy management. This collaboration ensures that both parties work together to maintain safe and secure communities.

Housing Strategy

The council's housing strategy outlines the vision, objectives, and policies for housing in the borough. It includes plans for housing delivery, capital programmes, building safety, and decarbonisation. The strategy also emphasizes the importance of working with housing associations to achieve these goals. Regular reviews and consultations with housing associations ensure that the strategy remains relevant and effective in addressing the borough's housing needs.

Conclusion

The relationship between the council and housing associations in the borough is essential for providing good quality, affordable housing and maintaining safe and secure communities. Through collaboration on nominations, housing development, housing management, resident engagement, anti-social behaviour, and housing strategy, the council and housing associations can effectively address the housing needs of the borough's residents.

IMPLICATIONS AND RISKS

Financial implications and risks:

This report is for information only and therefore there are no financial implications and risks. It should be noted however that housing associations play a key role in providing housing for households in housing need in the borough which has a financial benefit to the Council.

Legal implications and risks:

This report sets out the regulatory framework within which housing associations operate.

Human Resources implications and risks:

There are no human resources or risks from this report.

Equalities implications and risks:

Consider the impact your proposal may have upon individuals with protected characteristics:

- age,
- disability,
- gender reassignment,
- marriage and civil partnership,
- pregnancy and maternity,
- race,
- religion or belief,
- sex,
- sexual orientation.

In addition to the above the Council considers equality implications on the following criteria:

- Socio-economic status
- Health and wellbeing

Equality and Health Impact Assessments (EHIA) involve anticipating the consequences of our strategies, policies and activities, making sure that any negative, detrimental, and discriminatory behaviours are eliminated. The EHIA is used to check that the design and approach to delivery of our commitments ensures that benefits and opportunities are realised by all our communities.

Please make explicit what can be done, where possible to mitigate for any negative impacts or enhance positive impacts with due regard to ensure that the council fulfils its Public Sector Equality Duty (PSED) under the Equalities Act 2010. This requires the Council to have due regard to:

- a) The need to eliminate discrimination, harassment, victimisation and any other conduct that is prohibited by or under the Equality Act 2010;
- b) The need to advance equality of opportunity between persons who share protected characteristics and those who do not, and;
- c) Foster good relations between those who have protected characteristics and those who do not.

ENVIRONMENTAL AND CLIMATE CHANGE IMPLICATIONS AND RISKS

BACKGROUND PAPERS



Appendix 1 Housing Association Stock Numbers in Havering 2024

 Regulator of Social Housing Return to Area Summary To change area return to Area Summary		<h3>Social stock in Havering by provider 2024</h3>														
Havering Number of social stock owning providers in area; (LARPs and FRPs who do not own stock are excluded):		Number of additional LAs PRP operates in	Total Social Stock (unweighted)	% Total Social Stock in area	% of LARP/PRPs total Social Stock	General needs self-contained units (unweighted)	% General needs self-contained units in area	% of LARP/PRPs total general needs self-contained stock	General needs bedspaces (unweighted)	% General needs bedspaces in area	% of LARP/PRPs total general needs bedspaces stock	Supported housing/ housing for older people units (unweighted)	% Supported housing/ housing for older people units in area	% of LARP/PRPs total supported housing/ housing for older people stock	Low cost home ownership (LARPs and large FRPs only - unweighted)	
32			15,141	100%		12,106	100%		290	100%		1,436	100%		1,309	
All units																
1	London Borough of Havering Council	LARP	-	9,126	60.3%	100.0%	8,153	67.3%	100.0%	-	-	-	756	52.6%	100.0%	217
2	A2Dominion Homes Limited	Large	44	42	0.3%	0.3%	14	0.1%	0.2%	-	-	-	-	-	-	28
3	Anchor Hanover Group	Large	245	207	1.4%	0.6%	-	-	-	-	-	207	14.4%	0.6%	-	
4	Bespoke Supportive Tenancies Ltd	Large	92	4	0.0%	0.3%	-	-	-	-	-	4	0.3%	0.3%	-	
5	Brentwood Housing Trust Limited	Small	1	29	0.2%	17.0%	29	0.2%	17.7%	-	-	-	-	-	-	
6	Centrepoint Soho	Small	15	12	0.1%	3.4%	-	-	-	-	-	12	0.8%	5.4%	-	
7	Clarion Housing Association Limited	Large	161	638	4.2%	0.6%	496	4.1%	0.6%	-	-	14	1.0%	0.2%	128	
8	Cromwood Housing Ltd	Small	25	34	0.2%	9.3%	34	0.3%	10.2%	-	-	-	-	-	-	
9	Estuary Housing Association Limited	Large	17	585	3.9%	13.5%	430	3.6%	12.1%	-	-	8	0.6%	4.4%	147	
10	Gateway Housing Association Limited	Large	5	1	0.0%	0.0%	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	1	
11	Golden Lane Housing Limited	Large	197	1	0.0%	0.0%	-	-	-	-	-	1	0.1%	0.0%	-	
12	Habinteg Housing Association Limited	Large	76	2	0.0%	0.1%	1	0.0%	0.0%	-	-	1	0.1%	0.1%	-	
13	Hastoe Housing Association Limited	Large	62	119	0.8%	2.3%	119	1.0%	2.8%	-	-	-	-	-	-	
14	Home Group Limited	Large	173	44	0.3%	0.1%	22	0.2%	0.1%	-	-	-	-	-	22	
15	Housing 21	Large	209	113	0.7%	0.6%	-	-	-	-	-	108	7.5%	0.6%	5	
16	Local Space	Large	18	113	0.7%	7.1%	113	0.9%	7.3%	-	-	-	-	-	-	
17	London & Quadrant Housing Trust	Large	139	1,893	12.5%	2.1%	1,167	9.6%	1.7%	-	-	226	15.7%	3.0%	500	
18	Look Ahead Care and Support Limited	Large	20	15	0.1%	1.3%	-	-	-	-	-	15	1.0%	1.4%	-	
19	Metropolitan Housing Trust Limited	Large	116	20	0.1%	0.0%	16	0.1%	0.1%	-	-	-	-	-	4	
20	Moat Homes Limited	Large	90	2	0.0%	0.0%	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	2	
21	Newlon Housing Trust	Large	10	2	0.0%	0.0%	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	2	
22	Notting Hill Genesis	Large	54	354	2.3%	0.8%	348	2.9%	1.0%	-	-	-	-	-	6	
23	Notting Hill Home Ownership Limited	Large	68	28	0.2%	0.5%	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	28	
24	Orbit Group Limited	Large	82	42	0.3%	0.7%	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	42	
25	Peabody Trust	Large	86	160	1.1%	0.2%	141	1.2%	0.2%	-	-	-	-	-	19	
26	Shepherds Bush Housing Association Limited	Large	34	1	0.0%	0.0%	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	1	
27	Southern Housing	Large	106	10	0.1%	0.0%	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	10	
28	Swan Housing Association Limited	Large	21	881	5.8%	10.4%	523	4.3%	7.3%	290	100.0%	43.0%	19	1.3%	5.1%	49
29	The Guinness Partnership Limited	Large	133	400	2.6%	0.7%	400	3.3%	0.9%	-	-	-	-	-	-	
30	The Riverside Group Limited	Large	149	224	1.5%	0.3%	82	0.7%	0.2%	-	-	44	3.1%	0.4%	98	
31	Trinity Housing Association Limited	Small	35	17	0.1%	4.1%	-	-	-	-	-	17	1.2%	4.1%	-	
32	Westmoreland Supported Housing Limited	Small	61	4	0.0%	0.6%	-	-	-	-	-	4	0.3%	0.6%	-	
33	YMCA Thames Gateway	Small	7	18	0.1%	3.9%	18	0.1%	13.4%	-	-	-	-	-	-	