

Mayor's revised housing strategy consultation

London Assembly response

November 2011



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Relevant sections of the Committee's terms of reference:

To examine and report to the Assembly from time to time on the Mayor's Spatial Development Strategy ('The London Plan') and the Mayor's Housing Strategy, particularly in respect of their implementation and revision.

To respond on behalf of the Assembly to consultations and similar processes when within its terms of reference.

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1 Background

- 1.1 This report sets out the Planning and Housing Committee's response to the Mayor's consultation on proposed changes to his Housing Strategy, published on 31 August 2011.¹
- 1.2 There is a need to revise the Mayor's housing strategy in light of new funding settlements, legislative changes and additional Mayoral housing and regeneration powers.
- 1.3 The Committee welcomes the Mayor's intention to strengthen the links between his strategic housing and planning powers with new responsibilities for budgets and land assets. This will give the Mayor an unprecedented opportunity to address London's unique housing needs with the widest range of powers since the introduction of the GLA.
- 1.4 The Committee notes the Mayor's statement that his current consultation primarily focuses on those areas where there will be significant change and that his new proposals sit alongside the existing policies that appear in the 2010 strategy document.
- 1.5 The Committee's response refers to these new proposals but also to existing policies where the Committee concludes it is constructive to provide comments on their implementation to date.
- 1.6 The Committee's response is largely based on its meeting with Richard Blakeway, the Mayor's housing adviser, on 8 September (the transcript of this discussion is at Appendix 1). Additional comments relate to relevant parts of recently agreed Committee reports on the implications of the affordable rent model in London² and overcrowding in social rented housing.³ The Committee is also in the final stages of drafting its report of its review of London's private sector housing⁴ and references to these policy areas appear in this consultation response where relevant.
- 1.7 The Committee's comments below relate to the main policy headings that appear in the consultation document.

2 Increasing supply

Increasing supply - Affordable housing

- 2.1 It is the Mayor's intention to deliver 13,635 new affordable homes annually over the period 2011–15. This is comparable with the annual average of 13,173 achieved from 2008–11.
- 2.2 The Committee notes the significant changes in funding available in terms of public subsidy for new affordable homes in London and the shift in emphasis towards private investment that is planned to contribute some £3.7 billion of funding.
- 2.3 The Mayor will be aware of the importance the Assembly has placed in the past on the ability to understand the planned delivery of new homes over the full-term of the affordable housing funding rounds. This is particularly relevant for the number of new affordable homes planned for delivery to meet London's housing needs.
- 2.4 A new flexible system of delivery has been introduced based on a programme delivery model. The affordable housing programme will be set out in a series of contracts agreed with delivery partners that can be adapted over time as opportunities arise and plans develop.
- 2.5 It is vital then that the Assembly, and other stakeholders, have access to the most up-to-date information available on what contracts have been agreed with delivery partners so it can monitor achievements over the course of the spending programme.
- 2.6 The Committee welcomes the Mayor's intention to publish information on the GLA website on affordable housing supply by delivery partner and in each borough. We note that the information on bed spaces by tenure in each of the four years 2011–15 will be available in October 2011⁵ and would expect to see this information also published alongside the contracted commitments on housing supply.
- 2.7 The Committee needs this information to understand the exact profile of affordable housing the Mayor is expecting to deliver in terms of tenure, size and location.

The Committee recommends that the Mayor provides more information in Table 2 of the Strategy showing on an annual basis planned delivery by each of the three types of affordable homes.

- 2.8 The Mayor's "top line" success measure is to deliver some 54,538 new affordable homes in London to meet the future demand for such housing and to partly address the backlog of unmet demand.
- 2.9 There is a need to move towards a measure of success that reflects the number of people housed as opposed to the number of homes that are built. Such a measure would allow the Mayor to demonstrate his success in helping the actual number of Londoners in housing need, rather than by using the relatively unsophisticated target of total new homes – a target that does not accurately measure how home building meets housing need.
- 2.10 The Committee welcomes the Mayor's intention to measure the supply of new affordable homes by bed spaces as well as units. This was a key recommendation of the Committee's report on overcrowding. The report also recommended that the Mayor should change the headline housing target in his housing strategy to the number of new bedrooms provided, rather than simply the number of units. He should also introduce a new measure of housing success, i.e. 'the number of Londoners taken out of housing need'.⁶

In addition to the welcome proposal to report the supply of new affordable homes by bed spaces as well as units, the Committee recommends the Mayor also reports on the number of "Londoners taken out of housing need" as a more meaningful measure of success to Londoners.⁷

Monitoring implementation

- 2.11 The introduction of the new "Affordable Rent" category accounts for a significant proportion of the anticipated affordable housing supply – representing some 32 per cent of all new affordable homes.
- 2.12 The Committee notes that the HCA is in the process of finalising the contracts with Registered Providers and that details should be available at the end of October.⁸
- 2.13 It is vital that the Mayor retains tight control over the actual delivery of the number and type of homes specified in the contracts with providers if he is going to achieve his aspirations set out in the housing strategy (in terms of the supply, size, type and location of new homes).

- 2.14 We note the Mayor's intention to replace the HCA London Board (that currently oversees and directs the investment programme of the HCA in London) with the new Housing Board for London that will exercise these powers including the monitoring of the delivery contracts.
- 2.15 These contracts will be the key to delivering the number of affordable homes set out in the Mayor's strategy. The Committee is of the view that it is vital that the Mayor ensures that the implementation of these contracts can be monitored easily, openly and publicly.
- 2.16 The Committee welcomes the Mayor's intention that the new "architecture for delivery" should strengthen lines of accountability, with the Assembly able to play a much fuller role in scrutinising the delivery of housing on behalf of Londoners (Mayor's proposals section 3.1).

The Committee recommends that the Mayor establishes a mechanism whereby the Assembly, and others, can access the information needed to assess the progress in delivering the Mayor's priorities through the contracts with housing providers. As a first step this might take the form of a commitment, by the Housing Board for London, to publish a regular update of the progress of contracts that have been agreed for the delivery of new affordable homes and that the information available indicates the number, type and location of all new affordable homes in London.

Additionally, the Mayor should agree to open the meetings and agenda papers of the Housing Board for London to Assembly scrutiny as this will support the Mayor's intention that the Assembly should play a much fuller role in scrutinising the delivery of housing on behalf of Londoners.

Family sized homes

- 2.17 The Committee has long been concerned with the challenges of providing more family sized homes in London and first produced a report on the subject in June 2006⁹ recommending the Mayor consider ways of making targets better reflect meeting housing need in terms of size / mix policies or the number of people housed.
- 2.18 The Committee's recent report on overcrowding in London's social rented homes identified the need for more family sized homes in line

with the evidence of need contained in the London Strategic Housing Market Assessment. It contained an ambitious recommendation that the Mayor's target should reflect this need and aim for 42 per cent of new affordable homes having four or more bedrooms.

- 2.19 In the previous investment round the Mayor had a target to deliver 42 per cent of new social rented homes that had three bedrooms or above. The Mayor's proposals reduce this target to 36 per cent for Affordable Rent homes.
- 2.20 The Mayor should review the opportunities that his new strategic housing and planning powers and responsibilities for budgets and land assets give him to reassess the ability to deliver a greater number of family sized homes over and above the 36 per cent commitment already stated.
- 2.21 One potential option for increasing the delivery of family sized homes is to take advantage of his new ability to co-ordinate housing, planning and regeneration functions. Land values are a key component in housing development economics and are an even more important factor in London. The cost of land is making many schemes for the delivery of larger homes financially unviable.

The Committee recommends that the Mayor clarifies his position on the role that GLA landholdings could play for improving the viability of schemes for family sized homes by building on the preliminary work set out in section 3.3 of his proposals document.

This could include the potential for offering land at discounted prices to make the development of larger homes financially viable or as an equity contribution that could generate a return on investment in the longer term.

Tenure mix

- 2.22 The Committee supports the Mayor's stated aim of ensuring that new housing developments contain an appropriate mix of market and affordable homes that are developed in locations where they can help to reduce concentrations of particular tenures.
- 2.23 The London Plan and the housing strategy set out targets for new housing supply across all tenures, the number of new affordable

homes and the target for the proportion of social rent and intermediate homes.

- 2.24 Within the overall targets for new housing supply, there is the Mayor's desire to achieve mixed and balanced communities (London Plan Policy 3.9) – the Committee supports this aim.
- 2.25 Both the Mayor's recently adopted London Plan and his existing housing strategy contain London wide targets to achieve a 60/40 social rent/intermediate split for new affordable homes (London Plan Policy 3.11 and housing strategy Policy 1.1D respectively, these policies are designed to promote the intermediate housing sector and to create mixed communities).
- 2.26 The London Plan sets targets for overall housing delivery across all tenures by each borough (London Plan Table 3.1) and the revised housing strategy proposals contains a London wide target for new affordable homes (Table 2). The Mayor's housing adviser was clear that the intention is not to set a borough target for affordable housing social rent/intermediate homes. It will therefore be necessary to find new ways to monitor the success of these policies.

To enable the Committee to monitor the Mayor's progress in achieving the delivery of new affordable homes in mixed and balance communities the Mayor should publish, in his annual monitoring report, a breakdown of new affordable homes delivered by borough.

The Mayor should aim to publish future monitoring data in line with the Code of Practice for Official Statistics (UK Statistics Authority, January 2009) whenever possible or appropriate.

- 2.27 From its meeting with Richard Blakeway the Committee heard that details of the HCA contracts for the second half of the four-year investment period are not known in terms of the locations and broad mix of development. The contracts need to contain such details so that the Mayor can be sure his intentions to support proposals that promote mixed communities and meet local housing need, are followed through.

- 2.28 The Committee has already highlighted the importance of the new contracts with development partners in the new arrangements for delivery. These contracts will offer a significant degree of control for the Mayor to achieve his targets and so it is important that he takes the opportunity to ensure they reflect his priorities.

The Committee recommends that the Mayor ensures that the HCA contracts are signed only if they support his aim to ensure mixed and balanced communities.

Affordable rent levels

- 2.29 Discussions with experts in March and April this year revealed the challenges and opportunities that the Affordable Rent model presents for the supply of new family housing. The Committee's report highlighted a number of issues relating to implementing the Affordable Rent Model in London.¹⁰
- 2.30 Affordable Rent will offer shorter-term tenancies at a rent higher than social rent, to be set up to a maximum of 80 per cent of the local market rate. Affordable Rent tenancies will be offered on a fixed term of at least two years with appropriate safeguards around termination. Affordable Rent will be offered on a proportion of providers' empty properties and re-lets initially and also on new stock. It is the Government's intention that the additional rental income providers receive will contribute to the provision of new affordable homes.
- 2.31 The Committee is of the view that the greatest challenge for housing associations is to set the new rents at an appropriate level to ensure they continue to provide affordable housing for those who need social rented homes.¹¹
- 2.32 The higher rent levels are set under Affordable Rent, the more investment is available for housing. However, this could have a negative impact on the ability for some families on benefits to afford housing if the proposed £500-a-week benefit cap comes into force. It may also affect the financial viability of building new family sized homes if families are unable to afford the new rents. In evidence, the Committee heard that while housing associations have achieved about 35 per cent to 40 per cent of new housing being three bed or more the potential effect of the Affordable Rent model might see that drop to around 20 per cent.¹²

- 2.33 The Mayor's proposals anticipate that new Affordable Rents will be set at an average of 65 per cent of median market rent. It also has a target that 36 per cent of new Affordable Rent homes have three bedrooms or more.
- 2.34 It is recognised that the new rent levels could potentially see some new tenants either having to pay more for their accommodation than existing tenants, or alternatively altering the geographical range of their search.

The relationship between level of Affordable Rent housing and the ability to deliver larger homes is still unclear. It would be helpful if the Mayor would set out how his proposals for ensuring larger homes can be delivered while retaining lower rents to meet Mayoral targets for family homes.

The inter-relationship between rent levels (as a proportion of local market rents) and the proposed benefit caps is still not clear. It would be helpful if the Mayor could provide further details on the formulae used by providers in relation to rent levels and viability calculations so that the Committee can be reassured that London can continue to provide affordable housing for those who need affordable rented homes.

Land

- 2.35 The Committee welcomes the Mayor's proposals to take advantage of his new responsibilities to better co-ordinate strategic housing and planning powers and land assets.
- 2.36 The Mayor has, in the past, indicated that the public sector land (especially that owned by the GLA, HCA and LDA) should be brought forward in a way that supports the development of new homes. The aim of this is to drive new housing supply by bringing forward surplus public land, or acquiring new sites, and – by discounting the upfront costs – ease the cash flows that would otherwise constrain new supply in current market conditions. On 28 October it was announced that the Mayor is accelerating the release of HCA owned land as part of a commitment to help get more homes built for Londoners and support the capital's economy.¹³

- 2.37 The Mayor's existing housing strategy contains policies to use GLA Group resources, including directing the HCA and LDA to develop flexible investment models and bringing forward public land to support new development.¹⁴
- 2.38 His new proposals suggest that the Mayor will publish and maintain a list of sites in the GLA Group's ownership, setting out their capacity, current status and a clear statement of how the Mayor intends to bring them forward. The Mayor proposes to set up a London Development Panel to streamline procurement of sites and support schemes that provide new homes. This Panel has the potential to deliver on a wide range of initiatives that would support the provision of new affordable housing in London.

The proposed London Development Panel must drive forward initiatives such as borough-led estate regeneration and community-led development as well as new forms of funding for housing delivery, such as long term institutional investment and equity funding. These have featured in Mayoral priorities throughout the last four years but need renewed impetus so that they can bring real benefits to London.

- 2.39 A Community Land Trust (CLT) is a local community-controlled organisation set up to own, and manage, land and other assets in perpetuity for the benefit of the community. The assets other than land can include affordable housing.
- 2.40 The Mayor's 2008 housing manifesto said "creating a network of Community Land Trusts across London is not only the most creative and transparent use of public assets owned by the GLA. It is also the clearest example yet of devolving planning power to communities." It proposed to "sell [GLA] land to Community Land Trusts [and] by releasing the land to a CLT, ensure that the units built on it remain affordable for future generations."¹⁵
- 2.41 The 2010 London Housing Strategy notes that Community Land Trusts have the potential to play a significant role in delivering additional homes and will be supported where they can do so (Policy 3.1E).
- 2.42 However, to date a CLT scheme has yet to come to fruition in London, although there are some promising schemes being developed. The

GLA is currently working with HCA London and community led housing initiatives in London, and HCA London is currently undertaking a competitive tendering process for development of community led housing on sites in East London. The Committee supports the Mayor's intentions to support Community Land Trusts in London but would like to see renewed efforts to see them a reality in London.

The Mayor's revised housing strategy needs to set out his proposals for promoting a network of Community Land Trusts across London in the form of an implementation plan.

Empty homes

- 2.43 The Committee agrees with the Mayor that long-term empty homes in London are a wasted resource and according to the Empty Homes Agency, there were 79,971 vacant homes in London in 2010.
- 2.44 The Mayor's revised strategy recognises that in October 2010, 34,671 properties in London had been empty for six months or more. CLG statistics show 2 per cent of local authority owned dwellings were vacant in the same period (reduced to 0.6 per cent after managed vacancies are taken into account).
- 2.45 The Mayor proposes to ensure that no more than one per cent of homes should stand empty and unused for more than six months.

The Committee supports the Mayor's intention to encourage boroughs to remove any financial incentives to leave homes empty and, specifically his intention to encourage the involvement of the community in bringing empty homes back into use, for example through self-help organisations.

The Committee would welcome further details of how the Mayor proposes to meet these objectives in the next version of his housing strategy.

- 2.46 The Temporary Empty Homes product developed by the Homes and Communities Agency is the successor to Temporary Social Housing Grant. This will be of importance to short-life housing organisations,

boroughs and housing associations who are involved in leasing empty properties to address housing shortages in London.

- 2.47 There are some differences in the new scheme; such as the minimum length of lease is now 5 years instead of 2 years and the home must have been empty for 2 years (previously there was no limit). There are slightly more restrictions around the ownership of the property prior to it being leased: local authorities and other registered providers are explicitly excluded (so a local authority can no longer lease a home to a housing association, which was possible under the previous scheme).

The Committee understands that some organisations are encountering barriers to the use of Temporary Empty Homes funding. Through his housing strategy, the Mayor should argue for these restrictions to be lifted and to ring fence funding for self-help organisations to make use of empty homes in London.

3 Raising standards

Housing standards

- 3.1 In August 2010, the Mayor published the 'interim edition' of the London Housing Design Guide that set out standards of housing design (including new minimum space standards) in London. All housing built on LDA land was expected to meet these standards.
- 3.2 The current London Housing Strategy requires all homes developed with public funding to deliver high quality in line with the guide from April 2011. In July 2011 the Mayor published his new replacement London Plan with Policy 3.5 setting out the requirement for new housing to include the minimum space standards contained in Table 3.3 of the London Plan.
- 3.3 The Committee fully supports the Mayor's policy of ensuring new homes in London meet minimum standards of energy efficiency, adequate room sizes and designed to higher standards. It is vital that the Mayor can guarantee these standards through contracts with providers that receive any kind of public subsidy.

The Mayor should ensure standards are integrated into future housing contracts with partners delivering new affordable homes to make it an obligation to meet his energy efficiency and space standards.

- 3.4 The Committee notes it is the Mayor's intention to continue the HCA practice of reporting data on completions.¹⁶ This reporting mechanism will provide the opportunity for the Mayor to monitor the implementation of his policies on space and energy efficiency standards.

The Mayor should include London's performance on meeting his space and energy efficiency standards for new homes in his regular housing monitoring reports.

Private rented sector

- 3.5 The Committee agrees with the Mayor's view that London needs a strong and vibrant private rented sector.
- 3.6 London has the highest number and proportion of private rented housing in England. In 2010, 25.8 per cent of all London households (850,000) were in the private rented sector – compared with an

average for England of 17.4 per cent. Government figures show that the private rented sector in London grew by 83 per cent between 2000 and 2010.

3.7 The private rented sector in London continues to face challenges associated with poor housing conditions and a minority of rogue, or even criminal, landlords. The sector is now growing strongly and it is vital that the Mayor and boroughs work to improve the sector in a number of ways including:

- Improving the quality of the sector
- Making the private rented sector a strategic housing priority
- Making it an appropriate tenure for families
- Providing more security of tenure especially for families

3.8 The Committee is in the final stages of drafting its report on London's private rented sector (due for publication in November 2011) and it looks forward to the Mayor responding positively to the recommendations in the report which are relevant to improving this increasingly important housing tenure in London.

The Mayor should respond to the recommendations made in the Committee's forthcoming report on London's private rented housing before publishing a version of his revised housing strategy proposals for public consultation.

4 Enhancing mobility and choice

Enhancing mobility and choice

- 4.1 The Mayor believes that pan-London mobility should provide a platform for social tenants to find employment and training.¹⁷ The Committee agrees with this, but also recognises the opportunities that encouraging mobility across London produces for easing problems such as overcrowding.
- 4.2 The Committee supports the Mayor's proposals to enhance mobility across London to ease housing needs and that a simple and flexible scheme is set for operation from early 2012. This scheme will initially give priority to underoccupying households, to help boroughs to release larger stock for overcrowded families and to help reduce the high levels of worklessness amongst social housing tenants.
- 4.3 It is noted that the Mayor proposes to involve all of London's social landlords in this scheme. In its May 2011 report on overcrowding the Committee recommended that:
- Boroughs review the requirement for housing associations to accept nominations from the waiting list as soon as vacancies occur so as to allow housing associations the ability to more effectively manage under-occupation and so free up larger homes (recommendation 7); and,
 - London boroughs prioritise overcrowding wherever possible and should include rehousing under-occupiers as a further priority where this would assist addressing overcrowding (recommendation 8).
- 4.4 The Committee notes that the Mayor's proposals would indicate he is more receptive to engaging all of London's social landlords in working towards enhancing mobility in order to meet a number of wider policy objectives. In terms of mobility, the Committee recommends the Mayor encourages boroughs and registered providers to be more flexible in their allocations policy to reduce overcrowding.

The Mayor should make every effort to encourage social landlords to agree to work together to review their allocations policies and priorities in line with recommendations 7 and 8 of the Committee's report on overcrowding.

- 4.5 Mobility schemes have the potential to offer great benefits to Londoners. However, it will be necessary to ensure that such schemes

will always rely on voluntary participation and do not have negative impacts on tenants' rights or the quality of their housing.

The Committee welcomes the Mayor's mobility proposals, but requests further details regarding what safeguards will be put in place to protect tenants' rights and the quality of their housing.

5 Tackling need

Temporary accommodation

- 5.1 In the current housing strategy, the Mayor notes: “the number of homeless households in temporary accommodation in London has fallen in the last few years but remains high at 43,500, just over three quarters of the national total.” Policy 3.2B sets out the Mayor’s target to halve the number of households in temporary accommodation by the end of 2010.
- 5.2 The issue of temporary accommodation does not feature in the Mayor’s current consultation document and the Committee is unclear whether a new target on reducing the number of Londoners in temporary accommodation is to be put in place.
- 5.3 The Committee notes the Mayor’s evidence to the House of Commons DWP Committee at the end of 2010 when he estimated that (in relation to housing benefit reforms) homelessness acceptances in London could increase by 51 per cent, at an estimated cost of around £78 million for the additional 5,000 households that could be placed in temporary accommodation.¹⁸

The Committee wishes to see in the next draft of the housing strategy what measures the Mayor proposes to take to reduce the number of households placed in temporary accommodation.

Rough sleeping

- 5.4 The Committee notes the Mayor’s progress towards his target in the 2010 London Housing Strategy is met that no-one should live on the streets and no-one arriving on the streets should sleep out for a second night.
- 5.5 The Government has devolved £8.5 million a year in funding to the Mayor for the commissioning of pan-London rough sleeping services. A commissioning framework setting out the Mayor’s priorities for this funding has just been published.
- 5.6 The Government has also recently announced an additional £37.5 million of funding nationally to provide 1,200 new bed spaces for homeless people over the period 2012 – 2015. London is to receive £11 million of this extra funding.¹⁹

The Committee requires further details in the Strategy from the Mayor on how he proposes to tackle rough sleeping given the funding levels now available to London.

Overcrowding

- 5.7 The Committee fully supports the Mayor's proposals to address overcrowding. The Committee particularly welcomes those on the retention of family sized housing stock; the production of overcrowding reduction plans; the measurement of new bed spaces as well as new homes; the prioritisation of under-occupiers in allocation policies to reduce overcrowding levels.
- 5.8 The Committee refers the Mayor to the recommendations made in its recent report on overcrowding in London's social rented housing as additional measures for consideration. Specifically those recommendations that relate to:
- Lobbying for an update to the statutory overcrowding definition as part of the Localism Bill;
 - Better collection of data and the recording of overcrowding in London's social rented housing;
 - Reviewing measures to incentivise the building of larger homes;
 - The need to change the target for family sized housing in his housing strategy so that 42 per cent of new social rented housing should be 4+ bedrooms;
 - Reviewing the requirement for housing associations to accept nominations from the waiting list as soon as vacancies occur to allow housing associations the ability to better manage under-occupation and so free up larger homes;
 - Prioritising under-occupiers for rehousing to reduce overcrowding.

The Committee would welcome the Mayor's views on, if and how, the recommendations in its recent report on overcrowding in London's social rented housing can contribute to improving this aspect of housing need in London.

Appendix 1 - Transcript of the Committee's meeting with the Mayor's housing adviser

Planning and Housing Committee, 8 September 2011

Jenny Jones (Chair): Welcome, gentlemen, again. It seems from the terms in the strategy that the supply of new affordable housing in 2011-15 will be about comparable with what was delivered between 2008-2011. What is the annual profile of the new homes across the three affordable categories, in each of the years 2011-15?

Richard Blakeway (Mayor's Advisor for Housing): You are right; there is a marginal increase in annualised affordable supply in terms of completions. Annual supply should be 13,181, if you annualised it, over this investment round. In each of your categories, the forecast for completions is 18,156 for social rent; 16,743 for affordable rent; and 17,823 for First Steps, which is essentially low cost home ownership intermediate housing.

Jenny Jones (Chair): Those are figures that you feel completely comfortable about delivering?

Richard Blakeway (Mayor's Advisor for Housing): Yes, absolutely. One of the significant features of this programme is the proportion which is on identified schemes, and these are going through. So we feel confident about these figures.

Alan Benson (Head of Housing, GLA): Confidence is probably well-founded in as much as these are the schemes that are in contract or going through the process of being in contract now between rental providers and the Homes and Communities Agency (HCA) and the Greater London Authority (GLA). On top of those schemes, always, in every year, there is some additional supply, which is not counted here. These are things that come through Section 106 without any HCA or public funding. That is usually in the range, in recent years of 2008-2011, of 700-800 a year. We expect more of them going forward because there is more incentive for local authorities to work with providers because grant levels have been small. There is more incentive to do a deal outside the grant conditions, particularly for boroughs who have stated they want to try and still provide some social rented housing; so they will do a Section 106 deal on those. None of those are counted in here; things that will not get funding are not counted in these figures that Richard's quoting; they will be additional to these.

Richard Blakeway (Mayor's Advisor for Housing): Yes that is the case, and also I have a critical update on the figures, which is, if you include supported housing, which is obviously very important, the numbers go up. The annualised supply would be 13,635, and then in each of those categories I have given you are looking at social rent of 19,014, affordable rent of 17,701, and First Steps of 17,823; that is with supported housing as well.

Alan Benson (Head of Housing, GLA): That is table 2 in the appendix.

Mike Tuffrey (AM): That was going to be my first supplementary, so how does the figures you have just given us relate with the numbers that are on the back of the revised strategy.

Richard Blakeway (Mayor's Advisor for Housing): I excluded supported housing.

Mike Tuffrey AM: Please define 'supported' for us?

Alan Benson (Head of Housing, GLA): It is housing, which comes with a support package, which has revenue-funding separately provided. For example, those people that are moving out of homes or hostels, that still require some degree of support when they are in housing; it is housing with a support package as well. It captures quite a range of different products, but mostly it is about single people with particular support needs for coming out of institutions of some kind.

David Lunts (Interim Executive Director Housing and Regeneration, GLA): Can I just add one other word on the numbers and the forecasts and the level of confidence, because I think it is a new programme, affordable rent. That obviously means that we are going to have to manage it quite carefully. On the other hand, one of the things that distinguishes the new programme from the old programme is that this is a four-year programme with firm contractual commitments from each of the partners to deliver their total completions. Unlike previous bidding rounds where individual schemes come forward at any particular time, which can make it quite a difficult programme to manage centrally, this time around there will be clear contractual obligations on each of the registered providers to deliver their four-yearly targets. To some extent this should assist with the delivery of the programme and the confidence we have in the

programme because those numbers will be fixed from the outset for a four-year term.

Nicky Gavron (Deputy Chair): Just on this last point, on the contractual programme, I want to be clear, because last time Alan Benson I appeared before us he said that there were 28,000 homes in the pipeline for 2011/12, 2012/13, and that of those around 16,000 were going to be delivered in the 2011/12 year. Those 28,000, which are already in the pipeline are they part of that contractual programme you have just talked about?

Alan Benson (Head of Housing, GLA): No, David is talking about the new contractual programme for 2011-15, this is a new programme we have been currently negotiating with partners.

Nicky Gavron (Deputy Chair): It is concurrent with these completions?

Alan Benson (Head of Housing, GLA): Yes, you always start a programme, and obviously, because it takes time to build houses, they always complete on the next round. The figures I was talking about then, at the Committee before last I was at, were the figures from the 2008-2011 investment programme that were still in the pipeline to be delivered. They were ones where we had started, paid the original instalments, but were being finished in this investment round.

Nicky Gavron (Deputy Chair): They are counted in these figures?

Alan Benson (Head of Housing, GLA): Yes. They are counted in these completion figures.

Nicky Gavron (Deputy Chair): They are counted; so this figure of 19,000, it includes the 2011/12?

Alan Benson (Head of Housing, GLA): Yes, absolutely, because this is 2011-15.

Nicky Gavron (Deputy Chair): The point I want to make now, and I have written to Richard [Blakeway] about this - and I am not satisfied yet with the reply - is that you have 2011/12 also featuring in your delivery of 54,000; so 54,000 is your 2008-12 target?

Richard Blakeway (Mayor's Advisor for Housing): The reason why it is counted, the reason why 2011/12 was counted as part of the 54,583, is because they are part of this investment round, the new investment round starting in April. For those completions to be delivered there is £1.1 billion of new money in this investment round to complete those homes. It is absolutely right to include those completions in this investment round, because we are in this investment round.

Nicky Gavron (Deputy Chair): Sure, no, I do not have any problems with that; I just have problems when it looks as though what you are delivering is 54,000 between 2008-12 and 54,000 between 2011-15, when in fact you are delivering 54,000 minus roughly 16,000; so there is double-counting in that year.

Alan Benson (Head of Housing, GLA): There is not double-counting. The difficulty is, of course, the Mayor's term crosses two spending rounds.

Nicky Gavron (Deputy Chair): All right, you are not double-counting, but there is double-counting in the Mayor's claims!

Richard Blakeway (Mayor's Advisor for Housing): No, there is not double-counting. The Mayor's commitment was to deliver 50,000 affordable homes and that is a commitment for this Mayoral term. This Mayoral term includes the 2008-2011 investment round and it includes the first year of this investment round, and that 50,000 includes those 16,000 homes. But they appear in this investment round because this investment round started in April and this Mayoral term finishes next April/May.

Nicky Gavron (Deputy Chair): That is because the Mayor did not deliver his 50,000 in three years, but extended it to four, so he had to take from the next investment round in order to pay for the 50,000.

Richard Blakeway (Mayor's Advisor for Housing): Two points: firstly, that point you have just made is not a point about double-counting; I want to be clear there is no double-counting. The second point --

Nicky Gavron (Deputy Chair): No, I am making two different points, one about double-counting and one about taking money.

Richard Blakeway (Mayor's Advisor for Housing): We have been around this before and we have always been clear that the reason why the target was moved was because of exceptionally difficult economic circumstances. I think most people look out the window and see what is happening in the market, and would recognise it was an extremely difficult market. Despite that, we are still delivering a record number of affordable homes and affordable completions, for a Mayoral term.

Nicky Gavron (Deputy Chair): I do not think that is going to work out right, but the point I am trying to stick to is that we have one year counted twice in your 54,000.

Richard Blakeway (Mayor's Advisor for Housing): No, we have one year counted once; it appears in the Mayor's 50,000 commitment because that is a Mayoral term, and it appears in this investment round because we are in this investment round.

Mike Tuffrey (AM): Could I go on trying to unpick the numbers, and then when we have the numbers clear we can make our points. What your question was, was: what is the annual profile? And we have not had that from you year by year. For ease let us take the ones included the supported homes, because that is the numbers we all have in front of us. So that 54,538 averages out at presumably 13,635, but can you give us what is the actual per year?

Richard Blakeway (Mayor's Advisor for Housing): I can give you the totals for each year, which is: 2011/12 16,883 completions; for 2012/13 it is 10,644; and for 2013/14 it is 13,502; and for 2014/15 it is 13,508.

Mike Tuffrey (AM): Good, because the underlying concern was that there was going to be a sharp drop-off, but actually, although there is a drop-off next year, 2012/13, it picks back up again in 2013/14.

Richard Blakeway (Mayor's Advisor for Housing): Yes, there is a re-gearing between two different programmes and the investment rounds.

Mike Tuffrey (AM): Then the second supplementary question was, how many of those were 'new' new, which is the sort of point that I think Nicky is trying to get at; how many new social rent homes will be

delivered outside those started in 2008-11 but not yet completed, and that number is what?

Richard Blakeway (Mayor's Advisor for Housing): We will not have a complete picture, because you have to remember, as Alan [Benson] said before, there will be some homes delivered without grants, which we do not yet know about - Section 106 and so on - but the Affordable Rent programme, we agreed to deliver circa 22,000 new homes and that is what the contracts are with the registered providers.

Mike Tuffrey (AM): So that is homes, that is units, but some of the thrust of our earlier work in this committee was to look at bedrooms, and I think in terms of the revisions to the Strategy we acknowledge that the number of bedrooms is also an important metric, but you have not given us those numbers, so can you tell us what are the bedroom implications?

Richard Blakeway (Mayor's Advisor for Housing): I cannot give you the number but we can come back to you with our estimate of what the number of bed spaces will be; I do not think we have the number in front of us. I can give you percentages. Are you talking about the affordable rent programme or are you talking about the whole programme?

Mike Tuffrey (AM): I would be interested in seeing all three levels.

Richard Blakeway (Mayor's Advisor for Housing): Broadly speaking, on allocations: for the affordable rent programme you are looking at 36% will be family sized: so that is three-bed or larger; for the old National Housing Partnership programme, your 2008-11 programme, the allocations, if you exclude supported housing, which tend to be smaller units, it is 41%. That is the allocation; that is what we are funding.

Mike Tuffrey (AM): It is going down then?

Richard Blakeway (Mayor's Advisor for Housing): There is a marginal decrease. If you look historically though it is still quite good, and I am sure we can go into challenges that affordable rent can present with delivering larger homes, but historically if you look back at the previous investment round, the 2006-08 investment round, I

think you were looking at 35-36% were family-sized, so historically it is still quite a large number, despite the more challenging product to deliver larger homes.

David Lunts (Interim Executive Director Housing and Regeneration, GLA): It may also be worth adding that in terms of intermediate shared ownership properties in the new programme we are looking to increase the proportion of allocations for three-bedroom units and larger from around about 9% in the 2008-11 programme to about 14% in the new programme, so although there is a very small drop in the proportion of larger homes for rent, there is quite a significant increase in the proportion of larger homes for shared ownership.

Mike Tuffrey (AM): So there is a mix within the tiers, but overall that is what I am really trying to understand. If the total numbers, taking the new round compared to the old round, are roughly equivalent in volume terms, number of units, the question is: are we getting more or fewer bedrooms overall? By the sound of it, we may be going backwards a bit in terms of the total number of bedrooms, and if so, that would be quite significant.

Richard Blakeway (Mayor's Advisor for Housing): You may want to look at family housing in more detail, but the investment round we have just finished saw a record number of affordable homes for ten years being delivered at family-size, at three-bedroom or larger, so we are coming off from a peak. The point that I can stress though is that, despite the problems are more challenging, if you look historically we are still delivering a significant proportion of family-sized housing and, indeed, pro-rates for 2006-08. The investment round before - the two previous investment rounds - the proportion of family-sized housing was 35%; so, actually, despite the more challenging product it is still slightly larger.

Navin Shah (AM): When you give us a split in terms of delivery of number of bedrooms, year by year, could you also include information about how many units were of three-bedroom, four-bedroom, or larger, for each of those years?

Richard Blakeway (Mayor's Advisor for Housing): Yes that would be possible. I do not have the figures, but we can get those.

Navin Shah (AM): When one talks about family-size dwellings, the original definition, as I understand it, was four bedrooms and larger. Have we now gone down in that sense in terms of the definition of family-sized dwellings, because in the proposed strategy, and from what you have been saying in terms of delivery, you are talking about three-bedroom and larger units?

Richard Blakeway (Mayor's Advisor for Housing): My understanding - and Alan [Benson] can expand on this - is that family-sized has always been counted as three-bed or larger. Indeed, I suspect that is the planning definition as well, although Alan can clarify. Before Alan does, I just want to make a big-picture point, which is, in investment terms, we have been very keen under the HCA to talk about this, counting bed sizes as well as units, and indeed, as you will see in the Housing Strategy we are very keen to continue to do that.

Alan Benson (Head of Housing, GLA): There is no statutory definition of family-sized, and we have always used, both in the London Plan and the Housing Strategy, three-bedroom plus as being the standard definition of family-sized housing, but there is no formal definition - that is usually the vernacular.

Andrew Boff (AM): That is not quite the case, because in the Strategic Housing Market Assessment (SHMA) they used four bedrooms.

Alan Benson (Head of Housing, GLA): That there is a need for four bedrooms, yes absolutely. It showed the greatest need for social rented housing was four-bedroom plus, you are quite right. But, as I say, when we use the phrase ,family-sized housing' we are referring to three-bedroom plus.

Andrew Boff (AM): Is it not fair to say that in coming to a decision about how many family properties should be built, one of the main sources of that information is the SHMA?

Alan Benson (Head of Housing, GLA): It is, yes, it is the main source of information about what we would need.

Andrew Boff (AM): Yet the targets are not reflecting the evidence.

Alan Benson (Head of Housing, GLA): We went through this with the Examination in Public in some detail, both for this plan and the previous London Plan of the former Mayor as well. You have targets for need; those targets for need are above the capacity to deliver in London and above the viability of sites to deliver on them, so what we must inevitably do is balance out the need for family-sized houses as I understand against the numbers you wish to deliver, and that is tested quite robustly at Examination in Public. Whether we had done that appropriately or not--

Navin Shah (AM): Is it not the current Mayor's strategy to deliver 43% minimum family-sized dwellings?

Richard Blakeway (Mayor's Advisor for Housing): No. The commitment we made for the previous investment round was to deliver 42% social-rented at family-sized, ie three-bed or larger, but that was a commitment for 2008-11 and it was in relation to social rent.

Navin Shah (AM): When you give us a split in terms of actual three and four or larger dwelling units delivered over the four years, would you be able to tell us aggregate figures for outer and inner London as well - split that way - which I think is important information to have?

Richard Blakeway (Mayor's Advisor for Housing): Yes. In so far as we have the data.

Alan Benson (Head of Housing, GLA): Can I just say, that will be quite a bit more difficult going forward, for the existing programmes, existing commitments, and the firm commitments we have in the contracts, which is about 40% of the contracts, that is fine, we know where they are. But remember, as David [Lunts] was saying earlier, these are contracts over four years and it includes a number of developments that will come forward in the last two years, which are not yet known exactly where they will be. We know what the mix will be because that will be in the contract with the providers: the broad mix of homes, but we do not know the exact location of some of those homes in the third and fourth years of the contract.

Navin Shah (AM): Surely you know this is a very important piece of information. You've got a lot of studio and small flats in outer London where they are crying out for larger units, and similarly in inner

London boroughs. It is very important that we get to the stage where we have it clear information as to how it is.

Richard Blakeway (Mayor's Advisor for Housing): I think that is very fair, but I just want to make the sort of big-picture point here, which is, it is boroughs with their planning powers who have responsibility for what they consent to. Our job is funding. What you have seen from the Mayor is a clear focus on delivering larger affordable homes, and what we have had is the highest proportion of family-sized affordable housing being delivered for a decade. We have managed to exceed expectations on affordable rent programmes to deliver 36%, and people were saying it would be significantly lower. If you look at that historically, that is a pretty decent number under what is a difficult product to deliver larger homes with.

Navin Shah (AM): I hear what you say and, yes, accept that boroughs then deliver, but surely, given the Mayor's strategic role and the commitment that he is giving through his strategy, it is important that we achieve the stated objectives. Also, given that the new control that the Mayor will have come April 2012 in terms of delivering housing and funding, and everything else, it is even more important that the Mayor has that control and exercises his powers to make sure that the stated objectives London-wide are achieved. He cannot run away from the fact that boroughs will deliver, but he has to make sure that the overall figures are achieved in specific areas.

Richard Blakeway (Mayor's Advisor for Housing): I agree, I mean there is no question that the Mayor is committed as a funder to delivering larger units.

Nicky Gavron (Deputy Chair): Alan, what is your likely estimate of the number of affordable homes that will be completed, affordable homes, by 2012?

Alan Benson (Head of Housing, GLA): By April 2012, the end of this term, I would think it would be mid-fifties, 55,000, 54,000.

Nicky Gavron (Deputy Chair): 54,000, 55,000, which is consistent with what you said before. We are told here it is going to be 54,000 for 2011-15, yes?

Alan Benson (Head of Housing, GLA): Yes.

Nicky Gavron (Deputy Chair): If you add that up; that is 108,000.

Richard Blakeway (Mayor's Advisor for Housing): No, you cannot add those two figures.

Nicky Gavron (Deputy Chair): Hang on a minute; that gives the impression though that you will have delivered --

Alan Benson (Head of Housing, GLA): No, you are double-counting them.

Richard Blakeway (Mayor's Advisor for Housing): Nicky, you are the double-counter here.

Jenny Jones (Chair): We know you cannot do that.

Richard Blakeway (Mayor's Advisor for Housing): We don't do that either.

Nicky Gavron (Deputy Chair): We understand your double-speak.

Richard Blakeway (Mayor's Advisor for Housing): I will explain it again.

Jenny Jones (Chair): We understand, Richard [Blakeway], that is fine.

Richard Blakeway (Mayor's Advisor for Housing): 50,000 is not specific to one investment round, it is a Mayoral term. 2011-12, the figure you say is double-counted, is within this Mayoral term, it is also within this investment round, so it is counted in this investment round.

Nicky Gavron (Deputy Chair): But it is also in the Mayor's target of 54,000 for the four-year term.

Richard Blakeway (Mayor's Advisor for Housing): For the four-year investment round.

Jenny Jones (Chair): I think, if you can just promise us there will not be any double-counting then we accept that.

Richard Blakeway (Mayor's Advisor for Housing): I assure you, we will not double-count.

Andrew Boff (AM): Mr Benson, I do not want you to start stepping on to political questions, but presumably you have to read through manifestos at election time. How many manifestos express their political targets in investment rounds that you have seen?

Alan Benson (Head of Housing, GLA): None. They always talk about the administration.

Andrew Boff (AM): Is it fair to say the political targets are expressed according to the term of the office?

Alan Benson (Head of Housing, GLA): That is usually the way.

Jenny Jones (Chair): While we are talking about mix, I just want to come in on the St Clements Hospital Site Community Land Trust. There was a slightly disturbing article on this in the Evening Standard yesterday, I do not know if you saw it, and it is great that they will own the land, but control and leadership is a bit different from owning the land, and it looks as if the private developer will have that control, which is very worrying, because that is not the point of community-led building programmes.

Richard Blakeway (Mayor's Advisor for Housing): I will just make some comments on those, but I would like to also be clear that we are in the middle of a procurement process.

Jenny Jones (Chair): Absolutely, I know that; I am just a bit concerned that it is not going to go ahead; that is all, which is a wasted opportunity.

Richard Blakeway (Mayor's Advisor for Housing): The most important thing is that a derelict piece of land gets homes built on it, and affordable homes for Londoners are made available. Bringing forward this land is key! What we have made quite clear is that the land should be held in trust by the community and therefore the purposes of that land are protected, and that the management of the homes should be overseen by a community board. I think there is an important distinction to be made when we talk about community land trusts conceptually. Community land trusts are about the land, it is not

actually about necessarily the homes. It is important, because, for example, a community land trust could be for a swimming pool or a community centre. Regarding the land we are extremely clear that it will be held in trust by the community and we are also extremely clear that the management of the homes – since this is for the purpose of housing – will be overseen by a board, and I think we just let the procurement process get on with it.

Jenny Jones (Chair): I might come back to you on this, I realise you are a bit constrained at the moment with regard to what you can say and so on.

Nicky Gavron (Deputy Chair): In the breakdown of tenures, you do not talk about intermediate anymore you talk about social, affordable and First Steps. You just mentioned shared ownership, David. Can you just explain to me, in that First Steps bracket, how many of those are actual shared ownership as we used to know it? Because First Steps, they are all going to be bought, are they not?

David Lunts (Interim Executive Director Housing and Regeneration, GLA): No. There is a variety of products, it is true, and there always has been in terms of defining intermediate affordable housing, so shared ownership has traditionally in recent times been the main tenure that we would classify as intermediate affordable, and that remains the case. I do not have the numbers in front of me but I think we can be confident that shared ownership will comprise the bulk of the First Steps numbers. In addition to that, there is now a range of shared equity products, which are slightly different from shared ownership, because it does not usually attract the same rent on the un-bought equity, and there are, in addition, I think new rent-to-buy products, which are aimed at those that are eligible and qualify within London Plan household income caps. So I think there is already two or three products associated with First Steps. It may be that we see one or two new products on the back of the affordable housing programme, but the fundamental point here is that these are units of affordable housing that must be provided for those within the eligibility criteria within the London Plan.

Nicky Gavron (Deputy Chair): Regarding what we have understood shared ownership to be, before these new products, including First Steps – I mean First Steps was there before, but not in the bulk that it

is going to be I understand - do they belong in that earlier committed part of this investment round?

David Lunts (Interim Executive Director Housing and Regeneration, GLA): Some of them do.

Nicky Gavron (Deputy Chair): Some of them, so they are still part of the 2013-15 [housing programme]?

David Lunts (Interim Executive Director Housing and Regeneration, GLA): 2013-15? 2011-15, do you mean? Sorry, First Steps is effectively the catchall to identify all legitimate affordable housing intermediate tenures. As I say, the bulk of that will be shared ownership, and some of that clearly, in the overall numbers, is going to be commitments from the 2008-2011 programme, which will build out over the next two to three years, but increasingly that will be obviously replaced by similar products and possibly one or two new products, all within that income eligibility criteria within the London Plan, associated with the new 2011-15 affordable housing programme.

Nicky Gavron (Deputy Chair): Is it possible for you to write to us and just say what the range of products are with a bit of an explanation, because it is very, very confusing?

David Lunts (Interim Executive Director Housing and Regeneration, GLA): Yes, that would be possible.

Mike Tuffrey (AM): Those are the numbers, and to understand the bedrooms, moving on then to the rents, because the big new thing, or one of the big new things, is this 'Affordable Rent', I find the terminology still very confusing, but getting closer to market rent. Your assumption on this is that the average in that new category will be at 65% across the programme, but clearly there is the potential to go up to 80%, and when we had an evidence session a little while back with the housing providers, I was surprised the extent to which they were in a sense keen on the 80%, until the penny dropped that of course, that means that they get more money in and can thus do more with it. The issue is then, who pays the 80%, if it is on benefits that is, as it were, from their perspective somebody else's problem, the national taxpayers' problem. If it is the tenant themselves then it is very much their problem because of the real affordability questions.

So, before we get on to the family issue, which I know is the family-sized housing, could you just give us your thinking as to why overall you have gone for 65% instead of 80%? Clearly, if you or the system had pushed it to 80%, whatever the rights and wrongs of that, one would have received more money into the system and thus more housing out of it. What is the thinking behind 65% overall as the right figure to come out with to start with?

Richard Blakeway (Mayor's Advisor for Housing): As you say, the average across the programme we are running at is 65%, not 80%, and there are predominantly three reasons for that: one to ensure that we can deliver larger homes, and I think we will come on to that; two, to keep within local housing allowance and welfare caps; and three, to reflect the fact that those are great barriers in the market within the capital.

Mike Tuffrey (AM): Let us approach them each in turn: First, the family-sized houses; that first reason. What is the impact therefore on the number of family-sized homes? If you had come in at a lower level, given the cap level of benefits per week, would we have had more or fewer family-sized houses out of that? I am just trying to understand your overall average and its impact, and the choices that were open to us in terms of those various levels. The underlying question is, by moving upwards to 65%, are we going to get fewer family-sized houses?

Richard Blakeway (Mayor's Advisor for Housing): Quite the reverse actually, by having 65% I think we are ensuring the delivery of family-sized housing, keeping within local housing allowance and other welfare caps.

Mike Tuffrey (AM): But in some parts of London, even 65% of market, the weekly rental will still exceed the cap level.

David Lunts (Interim Executive Director Housing and Regeneration, GLA): You are right and there is a balance to be drawn here, because I think, if one models the affordable rent programme, theoretically you are right; if there were fewer family homes and more one and two-bedroom flats, it would be possible I suspect to get more units, because the rents could rise and the cost of building three-bedroom and larger properties is greater, and the rent needs to be depressed to deal with the caps issues. In theory, you

could build more units if you had fewer family homes. However, for reasons that we have already rehearsed, none of us want to see fewer family homes, least of all, -generally speaking - the boroughs, and the landlords that are responsible for the estates that are built. Whether it is for planning reasons, or whether it is because registered providers simply would not want to fund schemes that were just one and two-bedroom flats, there is, for good sustainable mix community reasons, and meeting housing needs, there is a very important priority attached to larger units. Clearly, every larger unit that you build at a depressed rent, closer to social rent, means that the grant that is left in the system has to work that much harder, which is one of the calculations that needs to be made about the mix, and balance between ones and two-beds on the one hand, and larger units on the other.

Alan Benson (Head of Housing, GLA): Can I just add something, because people misunderstand and sometimes think we are using 65% instead of 80%; we are not: 80% still applies in London. The 80% is a cap that you are not allowed, in any home, to go over the market rent of that property. 65% is the average across the whole of London for the whole programme we are doing; that means some rents will be up to 80% of market rents, particularly one or two sites where that is viable, because we want to keep family-sized housing down at lower rents so that it is affordable for families and comes within the benefit caps. A lot of family-sized housing will be down very close to or at social-rented levels, which means some of them seem much more expensive to balance it. The range of rents between social rent levels and 80% of market rents, almost all the family-sized are at social rent or very close to that level within this programme, and therefore quite a few of the one and two-beds will be above 65%, towards 80%, to try and make sure that programme balances.

James Cleverly (AM): You say there is going to be a spectrum; is it fair to assume that where the market rent is lowest, typically in outer London, east, south east London; that is going to be where you are likely to be closer to the 80% threshold, and the more expensive central London locations are going to be below that 65%?

Alan Benson (Head of Housing, GLA): That is a reasonable assumption, yes.

Mike Tuffrey (AM): I think we understand the average; I am just really trying to probe the assumptions, because you could have been

sending signals through this revised strategy to push it up, so the average is closer to 80%. This would result in getting more money into the system, and thus get more housing out at the other end, and there is a judgment call as to what that would mean in terms of affordability, where people would then have to move to be able to afford 80%. The punchline on this is, have you run any sort of projections about the likely effect of this? You will recall there are a lot of stories about 80,000 people being forced out of central London and the emotive language about social cleansing and so forth. I know that whole thing is not just the new build; that is also private rented and so forth. But what projections, what modelling, have you done to say, 'what is the likely effect of this in terms of - the scare stories as I call it - the impact of people living in central London?' There were all sorts of stories about primary schools in Westminster becoming half empty next year because everybody was going to be forced out. What facts do you now have, given we are clear on that?

Richard Blakeway (Mayor's Advisor for Housing): As you alluded to, those projections are not about affordable rent or the affordable homes programme; it is purely about speculation around the impact of housing benefit and wider welfare changes. Many of the impacts with many of the changes have yet to actually come into effect and certainly, as you know, for existing claimants, for existing local housing allowance claimants living in the private rental sector at the moment, there has been no change for those individuals. The empirical evidence you are looking for is not there because it has not come into effect. Clearly, the Department for Work and Pensions and the GLA will monitor the impact when the changes do come into effect, but that is something we say in the strategy.

David Lunts (Interim Executive Director Housing and Regeneration, GLA): The HCA spent a great deal of time talking to boroughs and particularly registered providers as part of the bidding process and the modelling work to do two things really: one is to structure an approach and a programme, which operates within the new benefit caps, this is really important, we talked about the need to keep rents within benefit cap levels for larger family homes, which, as Alan says, means that a lot of larger units are effectively going to be built at or around existing social rents. It is also very important to acknowledge that, again, as Alan says, the 65% is derived from the fact that we have told registered providers that they should never be setting a rent level higher than the local housing allowance. What that

means is that – and I daresay we will come on to the wider discussion about the impact of benefit changes and welfare reform – but it should not be the case that anyone is building affordable housing under the new programme that operates outside of the new welfare regime. Nothing that we are doing in this programme will contribute to those scare stories, as you described them, around falling primary school rolls and so forth.

The second point is on the modelling, which I think is important. I would just like to refer back to the question about the balance between the amount of grant and the level of rent for larger units, and could we potentially get more units if we went to a smaller programme? One of the reasons why we have been keen to make sure that our programme supports the building of homes that can work for people within the new benefit regime is precisely because, if it did not, frankly I do not think registered providers would want to take the grant and build the homes, because it would be a massive headache for them. In terms of modelling that balance between larger units, smaller units, 80% rents and subsidised rents below that, we have been minded, not only to try and keep a sustainable programme in terms of mixed tenure and mixed communities, but also do something, which can maximise the leverage that registered providers will bring from their own balance sheets and their own borrowings into the programme, and they would not do that unless we had that sort of range of product and that range of approach to rents.

Mike Tuffrey (AM): In terms of what I call the scare stories, and I say that because people are scared and not because I think they are not true, what you have just said is that nothing in here is going to make that worse because it is all under the new regime. My question in a sense is: is it going to make things better? For those who are worried about that, which I was, should we be happy that some of the stuff in here will actually ease some of those pressures, or is it essentially irrelevant, which is what I think you were trying to say, Richard; that this does not sort of somehow apply to that, because that is to do with benefits and not to do with new --

Richard Blakeway (Mayor's Advisor for Housing): For the reasons we have explained, what you were quoting was not in relation to the affordable rent, as David has made quite clear our programmes are within local housing allowance welfare caps. I think, what we have managed to do – there is sort of a bit of a bigger picture here – with

this programme is deliver a range of rents and a range of bed sizes, unit sizes, and I think for us there was a number of considerations; what is an entirely new programme, introduced relatively quickly, and I think there are a number of key factors, and I think we were successful on a number of measures, which we had. Key factors for us were: one, the volume of housing let us deliver the London Plan target, and that is something that you can see from the figures; and two, ensure there is a significant proportion of family-sized housing, again, I think if you look at it, it is a significant proportion; three, ensure that there is a range of rents; four, keep within the welfare caps, there was a number of key issues. The final one, five, was to ensure that we received not just the most amount of grant that we could, and we did well at securing as much grant as we could, but also ensure that we made grant work harder, and, as you can see, while getting significant grant settlement, given the resources available nationally, we have also ensured that providers are contributing to this, and to deliver the volume of homes at the range of rents and the larger homes, which were required; I think that is also a key point. Grants I think will represent no more than about 20% of scheme costs, which is very different to obviously what the previous programme looked like.

Alan Benson (Head of Housing, GLA): In answer to that particular question you asked about whether it is good, bad or irrelevant, in terms of the impact on benefits, and people potentially leaving central London, as David [Lunts] was saying, it is not bad, because all of these schemes, and nobody going into these homes will be impacted by the benefit cuts, but it is not irrelevant, it is good, because 54,000 new affordable homes, which work within the benefit caps, most of these will be allocated to people who are in the private rental sector, who currently would face those benefit caps, so actually it is beneficial very much for people not having to leave potentially central London or more expensive parts of London, because they can stay within affordable homes in London that are now being provided, so it is beneficial; not irrelevant.

Nicky Gavron (Deputy Chair): How many social rented homes are going to be produced, not out of the committed programme, but after you have subtracted the committed programme, how many social rented are we talking about of that 19,000?

Richard Blakeway (Mayor's Advisor for Housing): We do have the figure but I will come back to you? The 28,000 is not social rent.

Nicky Gavron (Deputy Chair): Please do come back to us with a figure. But, you see, I looked at your balance of 28,000 in the way you divide it up, and I estimate probably 12,000 to 14,000 of those would be social rent?

David Lunts (Interim Executive Director Housing and Regeneration, GLA): If we assume, which I think is reasonable, that all of the three-bed pluses will effectively be at or very close to social rent, and that is about a third of the programme, if you also add in things like supported housing and an allowance that we are making for emergency transfers and so forth, then it is probably in the region of about 7,000. We can come back with more detail, but the caveat is that it will to some extent be a moving picture because a lot of the stuff is indicative and will not be settled in terms of firm schemes for some time. But I think it is reasonable to assume it is probably around about 7,000 units of the new programme.

Richard Blakeway (Mayor's Advisor for Housing): On social rent, there is an interesting and important fact, which I suspect, given your concern around social rent, will welcome. It is important to note the existing commitments in this programme going through, because what we have seen with the 2008-11 programme is, I think, a 10% increase in the proportion of social rented homes. Prior to that, if you look at the 2006-08 investment programme you are looking at an allocation of about 51%, which was social rented, so only about half the affordable homes social rented. It has actually gone up to 61% under the last programme, which would obviously mean there is a tail going into the completions, which are social rented, a greater proportion, which is an interesting and important fact.

Nicky Gavron (Deputy Chair): Moving on, it is part of my question really, which is about mix. It is all part of trying to get some information to help me with understanding will the new framework contracts give the Mayor the ability to ensure that his policies on tenure mix, and meeting local needs for affordable housing are met? Basically that is what I am trying to unpick, and you in a way make my case for me, because the reason you can talk about more social rent is because between 2006 -08 there were a lot of starts, which were then completed in this Mayoral term. Now, there have been starts, and you have talked about a good number of starts that are now going to be completed - this is under the old housing, before housing reform came in. You have a lot of starts that are social rent. We are now talking

about two different models in this investment round. I am trying to find out what the new model looks like, and the new model really takes effect from 2013-15 I think. You have talked about some overlap I am really trying to unpick that. What is this new model going to look like? What does it mean for the future, even beyond 2012? That is all I am trying to find out.

Now you said earlier that you do not know the location of the homes, you have a rough idea about mix, but you do not know what the location will be. How are you going to - going back to this question - ensure that you get the mix, that you meet the needs and you get the mix universally, as it says in the London Plan, across all the boroughs?

Richard Blakeway (Mayor's Advisor for Housing): There is obviously a lot in there, and I will try and unpackage some of it. I kind of get the point you were trying to make, all I would say is that actually again one of the interesting things is that under the Mayor we have seen a 50% increase in the number of affordable starts, if you look at the last year compared to the 2007/2008 year, there was a 50% increase, which I do not think you should lose sight of.

The second point, which you are making is that you do not know where these homes are, is not strictly true. About half of the programme is unidentified schemes, and again one of the important things for us was to ensure - this is the new Affordable Rent programme to be clear - was that there was a conversation with the boroughs and that schemes identified were ones contained within the borough investment plans. Clearly, as the programme is delivered, it is a four-year programme, other schemes will be identified and homes will be delivered on those, but as we stand now, at the beginning of it, we know where half those homes will be delivered, so it is not accurate to say we do not know where they are.

Nicky Gavron (Deputy Chair): All right. I have just been quoting what was said earlier, I wrote it down, that you did not know the location. ,We do not know the location .

Alan Benson (Head of Housing, GLA): We are saying a substantial part of the programme we do know, there are firm commitments, we know where those homes will be, but there is part of the programme that is indicative yet, for the last two years of the programme, and those are the ones we do not know. We do not know the whole

programme where they will be yet, but we do know, I think it is approximately 40%.

David Lunts (Interim Executive Director Housing and Regeneration, GLA): Yes, 40.5%.

Alan Benson (Head of Housing, GLA): If you compare that to 2008 at that point, April 2008, when we agreed the programme then, we would have known about 20%. We know with a great deal more certainty at this point where the schemes will be than we did in 2008.

Nicky Gavron (Deputy Chair): That is helpful. In that case then, you also said that you are not going to – and I really applaud you if you manage to do this – go above the benefit caps in terms of rents. That would seem to me therefore that a lot of the homes, especially the larger ones, I know somebody else talked about this, but surely then, because market rents are so high in central London, and increasing, surely then that means that they will have to be in the cheaper parts of London?

Richard Blakeway (Mayor's Advisor for Housing): No, there will be a range of rents delivered, which we have always made clear, and, as I said, the reason why we have an average of 65% reflects both the fact that we wanted to keep them in local housing allowance, and other caps, but also that the programme would be sensitive to variations in the market, and we have always been clear about that and it was written down in the Affordable Rent Framework that was published.

Nicky Gavron (Deputy Chair): I was concerned about what mix will we get in inner London where market rents are so high? Will we get the right mix of tenures? Will we get these family homes?

Richard Blakeway (Mayor's Advisor for Housing): Market rents are quite variable in some parts of central London; you will find great variance between rents within boroughs.

David Lunts (Interim Executive Director Housing and Regeneration, GLA): There is no doubt that, if we are going to be building affordable housing in the most expensive parts of inner London then they are going to be, as far as we are concerned – and these are the calculations we have made in terms of modelling the new

product and giving the grant decisions that will be enshrined in the new contracts – is that they will be very significantly depressed from the market rent levels, there is no question about that in the main.

It also is challenging to do that because clearly that means there is quite a lot of subsidy that has to go into those units relative to cheaper parts of London, there is no doubt about that, it is more expensive to build in inner London and the discount from market rent is greater. But that does not mean that we will not want to continue to see a central London and inner London affordable housing programme; quite the reverse, but it does mean that the model has to work hard, it does mean that the planning system has to do its work quite well to ensure that those contributions continue to come forward. But all I can do is repeat what Richard said, there is nothing in our modelling and nothing in our decisions that should lead people to the conclusion that we will not be able to provide affordable housing across a range of sizes in inner London. It will not be straightforward, it never has been, we know it has always been difficult to get the sort of numbers that we would like to see in inner London, because sites are constrained, values are high, viability is an issue, but there is nothing in this model that should make that more difficult.

Nicky Gavron (Deputy Chair): Given you know where 40% are, can you tell us, I mean not now, but can you just send us where they are?

Jenny Jones (Chair): Yes, we have made a note to ask specifically.

Richard Blakeway (Mayor's Advisor for Housing): What I want to be clear about is at the moment we are in the process of signing contracts with registered providers and I think we can provide some sort of breakdown, but I want to be clear about how much information we can provide, because we are in a contractual process at the moment.

Nicky Gavron (Deputy Chair): When you talk about subsidy, you do not just mean the grant that you might be giving, you also mean what the housing associations are putting in themselves, because they were here and said that they would want to keep rents low for the equivalent of social rent under the Affordable Rent model, for the target rent, they would like to keep them low, therefore they would agree to subsidise them. But they did not think that they would be

able to do that in certainly Central London and probably inner London, and that is why I am trying to sort of tease out whether you have managed to get that kind of mix in those areas of high market value.

Richard Blakeway (Mayor's Advisor for Housing): I think I agree with what David [Lunts] said.

Nicky Gavron (Deputy Chair): I am not getting an answer.

David Lunts (Interim Executive Director Housing and Regeneration, GLA): It comes down to viability and what I was at pains to emphasise I think is that we have worked hard to try and ensure that it is still possible to build affordable housing in high market value parts of London, but you are right, Nicky [Gavron], there is no doubt that, because the level of grant across the piece has been substantially reduced in the new model, it means that housing associations are going to have to find more investment from their own sources to meet that viability gap - and I make the point again because it is critical - and the planning system is also going to have to work carefully and consistently to effectively ensure that developments bring forward maximum levels of contributions to affordable housing so that our grant, which is less than it was, housing association borrowings, which come at a price, and the planning system extracting legitimate planning going through Section 106, comes together to continue to ensure that we do build in inner London.

Just to confirm Richard's [Blakeway] point, we would expect to start signing the first contracts - none are signed yet in London - over the next few weeks, and as soon as they are signed then there is obviously no problem at all in terms of sharing the information in terms of scheme details where they are known and borough breakdowns.

Nicky Gavron (Deputy Chair): All right. I just want to add - there is not time I think to go into this - the planning system needs mechanisms to deliver that mix and I am not sure they are now there anymore.

James Cleverly (AM): We seem to be getting into an awful lot of detail about where the large houses are built. In the private sector, the completely unsubsidised private sector, where are the bulk of family-

sized housing units built or currently exist, inner London or outer London?

David Lunts (Interim Executive Director Housing and Regeneration, GLA): Outer London.

James Cleverly (AM): Is it reasonable to therefore assume that will be reflected in where the housing we are discussing is likely to be located?

David Lunts (Interim Executive Director Housing and Regeneration, GLA): There is no doubt about it, it is easier to build larger homes in less-dense, less-expensive parts of London. That has always been the case; that will remain the case.

James Cleverly (AM): I just think we have spent an awful lot of time going around this.

Navin Shah (AM): But James, is it not also relevant that London's demography has changed hugely in the last two or three decades, and therefore the original family units living in outer London and inner London has also changed remarkably, and therefore while physically you may have more in outer London now, more family-sized units in outer London, that does not mean that inner London should have to provide the right supply of family-sized units to meet inner London needs that we need to look at, do not have those units within inner London and not outer London, the whole social aspect is very important. So it does not follow that family-sized units must be built in outer London.

David Lunts (Interim Executive Director Housing and Regeneration, GLA): I do not think that is what I was saying I think I was saying that we are determined to do what we can to ensure that we can continue to fund and see built family homes in inner London. That does come at a price. There are difficulties associated with it. There are viability issues. There are land availability issues. The points that James [Cleverly] was making are absolutely correct, but we are not ruling out family units in inner London.

Jenny Jones (Chair): On the new framework contract, do you feel that they are going to add to security of tenure? There is quite a lot of choice here.

Richard Blakeway (Mayor's Advisor for Housing): I think Alan will correct me if I am wrong here, but I think social rent actually is not defined by length of tenure, in planning terms. Therefore, what happens with tenancies and whole tenancy reform is entirely co-dependent with us and our Affordable Rent programme. It is just separate.

Alan Benson (Head of Housing, GLA): I would not possibly correct Richard if he was wrong in public, anyway, but he is right.

Richard Blakeway (Mayor's Advisor for Housing): Am I right? That is good.

Alan Benson (Head of Housing, GLA): Tenure is not part of the planning definition of social rented housing.

Jenny Jones (Chair): I accept that, but it does seem that there is quite a lot of choice in the affordable models, yet at the time, one of the areas of concern we have had as a committee is security of tenure.

Richard Blakeway (Mayor's Advisor for Housing): Sure, but it is a matter for landlords.

Nicky Gavron (Deputy Chair): What about opting out?

Jenny Jones (Chair): This is the second part of Nicky's question. How many boroughs or housing associations in London actually opted out of the Affordable Rent Model?

Richard Blakeway (Mayor's Advisor for Housing): Some opted in because they are delivering their own programme: Newham, Camden. We also have Hillingdon, Barking and Dagenham, and Hackney.

Alan Benson (Head of Housing, GLA): Wandsworth.

Richard Blakeway (Mayor's Advisor for Housing): Wandsworth. Is that seven?

Alan Benson (Head of Housing, GLA): Seven, yes.

Richard Blakeway (Mayor's Advisor for Housing): Yes, so, seven boroughs, which I think we have listed previously, but the seven

boroughs are Camden, Hackney, Newham, Ealing, Wandsworth, Hillingdon and Barking and Dagenham. They have all opted in and they are currently in the process of signing contracts to deliver Affordable Rent homes. The borough which has obviously stated most publicly its opposition to Affordable Rent is Islington.

Andrew Boff (AM): Apart from selling children's playgrounds in order to pay for its opting out of the affordable housing model, are you aware of any other things that Islington could do?

Richard Blakeway (Mayor's Advisor for Housing): It depends who partners with it to deliver the homes. Is Islington proposing to partner with a registered provider?

Alan Benson (Head of Housing, GLA): They are looking to partner, looking to try to use some of their own assets and their own land to promote development, but it is quite difficult.

Andrew Boff (AM): Some of those assets are children's playgrounds and playing fields.

Nicky Gavron (Deputy Chair): That is so dreadful.

Alan Benson (Head of Housing, GLA): It may well be, not to make a judgement.

Richard Blakeway (Mayor's Advisor for Housing): The key point about the registered partners is that it is possible within the great mix of the programme being delivered. If those registered partners are also delivering an Affordable Rent programme, it is possible that there is cross-subsidy from rents elsewhere in London to fund homes within their budgets. Is that a fair assumption? I do not know. Correct me in public if I am wrong.

Jenny Jones (Chair): Before it goes in the record, yes.

Alan Benson (Head of Housing, GLA): Islington is the only local authority that has visibly or publicly opted out, and every major housing association bid for a programme. We were very significantly overbid. We had a lot more bids than we were able to fund for housing, so there were no housing associations that walked away from this.

Jenny Jones (Chair): OK, great. Thank you. That is very useful to know.

Steve O’Connell (AM): Thank you very much. You know my Croydon housing interest in the asset-backed vehicle model, which is something, I know, that you have been interested in pursuing for some time through the housing plan. You are proposing to set up a London Development Panel, and that, I understand, is going to steer your version or the London version of that vehicle. Could you tell me a little bit about that?

Richard Blakeway (Mayor’s Advisor for Housing): We are in the process of doing this. The London Development Panel actually is a procurement process, a procurement panel, but as part of the devolution of settlement we will obviously be transferring over records and the like to the Development Partner Panel. The HCA has some procurement processes at the London Development Agency (LDA) for their land, and what we want is a single procurement panel which is OJEU (Official Journal of the European Union) compliant. We think that would be the most efficient and speediest way to bring public land assets forward.

David Lunts (Interim Executive Director Housing and Regeneration, GLA): The point here is about something we can use. It does not need to be used exclusively. There will be times, perhaps, when it is relevant to go to OJEU process. There may be a particularly complicated site or we may be interested in testing new models, but I think that if we have something where, instead of spending 6, 9, sometimes 12 months through a long, expensive OJEU process, we can go to a pre-procured framework of contractors, developers and builders to turn things around much more quickly, then that must make sense. I think the HCA’s Delivery Partner Panel that Richard has described has been helpful in that regard, but at the moment it is (a) a couple of years old, so it probably needs a refresh, and (b) it has been procured for the whole of southern England, so there are companies there who maybe do quite a lot of business in the Southwest but frankly are not that interested in London, so we want something that is London specific.

Steve O’Connell (AM): The housing and property company that you have been mooted for a couple of years - these things take time - how would that be progressing at all?

Richard Blakeway (Mayor's Advisor for Housing): Essentially, that will be the London Development Panel.

Steve O'Connell (AM): Yes, in essence. We have now been talking about it for years. As I say, these things take time, although, to the credit of the Croydon Borough Council, they move their curve on relatively quickly. What are the obstacles to take us further? Or is it just the fact that we are morphing into the Panel, and that is just another process and it is incremental? Is this a commitment that we have?

Richard Blakeway (Mayor's Advisor for Housing): Yes. It is a commitment to bring forward our public land assets. It is a commitment to procure them in the most efficient manner, and it is a commitment to, through that, try to unlock institutional or other investment. I think the procurement process we have is the London Development Panel, and the ground shifted slightly with the devolution of settlement and obviously the LDA closing down, and the HCA London's transfer over here. The product you will see is the London Development Panel.

Steve O'Connell (AM): Will that be producing the London Housing Bond? Is that a connected piece?

Richard Blakeway (Mayor's Advisor for Housing): It is slightly separate. It was something which was being mooted previously, and something which we are looking at. As you will have seen recently, the GLA has done a bond already - Crossrail and some other stuff - so I think it is something we are looking at, but it is independent of the Panel.

Steve O'Connell (AM): It is part of your kit bag of options.

Richard Blakeway (Mayor's Advisor for Housing): Absolutely.

Mike Tuffrey (AM): I am conscious that time is short, but this is something that we have talked about repeatedly. Indeed, I have put a slew of Mayor's questions in which I suspect will end up fairly rapidly on your desks to answer, because I am concerned that the Panel concept is not the fully fledged company. A lot of work was done by the LDA in terms of creating a vehicle, an entity that was a off balance sheet, as it were, and could, therefore, get boroughs involved and so

forth. There was a lot of work done and a lot of excitement created. I am certainly frustrated at how long it is and I am worried that your Panel idea is merely a mouse, when what we need is a bloody great tiger to get in the private money match with the public land and really move stuff forward.

Richard Blakeway (Mayor's Advisor for Housing): Boroughs can use the Panel if they choose to. There is nothing preventing them from using that Panel, so it is not just exclusive to us. If boroughs have land which they want to bring forward and they want an official process, there is no reason why they cannot use - indeed, at the moment - the Development Partner Panel, Public Land Initiative and so on, so it is all possible to do. It is not preventing that.

Steve O'Connell (AM): We are relatively not unusually inseparable on this, but the vehicles for those are not close, and I was on the board which created one. You have land; you have asset; you have actually put your asset on the table then you create a vehicle, and that attracts finance, and the finance is, say, 50%. It is not rocket science in itself, but that is something that you were interested in at the particular time?

Richard Blakeway (Mayor's Advisor for Housing): Yes, absolutely, and we are still interested in attracting that finance, and I think it is possible to do through the London Development Panel.

Mike Tuffrey (AM): Perhaps, then, Chair, we can come back to you with some specific questions really to get chapter and verse on start dates, constitutions and how it is all going to work, offline from that.

Navin Shah (AM): We have already talked about issues of overcrowding, and before I go on to the London Overcrowding Panel, I want to try to get context. Can you give us the justification for dropping the proportion of family-sized dwellings from 42% to 36%?

Richard Blakeway (Mayor's Advisor for Housing): Our pledge was to deliver 42% in the last investment round, specifically on the rented affordable homes, and we are delivering at the highest proportion for decades, so I think it would be wrong to characterise this as somehow a drop in family-sized affordable housing.

Navin Shah (AM): But that is clearly what your target now is in this revised Housing Strategic --

Richard Blakeway (Mayor's Advisor for Housing): For the affordable rented programme, we are looking at the 36%, as you cite, which I would suggest is higher than commentators expected. Overall, our aspiration would be for half the affordable homes in London to be family-sized. The source of affordable housing is not just the affordable rent programme.

Navin Shah (AM): Sure, but if we can switch to outer London itself, for example, you have an issue about the housing benefit cap, from only the discussion we are talking about to having something like 80% going to market rent, and then of course in terms of potential reduced supply of large family dwellings, that does not actually make the issue of overcrowding in outer London even worse than what it currently is.

Richard Blakeway (Mayor's Advisor for Housing): I do not know what you are driving at here. As we have said, you will see larger homes in outer London, so I do not know why you are saying there is going to be some --

Navin Shah (AM): There is a full implication here, is there not?

Richard Blakeway (Mayor's Advisor for Housing): The point we have made before and which I think we have made at length is that the way the programme is constructed should ensure that homes are delivered within the welfare caps, and we have kept the rents lower on the family-sized units to ensure that there should not be a complication, and they do remain within welfare caps, and that is something which we explored previously, and, therefore, we were able to deliver a significant proportion of family-sized housing.

The issue of overcrowding is not just the delivery of family-sized homes, although that is important. There is a whole range of other issues, including, for example, under-occupation and addressing that.

Navin Shah (AM): It is a big issue, and I am not quite convinced that we are going to achieve the stated objective of halving the overcrowding by 2016, which is the current strategy.

Moving on to the London Overcrowding Board, can you explain the composition of it and who will chair it?

Richard Blakeway (Mayor's Advisor for Housing): It is early days at the moment.

Navin Shah (AM): Any thoughts on it? What is likely?

Richard Blakeway (Mayor's Advisor for Housing): I can certainly give you some thoughts, but we will go through a process of agreeing this. Importantly, the Board is in partnership with London councils. It is important the boroughs are engaged in it. We would envisage members of the Board, representatives from the boroughs, representatives from landlords, so the G15 major relationship providers. We would anticipate that organisations like Shelter, the National Health Service and others being involved in the Board as well. So far as who chairs it, it is a discussion we are having with those people who will join the Board.

We are drafting the terms of reference at the moment. The important thing, as much as membership, is what the body does. We have had some success, I would say, with the London Delivery Board, which has been tackling street homelessness, to get a co-ordinated, and focused approach, bring in a range of partners and not just your traditional partners; also bringing in others like the NHS. I would hope to replicate that process with this Board.

Navin Shah (AM): In terms of what the Board does, can you tell us about the targets and milestones it might be addressing?

Richard Blakeway (Mayor's Advisor for Housing): It will not be the Board's job to set targets. It will be the job of the Board to co-ordinate a response so we can look at, for example, data, and ensure there is consistent and clear data on issues around overcrowding. It can monitor delivery of programmes and family-sized homes. It can look at advocacy to try to get the NHS, for example, and its role in helping households, particularly children in overcrowded households, where there is plenty of evidence from the British Medical Association and others of the health impact of living in overcrowded circumstances. What is the NHS' specific response for those individuals and for overcrowded households? It can look at the programmes that we have around under-occupation, Seaside & Country Homes. There is

a whole range of different jobs and tasks the board can do, and this is all in discussion at the moment.

Navin Shah (AM): Will it actually be charged with delivering the number of increased family units?

Richard Blakeway (Mayor's Advisor for Housing): No, because that is the job of the relationship providers who sign contracts with the HCA, which will be novated to the GLA.

Navin Shah (AM): What about merely encouraging social rent landlords to retain family-sized homes?

Richard Blakeway (Mayor's Advisor for Housing): Disposals is an issue for Tenant Services Authority (TSA), for the regulator, which will obviously from next year become a subsection of the Homes and Communities Agency at national level. Disposals is an issue where, if a relationship provider intends to dispose stock, I think they have to notify the borough and they certainly have to notify TSA; they are not under an obligation to notify the Mayor. That has not been the case since the GLA was created, but certainly it is an area where we show interest, and certainly we are at the moment drafting a memorandum of understanding with the regulator, and one of the things we would obviously seek to look at is disposals.

Jenny Jones (Chair): It sounds like a very good idea. It would be very interesting to hear some more details, but is there a budget for it at the moment?

Richard Blakeway (Mayor's Advisor for Housing): No, but there wasn't a budget with the London Delivery Board, and that Board had an oversight of a £36 million budget.

Nicky Gavron (Deputy Chair): Navin [Shah] was asking about social rent again and family housing. I know you are keeping rents within the benefit caps but, as we know for the welfare cap, the total benefit cap, it does not matter. If you keep the rent within that and it is tied to market rents then people are not going to be able to afford it, basically. They are not going to be able to afford £400 out of a weekly income of £500 if they have two, three, four children. How have you dealt with that?

Richard Blakeway (Mayor's Advisor for Housing): In the programme we have, we asked relationship providers to account for the universal credit cap, so we feel we have addressed that through the negotiations with providers.

Nicky Gavron (Deputy Chair): How have you addressed it?

Richard Blakeway (Mayor's Advisor for Housing): We have asked them, when revising their programmes, to account for the universal credit cap. That is obviously a matter now for relationship providers, but that is what we have asked them to address, and that is why, as we have said, you will see rents on family-sized, social-rented housing, which is your specific question, at or near target rents. Under Affordable Rent, family-sized housing will almost be indistinguishable --

Nicky Gavron (Deputy Chair): So, what? 55%? 45%

Richard Blakeway (Mayor's Advisor for Housing): -- from social-rented, family-sized housing.

Alan Benson (Head of Housing, GLA): It will be the same target rent as the social rent would have been in that borough, which can be anywhere between one-fifth to half of market rent, depending on the borough.

Nicky Gavron (Deputy Chair): What the providers were saying to us was that they would actually subsidise making affordable rent at that level.

Alan Benson (Head of Housing, GLA): Absolutely, yes. It is in their interests, my interests and the borough's interests. We all want to see family housing delivered, and the only way to do it is to have very low rents on family-sized housing go within the universal welfare caps.

Nicky Gavron (Deputy Chair): But they also did say that they could not really see themselves being able to build in inner London. They just thought they would not be able to do it there.

Alan Benson (Head of Housing, GLA): You were asking them about what was likely to be in the programme just before they were putting their bids in, and at that stage of the process, they always say

it looks terrible, the whole ceiling is going to fall in and they cannot possibly build anything, because they are trying to talk up their negotiating position.

David Lunts (Interim Executive Director Housing and Regeneration, GLA): And then they all bid.

Alan Benson (Head of Housing, GLA): When they sat here, they said they might not bid. They all bid, and they all vastly overbid.

David Lunts (Interim Executive Director Housing and Regeneration, GLA): If you are referencing what they said in your evidence session, some of them also said there could be zero social family-sized housing. I think also one of them said the highest bid you got was 20%. It was 36%. I do not think your evidence session is necessarily reflecting what is being agreed.

Nicky Gavron (Deputy Chair): I thought that was what the grant was going to be spent --

David Lunts (Interim Executive Director Housing and Regeneration, GLA): I think we can increasingly deal with facts rather than speculations and assertions, which was not the case until recently.

Nicky Gavron (Deputy Chair): That is good, but you are going to give us some facts, aren't you, about where they are as well?

David Lunts (Interim Executive Director Housing and Regeneration, GLA): Yes.

Andrew Boff (AM): The Mayor's Housing Taskforce recognised that there should be a decent home to Kitemark for the private rented sector, but that is not the strategy. Is the Mayor considering any other standards to improve the condition of London's privately rented stock?

Richard Blakeway (Mayor's Advisor for Housing): We obviously had a session on the private rented sector previously, so I do not want to delve into that, in too much detail, but I am happy to talk about it outside the Committee. I think there is, if you like, a decent standard, or certainly a standard set for the private rented sector, and that is

through the legislation. I think it is schedule 7 of the 1984 Housing Act, which sets down standards, conditions and so on. In a sense, that happens. Boroughs also have powers under the 2004 Housing Act, I think it was, to enforce that standard, and obviously one of the things which we are keen to do, given that landlords have stock across many boroughs, is a consistent approach to enforcing it.

Where you have a problem landlord, you have to recognise that many landlords offer a good product. That is one of the standards of the Decent Homes side of it. We talk about that bit in the Housing Strategy, although we do not reference it specifically in Decent Homes, but I think that is the legislation there.

The second bit is on the day-to-day management, and obviously we have pledged to increase landlord accreditation. We have exceeded our pledge to double the number of accredited landlords, and we are also looking at a London rental standard, which will be a kind of badge in the private rented sector, and a single accreditation badge, which will include letting agents as well as landlords.

Andrew Boff (AM): You may be familiar with the fact that I am not very much persuaded in London-wide anythings, but there are some strong arguments for having that accreditation scheme, but publicising it as well, because without the publicity or the customer recognition of that kitemark or that badge, there is no point, it is a waste of money, because it will mean nothing unless there is recognition. If we are going to do it, can we ensure that at the end of that process there is one hell of a marketing campaign to ensure that there is recognition of these standards? I think we are quite familiar with the fact that some of the worst housing conditions are actually in privately rented properties, and it would help London to have some kind of easily recognised and familiar kitemark.

Richard Blakeway (Mayor's Advisor for Housing): I absolutely agree. Consumer recognition is important on this, and that is absolutely part of our thinking. I think it is also important that there are some incentives for landlords, and I know that some boroughs have offered incentives to their landlords to become accredited. Concerning details on those, they were in the Helen Cope Report, so there is a carrot for the landlords and also clear consumer recognition for the landlord accreditation.

Navin Shah (AM): In the consultation document, there is reference to the Mayor taking responsibility for the location and monitoring of Decent Homes from April 2012. Do you have any idea or any thoughts on how the whole structure is going to work in terms of the Mayor working with the boroughs and actually having responsibility in terms of the stock and the whole backlog London-wide? How is it actually going to work? There is allocation of funding, but in terms of making sure that, again, the targets are achieved, is there going to be some mechanism to monitor and evaluate all of that which is happening to overcome the backlog in the long run?

Richard Blakeway (Mayor's Advisor for Housing): Absolutely. There is clearly a settlement - £824 million - after the Decent Homes budget for London. It is clear that what the boroughs are receiving has also been set out quite clearly. This interplays with Housing Revenue Accounts (HRA) reform, as you know. The HRA currently administers and monitors this programme at corporate level, and that is why it is coming to us. There was a debate that it could sit at corporate HCA level or it could sit in London, and we were very keen the Mayor took it on so we could take a leading role in helping boroughs to upgrade their stock. David [Lunts], do you want to say anything else on the specifics?

David Lunts (Interim Executive Director Housing and Regeneration, GLA): No. I think Richard has covered the Decent Homes programme. I think the other thing that we are particularly interested to explore with boroughs - and this does link to Decent Homes - is reform of Housing Revenue Accounts. Clearly, as local housing authorities are set free, if you like, to manage their own housing accounts without relying on Government subsidies or paying Government back, some of that money is going, particularly in London, towards supporting Decent Homes, I have no doubt, but in other cases there could be some quite interesting possibilities with some of the freedoms and flexibilities that are emerging in Housing Revenue Accounts.

I think what we want to do - this is one of the reasons why we were keen to get in London some responsibility for Decent Homes - is to extend the dialogue that the GLA and the HCA have been having with each of the London boroughs around, if you like, the affordable housing programme into a wider discussion around not just the future of the affordable housing programme but how they are going to

handle the improvements to their own stock through Decent Homes, what they are going to be thinking about in terms of using their land and assets, and whether there are ways where, between us, we can actually do more to support more housing delivery by looking at Housing Revenue Accounts, Decent Homes funding and land and assets as well as mainstream affordable housing investment. I think one of the things we can look forward to is a more extensive dialogue, borough by borough, which hopefully we can use to find some fresh opportunities.

Tony Arbour (AM): This relates to First Steps. In May you take over the functioning of First Steps; this is a strategic housing authority. How does that fit in with being a strategic housing authority? Secondly, and I think this is one directly for Richard [Blakeway], do you think there should be greater incentives than there are now to enable people to buy a stake in rented homes?

Richard Blakeway (Mayor's Advisor for Housing): Let me deal with them. Firstly, I want to say a bit more on First Steps. In terms of whether there should be greater incentives, I think this is an absolutely critical issue. You have people who are unlikely to access Affordable Housing, conventional social housing, but are unable to purchase on the market. They are probably able to afford a conventional mortgage, and indeed in some cases their rental costs are probably similar to mortgage repayments. They cannot get the deposit unless they have access to the 'Bank of Mum and Dad' and all the rest of it. I think there is a big challenge and we have to ensure that there is a quality mid-market offer for those households, and I think it should include incentives and assistance with entry and low-cost homeownership, and one of the key elements of First Steps is that we do that.

As you can see, we are delivering a significant number of First Steps homes and there has been significant interest in what we have done, so we launched the First Steps website. It sounds a simple thing, but actually it is critically important, because if you want to buy a home and you go to the bank, you get a mortgage, and sure, there are lots of different mortgage products, but it is a mortgage; whereas in intermediate homeownership, there is a whole range of different products and it becomes incredibly confusing. We start to talk about specific product first rather than the fact that it is intermediate housing, so the idea of First Steps is to try to simplify this, make it easier for the consumer to understand and to get some finance and all

the rest of it and then access the home, so the First Steps website is, in essence, a right move for intermediate housing in London and to try to make that experience akin to purchasing on the market.

Again, the responsibility of First Steps' home buying agents was one which was contracted to the HCA, so it is important it transfers here. There are currently two agents in London, and I think it is absolutely consistent that we have a strategic approach to ensure that there is a consistent kind of London portal for people to access those products.

Alan Benson (Head of Housing, GLA): Just a couple of things. We will not necessarily take on responsibility directly for managing First Steps. We may continue the contracting process. We may try to bring First Steps together with other options programmes we have, like Seaside & Country Homes, or pan-London mobility for social tenants. There are a number of options we should look at, which is why we have rolled the contract forward for a year so we can consider those options and retender as necessary. But it is a big, broad question you are asking. You are picking on First Steps. Does that fit with the Mayor's strategic role? We are bringing in the whole big spending department from the HCA and the LDA into the GLA to fit with the strategic role, so we are no longer just the strategic authority; we are a strategic authority that also has a direct delivery function, and it is a shift in the GLA as an organisation and the GLA needs to gear up in delivering administration after the next election to be able to do delivery as well as --

Tony Arbour (AM): Are we geared up for that? Are we ready to go?

Alan Benson (Head of Housing, GLA): We are getting there.

Tony Arbour (AM): Again, if I could come back on the detail of First Steps, are there grounds for changing the eligibility criteria?

Richard Blakeway (Mayor's Advisor for Housing): There are a number of ways in which you can look at eligibility and we have made some adjustments already. The first is to ensure that eligibility is assessed on income and that it is available. There are a number of people who are defined as key workers who I would say are key to London's economy and are key workers here, so if you are a bus driver you are not a key worker, but surely you should be eligible for assistance. If you work in retail, for example, you are key to London's

economy but you are not necessarily eligible. We have done eligibility based on income rather than just these narrow definitions.

The second change to eligibility was to recognise that the housing market in London is very different. There is a flat rate nationally of household income at £60,000, at which point eligibility is capped off. There is a cap there. We have been clear, ,Well, look, if you are a family in search of a family-sized home, £60,000 might work nationally but it doesn't necessarily work in London's market , so the London plan now raises the cap up to £74,000 specifically for that group.

Tony Arbour (AM): How did you arrive at the £74,000?

Alan Benson (Head of Housing, GLA): We ran a number - I will have to dig up all the calculations we did - looking at what would be a relevant cap for London. We thought of the £60,000 and there was never any evidence from the Government of how they arrived at £60,000. £60,000 was a figure plucked off the shelf many years ago by the Government for a national cap and has never shifted up or down since. We started from the position of the London Plan, which has a very clear way of defining the intermediate range. Rent is at the bottom and incomes are based upon house prices, incomes at the top of the range, and that gets up-rated every year as rents and house prices change, so we had a good methodology for doing the London Plan.

We were in negotiations with the Government, who were quite chary about us changing that cap in London, having it different from the rest of the country. They were very nervous.

Richard Blakeway (Mayor's Advisor for Housing): The previous Government.

Alan Benson (Head of Housing, GLA): The previous Government, yes. Sorry. In negotiations, some of the previous Government did not wish us to do so. But if we looked at any comparator of London house prices to the prices in the rest of the country, either first-time buyers, average prices or the price-to-income ratio and then increase that national level by the same, we came to £95-100,000 plus. It came to clearly far too high figures. What we were clearly fishing out was that there was clearly a need to have a much higher income band for a

family looking for a home in Kingston upon Thames than for a person looking for a one-bedroom flat in Kingston upon Hull. There is a massive difference in house prices, so we linked it to families because we were particularly keen to try to get families into intermediate housing. We had a very low proportion of intermediate homes being linked to families. We came up with a calculation that was, I think, a percentage uplift on the Government's figure, which was about a 20% increase in the Government total, and we said we would link that every year to that increase, so we are linking it to the Government's increase. That is the very simplistic way of getting the number we came up with in the end, because every rational number came up with a number that was too high because the gap between London house prices and national ones was just massive.

Tony Arbour (AM): But it may not work.

Richard Blakeway (Mayor's Advisor for Housing): It may not work.

Tony Arbour (AM): That higher level still sounds rather out of kilter to the real situation in London, and no doubt we will know that, won't we? Effectively, what I am saying is the cap is too low and, therefore, you will be getting fewer applicants than you otherwise should be getting.

Richard Blakeway (Mayor's Advisor for Housing): There is a great demand for intermediate housing. The challenge is the supply meeting that demand, and I think, as with all aspects of housing, there is obviously a mismatch between the demand and the supply. Wherever you set the cap, I think you would have a problem.

Tony Arbour (AM): I am sure we will revisit that one. Thank you, Chair.

Jenny Jones (Chair): Thank you.

Nicky Gavron (Deputy Chair): I just wanted to come in on the London Plan and the Housing Strategy. The London Plan does give until 2021. It does breakdowns per borough, the 60/40 split, the tenures and so on, and we do not seem to have that in the Housing Strategy.

Richard Blakeway (Mayor's Advisor for Housing): 60/40 is not a borough split, it is a London-wide approach.

Nicky Gavron (Deputy Chair): Yes, but it gives targets for boroughs, in the London Plan.

Richard Blakeway (Mayor's Advisor for Housing): The London Plan is in housing investment terms. We have been clear for quite some time that we are not going to have a borough-by-borough target. That was a matter for the Housing Strategy, not the London Plan. 60/40 is obviously within the Housing Strategy and also within the London Plan, but that is not such a borough-by-borough target. It is a London-wide approach.

Alan Benson (Head of Housing, GLA): That is right. The London Plan sets targets for overall housing delivery across all tenures through each borough. It would not be allowed to set individual targets for boroughs for affordable housing, social housing or any mix of that.

Nicky Gavron (Deputy Chair): It breaks it down into market and so on?

Alan Benson (Head of Housing, GLA): Not at the borough level. It sets a borough target for each borough for their overall supply, and has a London-wide target for their overall number of affordable homes and the split between the current London Plan and social and intermediate. It cannot do that at borough level and never has been able to.

In the Housing Strategy, we do not set individual affordable housing targets for boroughs. We say that we will deliver the London Plan London-wide target numbers, which is a good thing. It is the first time it has been fully aligned with the London Plan and the Housing Strategy in terms of numbers. The actual distribution of that at a local level is up to local planning policies and negotiations between the boroughs, and they arrange to provide us with the contracts. We would not be able to impose through the plan all the strategy, individual affordable housing targets for boroughs.

Navin Shah (AM): If we can just revisit the issue of Decent Homes you were talking about. We sort of talked generally about the monitoring role of the Mayor here. The specific question now is: how

will the assessment of borough performance take place through the Mayor's Office, and how does he intend to reallocate any funding after 2013?

Richard Blakeway (Mayor's Advisor for Housing): From my perspective, I suspect the GLA will be proactive in this area, partly as a result of the Housing Revenue Account assessment and partly because of the fact that it is being done at a London level rather than a national level. Obviously, we have to go through exactly how that will work. While there is the possibility that you could reallocate funds, we would not anticipate that to be the case. We just want boroughs to get on and deliver the agreements which have clearly been set out already and where the Housing Minister has written to each borough.

Navin Shah (AM): It is about having the proper mechanism to ensure that the boroughs do perform on the agreed terms.

Navin Shah (AM): That surely is the Mayor's role.

Richard Blakeway (Mayor's Advisor for Housing): Absolutely, and we will be more proactive about it, I suspect.

Nicky Gavron (Deputy Chair): How did you agree targets?

Alan Benson (Head of Housing, GLA): At the moment, up to this point, there has never been any proper mechanism for monitoring performance and shifting money around. The money was paid to local authorities subject to borrowing approvals etc, and the Department for Communities and Local Government who managed a programme through the HCA, did not formally manage it in terms of moving money around. It is shifting because of the HRA reform and it will not be borrowing from them anymore. It will be a direct grant paid by the Mayor to the boroughs, and we can put grant conditions on it. We will set up a performance management system and if they do not deliver, we will seek to move money around.

Having said that, we have said very clearly to Government and to boroughs that we do not want to move money around unless we absolutely have to, because boroughs have to plan their asset management strategy and have to know what they have got. We do not want to go into this thinking we have £800 million to move around. We want to go into this thinking we want to make sure we get

value for money for that money. There is plenty of scope to move it around, because an awful lot of Decent Homes will not be made decent with this money, so there is scope and need to move money around if it is not being delivered in those boroughs.

Andrew Boff (AM): A slightly separate point. What are the chances of including in any future revision of the Housing Strategy a summary of the obstacles that there are to building more family-sized properties? I say that particularly for two objects. One is to indicate how well you actually have done, because there are obstacles to building family-sized properties which, within the Affordable Rents Model, you have done very well with. I am still not happy with it, but you recognise that there are obstacles to do it. It would also lay down a marker for the kind of funding regime that might assist us in the future for Government, and what they should be attending to in order to encourage more family homes. You know my opinion on this. As a result of the overcrowding report, yes, tackling under-occupation will help. Yes, better systems of allocating tenants would help, but at the end of the day, we need more family-sized properties, substantially more!

Richard Blakeway (Mayor's Advisor for Housing): I think that is a good point. I think it is certainly something which we can look at as we reiterate the strategy through the process, and certainly specifically on the issue of family-sized housing, it is something which the Overcrowding Board will consider as well.

David Lunts (Interim Executive Director Housing and Regeneration, GLA): It also goes back to the point that I think Richard [Blakeway] mentioned some time ago, which is that we are increasingly interested in understanding how many people are being housed as a consequence of investment programmes rather than just how many homes are built. I do think one of the observations one can make over recent years is that there has been a great deal of interest in numbers of units built, which has not always translated in every instance, so, therefore, we have definitely done more to house more people in housing need than we could have done if we had done things slightly differently. Number of bed spaces, number of people helped into housing solutions is, in some ways, at least as, if not more, important than the number of units built.

Andrew Boff (AM): Thank you for volunteering that rather than us badgering you about it, because absolutely it is bed space. The whole point of social housing provision is to remove people from housing need, and if we continually go on units and ignore the people, we are going to have a problem. We are not spending the money properly.

Jenny Jones (Chair): Thank you so much for coming.

Glossary

This glossary of housing related terms is compiled from the following sources:

<http://www.tenantservicesauthority.org/server/show/nav.00i008001/>

<http://www.london.gov.uk/priorities/housing/working-partnership>

<http://www.parliament.uk/briefing-papers/SN02110>

Affordable Housing

Affordable housing meets the housing needs of the community that are not met by the housing market. Affordable housing includes social rented and intermediate housing (eg shared equity or shared ownership). Affordable homes are provided at below market prices, and restricted to certain types of household.

Affordable Rent Housing

The Government announced that it will introduce, from April 2011, a new Affordable Rent model to be offered to Housing Associations. Affordable Rent will offer shorter-term tenancies at a rent higher than social rent, to be set at a maximum of 80 per cent of local market rent. Affordable Rent tenancies will be offered on a fixed term of at least two years with appropriate safeguards around termination. Affordable Rent will be offered on a proportion of providers' empty properties and re-lets initially and also on new stock. It is the Government's intention that the additional rental income providers receive will contribute to the provision of new affordable homes.

Family sized homes

There is no statutory definition of family-sized homes. The London Plan and the Housing Strategy both categorise homes that have three or more bedrooms as being family sized homes.

Homes and Communities Agency (HCA)

The HCA is the national housing and regeneration agency for England. The HCA is the key partner responsible for delivering the Mayor's London Housing Strategy. London is the only region of the HCA to have its own board, which the Mayor chairs. After April 2012, the London region of the Homes and Communities Agency will be devolved to the GLA, resulting in a London housing and regeneration body, which will be an executive arm of the GLA.

London Development Agency (LDA)

The LDA is a regional development agency and is part of the wider GLA group. It has a key role to play in helping to deliver the Mayor's vision and priorities for London. It holds a significant amount of housing land in the capital. After April 2012, the LDA will cease to exist as a separate body: its functions would continue but it will be integrated into the GLA.

Overcrowding

Occurs when, using the bedroom standard classification, there are insufficient bedrooms in the property based on the number of residents and their age/sex/marital status composition. Overcrowding is more common in the public sector than the private sector.

Bedroom Standard

The standard number of bedrooms allocated to each household in accordance with its age/sex/marital status composition and the relationship of the members to one another. A separate bedroom is allocated to each married couple, any person aged 21 or over, each pair of adolescents aged 10 – 20 of the same sex, and each pair of children under 10. Any unpaired person aged 10 – 20 is paired, if possible with a child under 10 of the same sex, or, if that is not possible, he or she is given a separate bedroom, as is any unpaired child under 10.

Local Authority Homelessness Duty

The Housing (Homeless Persons) Act 1977 placed a duty on local housing authorities to secure permanent accommodation for unintentionally homeless people in priority need. Authorities do not have a duty to secure accommodation for all homeless people. If an applicant has become homeless unintentionally, the authority must assess whether they, or a member of their household, falls into a 'priority need' category.

The Localism Bill, which is currently before Parliament, contains measures that will enable local authorities to discharge their duty towards homeless households in priority need by using privately rented housing irrespective of whether the household is in agreement with this.

Temporary Accommodation

There has been a growing trend for local authorities to deal with homelessness applications by placing people in 'temporary accommodation' if they cannot be offered a permanent tenancy in social housing through the waiting list. This includes accommodation in hotels, hostels, bed and breakfasts and short-term leases on private rented housing. People remain in temporary accommodation until a place in social housing becomes available.

Endnotes

¹ A Revised London Housing Strategy – Initial Proposals. Consultation with the London Assembly and the GLA Group, August 2011

www.london.gov.uk/sites/default/files/Revised%20Housing%20Strategy%20proposals.pdf

² Implications of the Affordable Rent Model in London, Planning and Housing Committee, July, 2011

www.london.gov.uk/sites/default/files/Implications%20of%20Affordable%20Rent%20Model%20in%20London.pdf

³ Crowded Houses, Planning and Housing Committee, March 2011

www.london.gov.uk/sites/default/files/Final%20overcrowding%20report%20-%20print%20version.pdf

⁴ Final report into the Planning and Housing Committee review of the London's private rented sector due for publication November 2011

⁵ Richard Blakeway letter to the Chair of the Planning and Housing Committee, 27 September 2011

⁶ For background see Recommendation 5 and section 3 of the overcrowding report (Crowded Houses, March 2011)

⁷ For background to this comment we refer the Mayor to recommendation 5 of the Committee's report on overcrowding, published in May 2011.

⁸ Richard Blakeway letter to the Chair of the Planning and Housing Committee, 27 September 2011

⁹ Size Matters – The need for more family homes in London, Planning and Housing Committee, June 2006

<http://legacy.london.gov.uk/assembly/reports/plansd/affordable-housing.pdf>

¹⁰ Implications of the Affordable Rent Model in London, Planning and Housing Committee, July 2011

¹¹ Paragraph 4.10 - Implications of the Affordable Rent Model in London, July 2011

¹² 4.19 - Implications of the Affordable Rent Model in London, July 2011

¹³ http://www.london.gov.uk/media/press_releases_mayoral/mayor-accelerates-delivery-public-land-provide-more-homes

¹⁴ Section 3 -The Mayor's Housing Strategy, February 2010

¹⁵ Page 10, Building a Better London, Boris Johnson's Housing Manifesto, 2008

¹⁶ Richard Blakeway letter to the Chair of the Planning and Housing Committee, 27 September 2011

¹⁷ Mobility for London's Social Tenants, HCA London Board consultation, December 2010
<http://www.london.gov.uk/sites/default/files/Mobility%20for%20London%27s%20social%20tenants%20-%20consultation%20December%202010.pdf>

¹⁸

<http://www.publications.parliament.uk/pa/cm201011/cmselect/cmworpen/469/469vw40.htm>

¹⁹ <http://www.insidehousing.co.uk/care/beds-for-homeless-boosted-with-%C2%A337m-funding/6518338.article>

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