

AGENDA

Meeting **Housing Committee**
Date **Tuesday 5 September 2017**
Time **10.00 am**
Place **Chamber, City Hall, The Queen's
Walk, London, SE1 2AA**

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Members of the Committee

Sian Berry (Chair)

Andrew Boff AM (Deputy Chair)

Tom Copley AM

Leonie Cooper AM

Tony Devenish AM

David Kurten AM

A meeting of the Committee has been called by the Chair of the Committee to deal with the business listed below.

Ed Williams, Executive Director of Secretariat
Friday 25 August 2017

Further Information

If you have questions, would like further information about the meeting or require special facilities please contact: Clare Bryant, Committee Officer; telephone: 020 7983 4616;
Email: clare.bryant@london.gov.uk; minicom: 020 7983 4458

For media enquiries please contact: Sonia Labboun; Telephone: 020 7983 5769;
Email sonia.labboun@london.gov.uk. If you have any questions about individual items please contact the author whose details are at the end of the report.

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Certificate Number: FS 80233

**Agenda
Housing Committee
Tuesday 5 September 2017**

1 Apologies for Absence and Chair's Announcements

To receive any apologies for absence and any announcements from the Chair.

2 Declarations of Interests (Pages 1 - 4)

Report of the Executive Director of Secretariat

Contact: Clare Bryant, Clare.bryant@london.gov.uk, 020 7983 4616

The Committee is recommended to:

- (a) Note the list of offices held by Assembly Members, as set out in the table at Agenda Item 2, as disclosable pecuniary interests;**
- (b) Note the declaration by any Member(s) of any disclosable pecuniary interests in specific items listed on the agenda and the necessary action taken by the Member(s) regarding withdrawal following such declaration(s); and**
- (c) Note the declaration by any Member(s) of any other interests deemed to be relevant (including any interests arising from gifts and hospitality received which are not at the time of the meeting reflected on the Authority's register of gifts and hospitality, and noting also the advice from the GLA's Monitoring Officer set out at Agenda Item 2) and to note any necessary action taken by the Member(s) following such declaration(s).**

3 Minutes

The Committee is recommended to confirm the minutes of the meetings of the Committee held on 27 June 2017 and 4 July 2017 to be signed by the Chair as a correct record.

The appendices to the minutes set out on pages 9 to 37 and pages 43 to 76 are attached for Members and officers only but are available from the following area of the Greater London Authority's website: www.london.gov.uk/mayor-assembly/london-assembly/housing

4 Summary List of Actions (Pages 77 - 80)

Report of the Executive Director of Secretariat

Contact: Clare Bryant; Clare.bryant@london.gov.uk; 020 7983 4616

The Committee is recommended to note the outstanding actions arising from its previous meetings.

5 Property Guardianship in London (Pages 81 - 84)

Report of the Executive Director of Secretariat

Contact: Charlotte Harrison, scrutiny@london.gov.uk; 020 7983 4456

The Committee is recommended to note the report as background to the discussion with invited guests on property guardianship in London.

6 Housing Committee Work Programme (Pages 85 - 88)

Report of the Executive Director of Secretariat

Contact: Lorraine Ford, scrutiny@london.gov.uk; 020 7983 4394

The Committee is recommended to agree the update to the work programme for the 2017/18 Assembly Year, as set out in paragraphs 4.1 to 4.4 of the report.

7 Date of Next Meeting

The next meeting of the Committee is scheduled for Thursday 5 October 2017 at 3.00pm in the Committee Room 5, City Hall.

8 Any Other Business the Chair Considers Urgent

Subject: Declarations of Interests

Report to: Housing Committee

Report of: Executive Director of Secretariat

Date: 5 September 2017

This report will be considered in public

1. Summary

- 1.1 This report sets out details of offices held by Assembly Members for noting as disclosable pecuniary interests and requires additional relevant declarations relating to disclosable pecuniary interests, and gifts and hospitality to be made.

2. Recommendations

- 2.1 **That the list of offices held by Assembly Members, as set out in the table below, be noted as disclosable pecuniary interests¹;**
- 2.2 **That the declaration by any Member(s) of any disclosable pecuniary interests in specific items listed on the agenda and the necessary action taken by the Member(s) regarding withdrawal following such declaration(s) be noted; and**
- 2.3 **That the declaration by any Member(s) of any other interests deemed to be relevant (including any interests arising from gifts and hospitality received which are not at the time of the meeting reflected on the Authority's register of gifts and hospitality, and noting also the advice from the GLA's Monitoring Officer set out at below) and any necessary action taken by the Member(s) following such declaration(s) be noted.**

3. Issues for Consideration

- 3.1 Relevant offices held by Assembly Members are listed in the table overleaf:

¹ The Monitoring Officer advises that: Paragraph 10 of the Code of Conduct will only preclude a Member from participating in any matter to be considered or being considered at, for example, a meeting of the Assembly, where the Member has a direct Disclosable Pecuniary Interest in that particular matter. The effect of this is that the 'matter to be considered, or being considered' must be about the Member's interest. So, by way of example, if an Assembly Member is also a councillor of London Borough X, that Assembly Member will be precluded from participating in an Assembly meeting where the Assembly is to consider a matter about the Member's role / employment as a councillor of London Borough X; the Member will not be precluded from participating in a meeting where the Assembly is to consider a matter about an activity or decision of London Borough X.

Member	Interest
Tony Arbour AM	Member, LFEPA; Member, LB Richmond
Jennette Arnold OBE AM	Committee of the Regions
Gareth Bacon AM	Member, LFEPA; Member, LB Bexley
Shaun Bailey AM	
Sian Berry AM	Member, LB Camden
Andrew Boff AM	Congress of Local and Regional Authorities (Council of Europe)
Leonie Cooper AM	Member, LFEPA; Member, LB Wandsworth
Tom Copley AM	
Unmesh Desai AM	Member, LFEPA; Member, LB Newham
Tony Devenish AM	Member, City of Westminster
Andrew Dismore AM	Member, LFEPA
Len Duvall AM	
Florence Eshalomi AM	Member, LB Lambeth
Nicky Gavron AM	
Susan Hall AM	Member, LFEPA; Member, LB Harrow
David Kurten AM	Member, LFEPA
Joanne McCartney AM	Deputy Mayor
Steve O'Connell AM	Member, LB Croydon
Caroline Pidgeon MBE AM	
Keith Prince AM	Member, LB Redbridge
Caroline Russell AM	Member, LFEPA; Member, LB Islington
Dr Onkar Sahota AM	
Navin Shah AM	
Fiona Twycross AM	Chair, LFEPA; Chair of the London Local Resilience Forum
Peter Whittle AM	

[Note: LB - London Borough; LFEPA - London Fire and Emergency Planning Authority. The appointments to LFEPA reflected above take effect as from 3 April 2017]

3.2 Paragraph 10 of the GLA's Code of Conduct, which reflects the relevant provisions of the Localism Act 2011, provides that:

- where an Assembly Member has a Disclosable Pecuniary Interest in any matter to be considered or being considered or at
 - (i) a meeting of the Assembly and any of its committees or sub-committees; or
 - (ii) any formal meeting held by the Mayor in connection with the exercise of the Authority's functions
- they must disclose that interest to the meeting (or, if it is a sensitive interest, disclose the fact that they have a sensitive interest to the meeting); and
- must not (i) participate, or participate any further, in any discussion of the matter at the meeting; or (ii) participate in any vote, or further vote, taken on the matter at the meeting

UNLESS

- they have obtained a dispensation from the GLA's Monitoring Officer (in accordance with section 2 of the Procedure for registration and declarations of interests, gifts and hospitality – Appendix 5 to the Code).

3.3 Failure to comply with the above requirements, without reasonable excuse, is a criminal offence; as is knowingly or recklessly providing information about your interests that is false or misleading.

- 3.4 In addition, the Monitoring Officer has advised Assembly Members to continue to apply the test that was previously applied to help determine whether a pecuniary / prejudicial interest was arising - namely, that Members rely on a reasonable estimation of whether a member of the public, with knowledge of the relevant facts, could, with justification, regard the matter as so significant that it would be likely to prejudice the Member's judgement of the public interest.
- 3.5 Members should then exercise their judgement as to whether or not, in view of their interests and the interests of others close to them, they should participate in any given discussions and/or decisions business of within and by the GLA. It remains the responsibility of individual Members to make further declarations about their actual or apparent interests at formal meetings noting also that a Member's failure to disclose relevant interest(s) has become a potential criminal offence.
- 3.6 Members are also required, where considering a matter which relates to or is likely to affect a person from whom they have received a gift or hospitality with an estimated value of at least £25 within the previous three years or from the date of election to the London Assembly, whichever is the later, to disclose the existence and nature of that interest at any meeting of the Authority which they attend at which that business is considered.
- 3.7 The obligation to declare any gift or hospitality at a meeting is discharged, subject to the proviso set out below, by registering gifts and hospitality received on the Authority's on-line database. The on-line database may be viewed here:
<http://www.london.gov.uk/mayor-assembly/gifts-and-hospitality>.
- 3.8 If any gift or hospitality received by a Member is not set out on the on-line database at the time of the meeting, and under consideration is a matter which relates to or is likely to affect a person from whom a Member has received a gift or hospitality with an estimated value of at least £25, Members are asked to disclose these at the meeting, either at the declarations of interest agenda item or when the interest becomes apparent.
- 3.9 It is for Members to decide, in light of the particular circumstances, whether their receipt of a gift or hospitality, could, on a reasonable estimation of a member of the public with knowledge of the relevant facts, with justification, be regarded as so significant that it would be likely to prejudice the Member's judgement of the public interest. Where receipt of a gift or hospitality could be so regarded, the Member must exercise their judgement as to whether or not, they should participate in any given discussions and/or decisions business of within and by the GLA.

4. Legal Implications

- 4.1 The legal implications are as set out in the body of this report.

5. Financial Implications

- 5.1 There are no financial implications arising directly from this report.

Local Government (Access to Information) Act 1985	
List of Background Papers: None	
Contact Officer:	Clare Bryant, Committee Officer
Telephone:	020 7983 4616
E-mail:	Clare.bryant@london.gov.uk

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MINUTES

Meeting: Housing Committee
Date: Tuesday 27 June 2017
Time: 3.30 pm
Place: Committee Room 3, City Hall, The Queen's Walk, London, SE1 2AA

Copies of the minutes may be found at:

www.london.gov.uk/mayor-assembly/london-assembly/housing

Present:

Sian Berry AM (Chair)
Andrew Boff AM (Deputy Chairman)
Tom Copley AM
Tony Devenish AM
Nicky Gavron AM
David Kurten AM
Joanne McCartney AM

1 Apologies for Absence and Chair's Announcements (Item 1)

- 1.1 The Chair welcomed Members, guests and members of the public and stated that before the Committee moved onto its formal business, she would invite everyone present to stand and observe a minute's silence in memory of the victims of the fire at Grenfell Tower.
- 1.2 An apology for absence was received from Florence Eshalomi AM for whom Joanne McCartney AM attended as a substitute.

2 Declarations of Interests (Item 2)

2.1 The Committee received the an updated report of the Executive Director of Secretariat, which had been published with a supplementary agenda.

2.2 **Resolved:**

That the list of offices held by Assembly Members, as set out in the table at Agenda Item 2 attached with the supplementary agenda, be noted as disclosable pecuniary interests.

3 Minutes (Item 3)

3.1 **Resolved:**

That the minutes of the meeting held on 23 March 2017 be signed by the Chair as a correct record.

4 Summary List of Actions (Item 4)

4.1 The Committee received the report of the Executive Director of Secretariat.

4.2 **Resolved:**

That the completed and outstanding actions arising from a previous meetings of the Committee be noted.

5 Tackling 'Hidden Homelessness' (Item 5)

5.1 The Committee received the report of the Executive Director of Secretariat, as background to a discussion with invited guests on tackling hidden homelessness.

5.2 The Chair welcomed the following guests to the meeting:

- Vincent Lawal, Housing Solutions Manager, London Borough of Southwark;
- Jenny Barnes, Head of Policy and Research, Centrepoint;
- Deborah Halling, Senior Policy Officer, Housing and Land, Greater London Authority;
and
- Jennie Bibbings, Campaigns Manager, Shelter Wales (who joined the meeting by video link).

5.3 During the course of the discussion Deborah Halling undertook to provide data regarding the number of refugees in London.

5.4 A transcript of the discussion is attached at **Appendix 1**.

5.5 **Resolved:**

(a) That the report be noted.

(b) That authority be delegated to the Chair, in consultation with party Group Lead members, to agree any output from the meeting.

6 Housing Committee Work Programme (Item 6)

6.1 The Committee received the report of the Executive Director of Secretariat.

6.2 **Resolved:**

(a) That the initial work programme for the 2017/18 Assembly Year, as set out in paragraphs 4.13 to 4.14 of the report, be agreed.

(b) That it be noted that the Committee's meeting slot on 27 June 2017 was used to continue its investigation into hidden homelessness, as set out in paragraphs 4.1 to 4.2 of the report.

(c) That the Committee's meeting slot on 4 July 2017 be used for a discussion concerning community-led housing models in London, with the scope outlined in paragraphs 4.3 to 4.6 of the report.

(d) That the Committee's meeting slot on 5 September 2017 be used for a discussion concerning property guardianship in London, with the scope outlined in paragraph 4.7 to 4.11 of the report.

(e) That the Committee's meeting slot on 5 October 2017 be used for a discussion concerning the draft Housing Strategy, with the scope outlined at paragraph 4.12 of this report.

7 Date of Next Meeting (Item 7)

7.1 The next meeting of the Committee was scheduled for Tuesday, 4 July 2017 at 10.00am in Committee Room 4, City Hall.

8 Any Other Business the Chair Considers Urgent (Item 8)

8.1 There were no items of business that the Chair considered to be urgent.

9 Close of Meeting

9.1 The meeting ended 5.23pm.

Chair

Date

Contact Officer: Clare Bryant, Committee Officer; telephone: 020 7983 5520;
Email: clare.bryant@london.gov.uk; minicom: 020 7983 4458

London Assembly Housing Committee – 27 June 2017

Transcript of Item 5 – Tackling ‘Hidden Homelessness’

Sian Berry AM (Chair): This brings us to today’s main item, a discussion on tackling hidden homelessness. Firstly, because our first meeting was a while ago, can I ask Members to agree the focus of the discussion, which I will just read out:

“We are discussing whether the homeless system could be adjusted to take better account of particularly vulnerable groups who might currently not be accorded priority need, if so how this could work, the extent to which the Homelessness Reduction Act may make visibly homeless people who are currently hidden homeless and how young people in particular could be made aware of their entitlement to homelessness support and the advice services open to them and what more the Mayor could do to advance this agenda.”

Now can I welcome our guests? We have Vincent Lawal, who is the Housing Solutions Manager for the London Borough of Southwark. We have Jenny Barnes, who is the Head of Policy and Research at Centrepoint, Deborah Halling, who is the Senior Policy Officer for Housing and Land at the Greater London Authority (GLA) and via the internet we have Jennie Bibbings, who is the Campaigns Manager from Shelter Wales where there has already been some work in this area, that is why we have brought her in specially today.

This is the second Committee meeting we have had on the topic on the topic of hidden homelessness. At our first meeting in March, we heard about the nature and extent of hidden homelessness from a number of homelessness support services and also from some people who have experienced hidden homelessness. We have launched a survey to gather some more detailed information and we will be using the survey data and the information we get from these two meetings to look at possible policy responses.

Starting with our questions, our first question is about definition of vulnerable persons. What we have found is quite often the people who end up hidden homeless do not fit the category of vulnerability. The questions, we are going to start with Vincent and then move along the row, which I doubt whether Jennie in Cardiff can see us doing this, then to Jenny Barnes, then to Deborah and then to Jennie Bibbings, is that okay. Starting with Vincent, can you set out for us the definition of vulnerable persons that the statutory agencies use at the present time?

Vincent Lawal (Housing Solutions Manager, Southwark): With vulnerability I would say, the challenge legislation throws us is you have a dictionary definition of vulnerability but then you have so to speak a legislative definition of vulnerability. Any homeless person will be vulnerable, because they do not have somewhere to say, they are vulnerable. Then when it comes to legislation, the definition is slightly different. You then go into things like are they ordinarily vulnerable, are they significantly more vulnerable.

In terms of the Act assistance, the Housing Act 1996, so you have people who are pregnant, people who have children, people who are vulnerable as a result of old age, mental health, handicap, physical disability, people who will be considered vulnerable or in priority need. If you have been made homeless due to fire and flood also, so for example with the incident we had in West London recently, clearly they would all be classed as vulnerable. That was the Housing Act 1996.

The Homelessness Act 2002 then made adjustments to that by adding the category of people, and that is where some of those categories they are clear cut, so if you are a 16/17-year old, you are vulnerable, you have been looked after, you are vulnerable. Where it gets tricky is did you become vulnerable by reason of a prison sentence, did you become vulnerable by reason of serving in the armed forces, did you become vulnerable by reason of domestic violence or domestic abuse, and that is where the contention is and with case law the judges have tried to redefine that and make it clearer, but unfortunately that is still not clear, because we still have cases in courts in terms of are you significantly vulnerable, are you ordinarily vulnerable, who do we owe a duty to. That is where we are in terms of vulnerability.

The latest case law on vulnerability is the *Hotak, Johnson and Kanu case*¹ and instead of solving the problem, it is kind of made it a bit more complicated, I would say, in my professional opinion.

Sian Berry AM (Chair): Can you outline how that in a simple way, is that going through the whole case?

Vincent Lawal (Housing Solutions Manager, Southwark): No. Previously councils would rely on what we would call the Pereira test, which is if you are street homeless and you have got needs, you are likely to be at a higher disadvantage than somebody else who is just street homeless without needs and, trust councils, we pushed that to the extreme, like we always do, and then these cases, Kanu, Johnson and Hotak, went to court and a decision was made in 2015 and basically the summary of the three cases was with Kanu it was that you need to take into consideration the equality impact, the Equality Act 2010, when you are considering a client's vulnerability, so you need to consider the nine protected characteristics.

With the Hotak case, it says if you might still be found non-priority if you are vulnerable but you have got a wrap around support service which is consistent and will always be with you even if you become homeless. Of course, there is been loads of cases going back to court that, okay, are you sure that is what you really want, and then with the Johnson case it says you cannot use general data, like, okay, if 20 people are vulnerable then you being vulnerable makes no difference. It has to be on a case by case basis. That is where we are. We thought that would resolve the issue around vulnerability but it is just faced us with more questions than answers in my opinion.

Sian Berry AM (Chair): In your experience are you finding that some people who just by common sense are definitely vulnerable are just failing to be supported? Is that leading to more people being turned away?

Vincent Lawal (Housing Solutions Manager, Southwark): I would say in terms of support so, for example, for Southwark, we have schemes, borrowing debt schemes for single people, for families and all of that. For some of those cases, yes, we might not have a final duty, which is provide social housing to them, but the other schemes we employ or we try to use to try to help them prevent homelessness. Bottom line, if councils are funded appropriately, less people will be homeless. That is my view. The less the funding, the more the homelessness. Then with the Homelessness Reduction Act, that is going to change things a bit, about you then ultimately you will still depend on funding, I would say.

Sian Berry AM (Chair): If the definition expands and if the Homeless Reduction Act does more to expand the number of people you have a duty to, what might the practical difficulties be for local authorities like Southwark?

¹ Supreme Court Judgement 15 May 2015, *Hotak v Southwark London Borough Council, Kanu v Southwark London Borough Council and Johnson v Solihull Metropolitan Borough Council*

Vincent Lawal (Housing Solutions Manager, Southwark): I like the Homelessness Reduction Act. I feel it is a step in the right direction. Whether it is gone far enough, I do not think so. At least we are heading in the right direction. We have a duty to try to prevent homelessness. We have a duty to take reasonable steps to relieve homelessness but you have still got other issues around homelessness which, unless they are tackled, we could accept duty to everyone, but we still have the issue of where do we place them eventually. In Southwark, for example, three years ago we had 2,500 social lets. Last year it was just 1,000, because it is drying up. We have got more people staying on in temporary accommodation waiting for social housing.

Andrew Boff AM (Deputy Chair): Sorry, those figures, 2,500 new lets.

Vincent Lawal (Housing Solutions Manager, Southwark): Social lets. New lets, new tenancies.

Andrew Boff AM (Deputy Chair): Okay, and then last year 1,000 new lets.

Vincent Lawal (Housing Solutions Manager, Southwark): It was 1,000, exactly. Yes.

Andrew Boff AM (Deputy Chair): Thank you very much.

Vincent Lawal (Housing Solutions Manager, Southwark): Yes, so it is drying up. You have got people staying longer in temporary accommodation and those are in cases where we have accepted duty. Now, with the new Act, if we expand that and we accept duty to more people, it just means we have more people staying at the temporary accommodation waiting for that social net which is drying up, which is why it is important we consider the private rented sector as a solution. However, with welfare reform benefit caps and the cost of living in London, that is a massive issue for clients. You could find them a property and the property might not be suitable because it is not affordable, and that is a real challenge. Previously, a few years back, up until 2010, we could still find a few properties in London where the LHA matched market rents and once you find that that is good, the client is happy, we are happy, the landlord is happy, but now we are not getting those, but even when you get those, with the benefit cap, the customer might not actually get the LHA rates, which then becomes a double challenge which then means we would have to think of other options, either think stay on in temporary accommodation for longer till they get a social let or they have to consider moving somewhere more affordable, which is a challenge because if you have got support network around an particular area, the last thing you want to do is move from that area.

Sian Berry AM (Chair): Can I move on to Jenny and ask what you think about those issues that have been raised around the definition of vulnerability and the practicalities of housing everybody when you do accept the duty and what happens if it expands?

Jenny Barnes (Head of Policy and Research, Centrepoint): Sure. In terms of the vulnerability definition I kind of agree with what you have said. A problem in terms of practicalities is often young people do not know what to declare, so they do not necessarily know what would count as vulnerability and a lot of young people often they are quite nervous about going and spilling their heart out to someone that they have never met before, and so if they do not know that certain factors are relevant, they would not necessarily think to raise them and so that is certainly in with things like mental health and that young people have not been diagnosed at the point that they become homeless, so they would not necessarily know that that is something to raise, and similarly with domestic violence, that is not always something that they are willing to talk about straight away. It is certainly something that we tend to find out about further down the line.

Jenny Barnes (Head of Policy and Research, Centrepoint): In terms of the challenges in delivering duties, so with regards to young people in particular, there are different challenges around supply of where do

you put them once you have accepted duties. Probably the biggest factor is the shared accommodation rates. Young people under 35 now are entitled to a lower rate of housing benefit. In the private rental sector that just means that options are extremely limited. We are hopefully going to be looking at this issue to do some more updated research on it, but previous research has shown that only 1.5% of lets are affordable at the shared accommodation rate and has a landlord that is willing to let to someone on benefits. That is a real issue and you also add --

Tom Copley AM: What was that percentage?

Sian Berry AM (Chair): 1.5%.

Jenny Barnes (Head of Policy and Research, Centrepoin): 1.5%.

Tom Copley AM: Willing to let to someone on benefits.

Jenny Barnes (Head of Policy and Research, Centrepoin): Have a --

Sian Berry AM (Chair): Is that -- how long?

Tom Copley AM: How long did they have this?

Jenny Barnes (Head of Policy and Research, Centrepoin): No, 1.5% who are willing to let to someone on benefits and the rent is affordable to someone on a shared accommodation rate. That was before the LHA freeze made this issue worse, so we would expect that to be even worse now. We find it extremely difficult to find suitable private rented sector properties for young people, as I am sure local authorities do to, and with the shared accommodation rate, it being announced that that is being spread to social housing, that will also make it extremely difficult to find social lets that are suitable for young people, because those do not tend to be shared social units, and also the rate would mean that they had so little buying power that I think social landlords would also be nervous about letting to this group, so there is a real question about where do you put them. In lots of areas there is sort of supported accommodation available, but, again, budgets for that have been cut.

For some young people that might be appropriate. For some young people that do not have support needs, they do need an independent unit, so, again, we come back to the impacts of the housing market, there not being independent units for them to move on to. It would be a real challenge for local authorities when those numbers are growing and are potentially bringing in more people that do not necessarily have the higher support needs but do have an immediate homelessness problem and to be able to assist them to access somewhere that they can afford and that is suitable.

Deborah Halling (Senior Policy Officer, Housing and Land, GLA): I do not think I have a huge amount to add to those comments around priority. I think Vincent's summary of the legal position is really helpful and I think that is a fairly broad grouping and often I think difficulties arise where the application of that is not very sensitive, particularly in cases with young people and, say, victims of domestic violence where drawing that story out of someone is not necessarily straightforward. That is the issue, is probably more around implementation than definition and there are certainly some really good examples of local authorities assisting those to whom they do not necessarily have a legal duty, sometimes around young people or sometimes around rough sleepers, but obviously the pressure is on local authority budgets for running services and the huge issues around supply and affordability of accommodation in London, compounded massively by welfare

reform and particularly impact, as Jenny was describing, of that on young people are a real challenge for local authorities who would seek to be as accommodating as possible in that definition of vulnerability.

Sian Berry AM (Chair): Okay. Jennie Bibbings in Cardiff, do you have anything to add to that? Is the picture different in Wales? Is Wales doing anything differently?

Jennie Bibbings (Campaigns Manager, Shelter Wales): Well, we changed the definition of vulnerability when we brought in the Housing Wales Act 2014 and that was something that we were really keen to involve government on, because we had historically all sort of issues around vulnerability with our clients echoing what my colleagues are saying for me. What we found is that it is often very humiliating - Yes, supporting our clients through making a homelessness application whether they are having to prove vulnerability was something we were always very uncomfortable with, because you have to really draw out all the problems in someone's life and really you are kind of focusing on these aspects, these kind of weaknesses in someone's life, the problems that they have had, so that they are eligible for a service, and we also observed that local authorities were spending a lot of resource on investigating vulnerability. We were engaging with the Welsh Government around developing the Act and we have a new definition now in Wales. It does not go as far as we would have liked it to have gone. In an ideal world, you would not have to ration services according to vulnerability anyway, but the definition that we have now in Wales is that a person is classed as vulnerable if they were to become street homeless, if they were less able to fend for themselves than an ordinary person who was made homeless. We would have liked the comparator to be with the ordinary person, that being already street homeless is already by definition more vulnerable than the average, but that is what we have.

However, in practice, with this new system, with the prevention duty and the relief duty, what we find is vulnerability does not become a factor until much further on in the process. Vulnerability is not formally considered until somebody has been through the prevention duty and then through the relief duty. Only at that point is it taken into account, so it is generally speaking much lower in the mix in Wales now than it was before

Sian Berry AM (Chair): That is really useful to know. I am also a local Councillor and I totally agree with you that when somebody comes in to help you with housing, you have to ask them all these quite searching questions in order to try to see if you can find them some help. It is very, very difficult.

When under the Act you are acting before they are homeless and so it is just more of a case of trying to help before you have to get to that point of pushing down the vulnerability really?

Jennie Bibbings (Campaigns Manager, Shelter Wales): That is right, and if they are actually homeless by the time they enter into the system, then local authorities, they are not supposed to spend a lot of time investigating priority need, they are just focused on to go on is someone apparently in priority need and they are supposed to err on the side of caution in that judgment but the emphasis is on using resources that help people and support people, not in carrying out investigations.

Sian Berry AM (Chair): That is really helpful to know.

Andrew Boff AM (Deputy Chair): Just before we go on, what is the situation with regard to, Mr. Lawal, vulnerability of ex-service people? Are they in a category of their own or are they assessed separately?

Vincent Lawal (Housing Solutions Manager, Southwark): With ex-service men, for example, in Southwark, we give them a very high priority on the waiting lists outside of homelessness, so they can bid for a property, because even if they approach us homeless and we accept a duty towards them, for example, they

will be in what we call Band 3, which is like a third category. You have got Band 1, the highest, Band 2, Band 3. If my memory serves me right, they will be in Band 2 once we know that they are ex-armed forces and we have given them more priority so they do not have -- so that argument around homelessness, are you in priority need or not, will not hold any more.

Andrew Boff AM (Deputy Chair): Is that an approach that is shared with other boroughs as well, do you --

Vincent Lawal (Housing Solutions Manager, Southwark): That was what I was going to get to. Different boroughs have different protocols around what they do with armed forces. The Government did say that reasonable preference should be given to them, but then reasonable preference as defined by each local authority is different. For us it is given a higher band. For some it might be give them a priority star, give them, I do not know, other things.

Andrew Boff AM (Deputy Chair): Thank you for that. Now, I will just move on to my main question. Again, Mr. Lawal, what training do your housing officers undertake for dealing with victims of domestic violence and abuse in determining their vulnerability?

Vincent Lawal (Housing Solutions Manager, Southwark): Every year all our staff go through at least a minimum of two trainings around domestic violence, domestic abuse. We have officers within the service who are domestic violence champions, so who would, once a client comes in and another client is being domestic violence, so domestic abuse, they engage with such clients. As a council, we fund the domestic violence women's aid, Solace, to work with us to provide support to victims of domestic violence. We co-locate our services with them, so every Wednesday they are coming into our service and they are bringing the list of cases they have, we bring in the list of cases we have, we compare notes and we try to move things forward. We do joint presentations at Multi-Agency Risk Assessment Conferences in terms of clients who are high risk and in terms of the solutions we can provide to them. Lots of training, I would say. We are quite robust in the service we have for domestic violence.

Andrew Boff AM (Deputy Chair): The training that is received, who gives that training generally?

Vincent Lawal (Housing Solutions Manager, Southwark): Solace Women's Aid provide the training, recently Domestic Abuse Housing Alliance (DAHA), they also have come in and provided training to us at least twice around domestic violence.

Andrew Boff AM (Deputy Chair): Is this in the whole range of domestic violence?

Vincent Lawal (Housing Solutions Manager, Southwark): Yes, domestic abuse.

Andrew Boff AM (Deputy Chair): Domestic abuse in general.

Vincent Lawal (Housing Solutions Manager, Southwark): Yes, it is more domestic abuse now, not domestic violence.

Andrew Boff AM (Deputy Chair): Do you think there is any more that is required in terms of training or understanding of domestic abuse by housing?

Vincent Lawal (Housing Solutions Manager, Southwark): I think so. Yes, definitely. That is why for us the training is ongoing. It is not like every year we -- and we get more officers to become domestic abuse champions. I attend the Violence Against Women and Girls meeting, quarterly meeting, we discuss issues like

this also. Yes, definitely, officers need to be training more and more. With housing, budget cuts means officers come, officers go. Unless you keep on training them, you are likely to use your experienced officers if they find jobs elsewhere or if they take redundancies and things like that. Yes, I totally agree.

Andrew Boff AM (Deputy Chair): Perhaps to the other guests, to Jenny Barnes, is your experience that local authorities do understand domestic violence?

Jenny Barnes (Head of Policy and Research, Centrepont): I think as with everything it depends on the local authority and it depends on the individual staff member. Some of them are extremely good at handling it. Unfortunately, we do hear cases where it is been handled badly, like we still hear cases where young people are told they need a police crime number to show they have reported the domestic violence to the police, which is not required, but that is still being asked some times of young people, so I think there is growing acknowledgement within local authorities that this is a big issue, but unfortunately we do still hear cases of it not going as it should, so - as with everything, I think as you mentioned, continued training is required. There is still work to do.

Andrew Boff AM (Deputy Chair): Yes. Thank you for that. Thank you very much.

Joanne McCartney AM: Yes, and I am asking it because I do not see anywhere else to put the question, so I apologise, but when I talk to people that work in domestic violence refuge, what I am often told is that there is lots of insecurity, particularly in social housing, because quite often the security of tenure resides with the perpetrator and that a lot of what women, particularly women but obviously also men, say is that if somebody could be done so that, when they left a property, they either don't lose their own security of tenure, that they are not intentionally homeless, particularly if they cannot prove domestic violence. Secondly, if the tenancy agreement is in the name of their partner, ex-partner, whether there should be a mechanism so that that could be allocated to the person that has fled, particularly women with children most of all. They might not want to go back to that particular property, but then they could at least look to exchange it. That is an issue. I am just wondering whether that is something that has been flagged up and whether you would welcome some change that enables you and your social housing to actually relocate tenancies on that basis.

Vincent Lawal (Housing Solutions Manager, Southwark): I totally agree with you. One, for us as a council, again, I can use that as an example, that is all I know, if a tenant, a secure tenant, a council tenant, is fleeing domestic violence, one of the provisions we have through our allocations policy is to place them in the highest band, which is Band 1 for emergency transfer.

Joanne McCartney AM: Do they retain that your security of tenure? Because often they fear they are going to lose it and have to start again.

Vincent Lawal (Housing Solutions Manager, Southwark): Yes. They retain their security of tenure, because they are moving from one social tenancy to another, so they still remain. They still keep their security of tenure. Lately we have been more active in terms of the London reciprocal arrangements where they actually are able to move to another borough and still retain their security of tenure.

I am speaking solely, but the bit we as homelessness and housing solutions do not like is of course the case you mentioned where someone's moving out with children and we cannot just kick out the perpetrator from the property just like that, because as far as we are concerned, that is a breach of their tenancy. Just kick them out, give the property to the lady or give the lady something else and give that property to another person. I have been told that they have gone to court a few times to try to make that happen, but judges are sometimes reluctant to grant that request which then makes it difficult for them to enforce. That is what I have been told

but if we had our way as housing solutions, of course, if someone's fleeing a property due to violence, the perpetrator should not remain in the property.

Joanne McCartney AM: Particularly if children are involved.

Vincent Lawal (Housing Solutions Manager, Southwark): Particularly when children are involved, yes. We have had a few cases where they have been able to go to court and change their tenancy to the woman's name where the woman was not originally under tenancy agreement, but you would expect those cases to either be consistent, something which is just by default something you do or eventually either way, if it the perpetrator, but I would not say that is happening as much as it should at the moment, and I think that is across local authorities.

Sian Berry AM (Chair): I think Jennie Bibbings had her hand up to answer that question as well from the Welsh perspective, is that right?

Jennie Bibbings (Campaigns Manager, Shelter Wales): Yes, just briefly, just to highlight that -- this is an issue in Wales as well and Welsh Government has recently brought in some new legislation. It has not been implemented yes. It is called the Renting Homes Act 2016 and it is all about simplifying tenancy law and it is a long framework which was developed by the Law Commission, going back quite a few years now. One of the provisions in that is creating joint tenancies so that you could remove people's name from the tenancy, you can add new people's name on the tenancy as well. You can end up at the end of a tenancy having completely different people listed as contract holders than they were at the beginning and the policy aim here was specifically to deal with these issues around domestic abuse where the perpetrator is named in the tenancy. That is coming in Autumn 2018 so we will wait and see how it works out but we are hoping that it will make things easier for victims of domestic violence.

Sian Berry AM (Chair): Thank you.

Joanne McCartney AM: Just a quick one, and that is to Deborah actually, because I understand the Mayor's given some extra money in there, homelessness money, particularly about women that are at risk of domestic violence about refuges, is that correct?

Deborah Halling (Senior Policy Officer, Housing and Land, GLA): Yes. Within the overall affordable homes programme, so the £3.15 billion for affordable homes during 2016- 21, there is provision there to fund the development or refurbishment of refuges. I think probably what you are referring to is £50 million that is set aside for move on accommodation for those who are in a position to move on from either hostels or refuges and I know my colleagues who are working on that front have been having conversations with Women's Aid and other organisations about the kind of best ways to develop that. That would not necessarily be social rented accommodation but it could potentially be.

Joanne McCartney AM: Okay. Thank you.

Nicky Gavron AM: Could I just ask; how many refuges are there in London? Because I know the policy during the last administration was not to concentrate on refuges.

Deborah Halling (Senior Policy Officer, Housing and Land, GLA): I do not have that kind of figure at my fingertips but I can find it out. We have got it kind of squirrelled away, so I can find that and bring it back to you. There is slight under provision within London compared to the rest of the country.

Sian Berry AM (Chair): We asked for some data on this following our subsequent meeting and I think that is come back. It will be in our report when it comes out.

Nicky Gavron AM: That is good, because I remember over the last period, last administration, we had been very concerned that the emphasis, good enough, it is good, it was on rape crisis centers, but completely moved away from refuge provision.

Deborah Halling (Senior Policy Officer, Housing and Land, GLA): Yes, and I think there is a need for a mixed economy of provision and the ideal is to kind of intervene early and that is why I think that Vincent mentioned the Domestic Abuse Housing Alliance (DAHA), which is working with social landlords to help them kind of identify and support victims early on, hopefully avoid those kind of eviction type situations that you were talking about but refuges are kind of a necessary part of provision and that is why we are making funding available for them.

Nicky Gavron AM: Thank you. That is helpful.

Tom Copley AM: My question is to Vincent. What kind of housing options advice can local authorities offer to those who might need support that are not owed the main homelessness duty?

Vincent Lawal (Housing Solutions Manager, Southwark): Right. I will go back to something that I said before, which is whether there is funding to local authorities [so that] we create options with the funding. Once the funding dries up, it is back to the legality of assessing people and making decision. For example, in Southwark at the moment we are a trail blazer borough for the new Homelessness Reduction Act and we have been given some money by the Government to pilot the Homelessness Reduction Act and with that money we have been able to set up a lot of schemes for single people and one of those schemes, for example, is what we call the housing first scheme. With the housing first scheme, we know lots of single people with complex mental health needs will not sustain or maintain their accommodation. You could place them, because they are in priority need, but then you place down and they are back on the streets. We are running a bespoke service for them where we have an officer --

Tom Copley AM: Is this essentially the same as the housing first they have in New York?

Vincent Lawal (Housing Solutions Manager, Southwark): Yes, exactly.

Tom Copley AM: It is that scheme, yes.

Vincent Lawal (Housing Solutions Manager, Southwark): Exactly. We are bringing that in because we have the money for it. We are bringing in incentive schemes to help single people into alternative accommodation. We also have an accommodation finding service within the Council which is a private rented sector procurement team. They also try to help people with alternative accommodation. We are bringing in family reconnection officers who would go back where there is no violence, speak to mum, speak to dad, speak to grandma, to try to prevent homelessness and keep people in their accommodation, because that is better for women to be doing under the Homelessness Reduction Act, and a few other schemes like that.

What I am trying to say is once the funding is there it is easy for local authorities to think about schemes, employment, debt advice, all kinds of schemes to help people. When the funding dries up, it becomes difficult.

Tom Copley AM: I would love to ask you more about this, but I know there is going to be questions on the Homelessness Reduction Act later, so I will go back to Joanne [McCartney AM] on that. Our survey that we did

on homelessness found that 57% of those who applied did not go to the local authority, in many cases because they did not feel the local authority would be able to offer them anything. Actually, do you think that is actually a correct assessment? You would not be able to?

Vincent Lawal (Housing Solutions Manager, Southwark): Yes, I think so. As a local authority right now, we expect that over time we are going to get an increase in the number of people approaching us for assistance, because we have brought these schemes in to help them, because we work with agencies, we work with local people and they know the service provision, they know that at the time when we did not have the money there was a difficulty in what we could offer people at that time rather than we have assessed you, we have a duty towards you, we do not have a duty towards you, you can try to find an accommodation to rent but we cannot help you with the deposit because we do not have the money, but that has changed now, because we have some money to do all of that. I would say, yes, 57% of people not turning up, people not going to their local authorities, because they feel they are not going to get any help is accurate, I would say.

Tom Copley AM: I do not know if our other guests want to comment on whether or not you think there is more local authorities could be doing or whether you simply agree that they are so over stretched that they can only really focus on those who are entitled to a priority need.

Jenny, do you have any thoughts on that?

Jenny Barnes (Head of Policy and Research, Centrepoint): I think it is undeniable that in order to do more they probably need more resources. Certainly, the pockets of good practice that if we can improve training in each service, it can improve the service on the ground. A lot of it is about how the initial person, when you walk in the door, receives you. That sort of stuff can be improved. In terms of practical assistance, that local authorities can be delivering to people that present, unfortunately, that does cost money, so you cannot really escape that.

Tom Copley AM: Sure. Thank you.

Deborah Halling (Senior Policy Officer, Housing and Land, GLA): Yes, I would agree with both Jenny and Vincent that there are things you can do with good training, in terms of making sure you pick up people who are vulnerable and making sure you deliver on the legal duty, but it is difficult for local authorities when resources either are not there or what often local authorities will say is there are short term pockets of funding. Vincent, for example, mentioned kind of homelessness, prevention trail blazer funding. There can be a period where there are some really good services that are in place and those often have some kind of positive sort of trickle down effects, but it is very difficult I think it sustain provision and that partly I think is about funding for services through local authorities, but there is also an issue of what the wider housing market looks like. Even with the best funded housing option services in the world, with the current housing market and the impacts of welfare reform on that could be very difficult to deliver substantial housing options for people and another factor there is the kind of uncertainty that is surrounding supportive accommodation at the moment. That is something that some local authorities have been very good and delivering kind of pathways for their supported accommodation to help, for example, young people or rough sleepers and those I think are in a very precarious position at the moment, because both revenue funding for the support and for the housing costs is very uncertain at the moment.

Tom Copley AM: Just finally I wanted to ask Jennie, in Wales, when the definition was changed, presumably encompassing more people, did resources follow that when that definition was changed, that local authorities had more to be able to deal with the extra people?

Jennie Bibbings (Campaigns Manager, Shelter Wales): Yes, the Welsh Government put some additional money in place, transitional funding, and it was meant to be there for three years initially and it was tapering year on year, and the idea was that local authorities should be able to manage demand themselves on the normal budgets moving forward but what we have found in practice is that is impossible actually for Welsh local authorities and so there has been a strong lobby to Welsh Government with us and with local authorities as well, all saying the same thing, which is that you need to resource this agenda in a long term way and an example of that was that local authorities in Wales before the Act came in, some of them had prevention funds but a lot of them did not have the money to put prevention funds in place, and those prevention funds have actually been a very important part of helping them to meet their duties under prevention and relief. We had seen prevention of funds being used in all kinds of very innovative ways, it had to be said. Sometimes it is about figuring arrears, sometimes it is about just little things that people cannot afford, like paying the £50 court fee to make an application to suspend a warrant or paying someone's bus fare so that they can get to the emergency accommodation, all sort of things like that, but that money is very important and if the Welsh Government were not providing additional assistance, those prevention funds in many cases would disappear.

It is a focus for our lobby moving forward but we need to make sure that this agenda is properly resourced.

Tom Copley AM: Thank you.

Nicky Gavron AM: Vincent, can I just ask you, does the Government still give a supporting people's grant?

Vincent Lawal (Housing Solutions Manager, Southwark): They do?

Nicky Gavron AM: They do, and do you ever use -- because that's discretionary, is it not? You can use it for vulnerable people. Is that ever used in these cases?

Vincent Lawal (Housing Solutions Manager, Southwark): Yes, we still have supported housing provision for clients who are vulnerable due to mental health, drug, alcohol and all of that. I must say the funding has reduced drastically, which again creates a challenge, and also the biggest challenge we have with supported housing provision is we are at a stage now where there is a lot of bed blocking. You have people in supported housing who are meant to move on so that other people can move in, but the challenge is where do they move on to. The private rental sector market is not affordable.

Nicky Gavron AM: Sure.

Vincent Lawal (Housing Solutions Manager, Southwark): Social housing is no longer there. You have lots of people who are bed blocking in the supported housing schemes.

Jenny Barnes (Head of Policy and Research, Centrepoint): The supported housing funding is not ring-fenced.

Nicky Gavron AM: Sorry?

Jenny Barnes (Head of Policy and Research, Centrepoint): The supported housing funding is not ring-fenced, so they do not have to spend it on housing related support.

Deborah Halling (Senior Policy Officer, Housing and Land, GLA): I think it is really noticeable that, since the ring-fence was removed from that funding in I think about 2010, or thereabouts, the amount of investment nationally in supported housing has gone down massively.

Nicky Gavron AM: It is used for other things by local authorities?

Deborah Halling (Senior Policy Officer, Housing and Land, GLA): Yes.

Nicky Gavron AM: Not vulnerable people.

Jenny Barnes (Head of Policy and Research, Centrepont): Not everywhere. In some places they have continued to maintain their level of funds, but in some areas the amount spent has dropped by, like, 85%, because they have --

Nicky Gavron AM: 85%?

Jenny Barnes (Head of Policy and Research, Centrepont): -- needed to, not necessarily in London. I think most of the examples of the big cuts have actually been outside of London, but they have then -- because there is so many other pressures on their budgets, local authorities have decided not to provide that housing related support any more and spend that money on other things, which they are entitled to do now under the new local authority funding rules.

Deborah Halling (Senior Policy Officer, Housing and Land, GLA): I think it is also fair to be clear that, although that money is no longer ring-fenced and can therefore be spent on other things, that the total amount of the money year on year has been subject to reductions. It is partly about spending on other things but partly about just not having the same amount to spend.

Nicky Gavron AM: I see. I know, but still this is a budget for vulnerable people.

Deborah Halling (Senior Policy Officer, Housing and Land, GLA): You would have to look at different authority budgets. It may well be spent on services for vulnerable people, but not necessarily on supported accommodation, so it can be spent on different --

Jenny Barnes (Head of Policy and Research, Centrepont): Not necessarily on homeless people. It might be for older people, for example.

Vincent Lawal (Housing Solutions Manager, Southwark): Different care services, social care.

Nicky Gavron AM: All right. I just think, Chair, it might be worth us looking at that.

I just want to move on to what I was supposed to be asking - this is of Centrepont, Jenny -- what advice to you give to young people when they come to you?

Jenny Barnes (Head of Policy and Research, Centrepont): Are you talking with regards to our helpline? We have a range of different services. Some of it, the vast majority of what we do, is supported housing provision, so most of them comes through the local authority. The advice we provide to them is about developing a personal support plan for them, helping them access education and dealing with any health issues that they have. I imagine your question is with regards to the helpline and what advice we give young people when they present to that, is that right?

Nicky Gavron AM: Well, no, just generally, but how long has your helpline been there?

Jenny Barnes (Head of Policy and Research, Centrepoint): It is quite a new service. It was formally launched in February.

Nicky Gavron AM: This February?

Jenny Barnes (Head of Policy and Research, Centrepoint): Yes.

Nicky Gavron AM: Oh, so it is very new. Yes.

Jenny Barnes (Head of Policy and Research, Centrepoint): This was essentially a service that came out of demand that was coming to us anyway. We were having lots of calls to our main head office number from young people who were asking for housing advice, basically, and so we decided that this had been going on for a number of years and we needed to formalise our response to these calls, so we created a prototype last year, but it was formally launched in February this year, and primarily what we do is helping young people understand what they are entitled to. It is not a detailed advocacy service. All we can do is make them aware of what priority need is, issues that might be relevant if it applies to them. In many cases it is just telling them to go to the local authority, because while it is an obvious thing to lots of us, they would not necessarily know that local authorities do provide housing assistance. Sometimes it can just be go and speak to your local authority, you might be in priority need, it is worth making your homelessness application, these are some of the factors that would make you a priority, if this applies to you, make sure that you raise that when you go down, so they are kind of aware of the relevant information they should be providing. We also have information on what local voluntary services are available in their area. If they tell us where they live, we have a database that we can look up and provide them with information about, whether it is a detailed local advocacy service or if there are any direct access services in their area, we can make them aware of those too. It is very much a sign-posting service really to deal with what we have found to be really quite big gaps in younger people's knowledge about what services are out there and what they are entitled to.

Nicky Gavron AM: Yes, it is a supporting and giving them advice and sign-posting.

Jenny Barnes (Head of Policy and Research, Centrepoint): Yes.

Nicky Gavron AM: That is it. Yes, okay.

Jenny Barnes (Head of Policy and Research, Centrepoint): Yes. In an ideal world it should not be necessary, really, but unfortunately we have found that it is, that young people do not necessarily know what it is that they should be raising or what services are out there for them.

Nicky Gavron AM: Sure. This is to Deborah: do you think the Mayor could be doing more in terms of messaging and educating and advising?

Deborah Halling (Senior Policy Officer, Housing and Land, GLA): Potentially I think there is some role there, and I know that the Mayor is very supportive of the Centrepoint phone line that Jenny was just describing. I think some of the sort of complexity of the picture in London is that the legal duty, as we have discussed, for assisting homeless households sits with London boroughs and they have a sort of pan London service, previously known as the London Youth Homeless Gateway, and I think the name of that has just changed, and I do not know of the new name to hand, that they will all be part of and that is funded through London Councils. There is some kind of provision there at a pan London level. There is something that the

Mayor can do in terms of messaging and awareness raising but there is a sort of case about where the local responsibility sits and what is already in place.

Nicky Gavron AM: Yes. You have a housing portal, have not you, a property portal? Do I have this right? It is a property portal?

Deborah Halling (Senior Policy Officer, Housing and Land, GLA): There is a website at the moment that is used primarily for shared ownership properties and there is some work underway to kind of broaden that.

Nicky Gavron AM: You could not be using that to do more?

Deborah Halling (Senior Policy Officer, Housing and Land, GLA): I think the remit of that is more around advertising intermediate housing.

Sian Berry AM (Chair): Is this the first steps website? That is the one you are referring to?

Deborah Halling (Senior Policy Officer, Housing and Land, GLA): Yes, rather than advice giving.

Nicky Gavron AM: Is there anything, any portal, he has got, that could be a vehicle?

Deborah Halling (Senior Policy Officer, Housing and Land, GLA): In terms of a vehicle for advice there is something about sort of whether it would be helpful for the Mayor to be kind of weighing in additional advice when that is not something necessarily within the Mayor's remit, rather than looking at ways of best supporting local authorities and the kind of partnerships in which they work, to do that more effectively. Some of the things the Mayor is doing can really help with that, for example, there is Platform for Life funding programme to develop for supported accommodation for young people and that sort of thing can mean that there are some substantial options in place. Essentially I would have some kind of hesitations about kind of muddying the waters with kind of legal responsibility for giving advice.

Nicky Gavron AM: Yes, but it could be sign-posting, could it not?

Deborah Halling (Senior Policy Officer, Housing and Land, GLA): Yes.

Nicky Gavron AM: I do not know. I think sometimes just having that voice and a Mayor being able to -- the Mayor is there, being the Mayor, stretching the envelope, sometimes makes a big difference, and we just heard --

Deborah Halling (Senior Policy Officer, Housing and Land, GLA): I think he likes supporting the phone line.

Nicky Gavron AM: -- it is so fragmented across boroughs, it is so different, the priority bands in each borough, and it would be quite good to just have a message about what you can do, what can be done.

Sian Berry AM (Chair): Sorry, Joanne had her hand up a minute ago. I do not know if that was a point of information.

Joanne McCartney AM: Well, it was just asking -- part of this in the earlier meeting. Common sense dictates that prevention is, apart from being a moral goal, actually saves money in the long term and I am just wondering what assessment is taking place of the trail blazer scheme or in Wales to determine what is good

practice and what is actually going to offer real value for money? Is that a sensible question to ask, or is it not on your --

Sian Berry AM (Chair): Unless what Tony wanted to ask was more of a point of information on this particular topic --

Tony Devenish AM: It is, yes.

I think where I often struggle here, being a year 2 GLA Member, is if I do not know how the system works, how other people that really need to access it and almost I would ask Jenny and her team if she could almost stand back and on a page of A3, as I often do, put out a flow chart of who does what, local authority, which bit. You talk about London Councils, we all know what London Councils is. Anybody watching what pod cast probably do not know what London Councils even is. It has who does what, London councils, the local authorities in London, is there a role answering Nicky's question for the Mayor in times of guidance or sign-posting, because it just needs to be clearer, more transparent and then we can perhaps make progress. Thank you.

Sian Berry AM (Chair): Okay. Shall we put your question now? Yes.

Joanne McCartney AM: About what works and are you evaluating.

Vincent Lawal (Housing Solutions Manager, Southwark): Yes. We approved this in the Homelessness Reduction Act and like Jennie said, from Wales, we have started trying to assist people putting aside the priority need intentionality issues, which previously would have been a factor.

Joanne McCartney AM: I do not want to get into the later questions, but it is just is it being evaluated, that is what I really want to know, and has been evaluation done on prevention schemes in the past that could be drawn on, because obviously, we always do this circular thing and we never seem to learn from what is gone before.

Vincent Lawal (Housing Solutions Manager, Southwark): In terms of evaluation, maybe I am not getting the question straight, but it is about either we are trying to help people stay where they are or we are trying to provide them with alternative accommodation. Previously we have had challenges with people coming in at the last minute or when they are homeless before they seek assistance. Now in Southwark we have seen people coming in a lot earlier, which has been very, very useful for us, because it means there is still somewhere and then we can help, we can engage with landlords, we can visit. We had a case two weeks ago, where a lady was in rent arrears and she was due to be evicted and we met with the landlord and we decided to pay £2,400 to the landlord to keep the tenancy on for a year. That did not cover the full arrears but it got us a new tenancy agreement, because the alternative to that, as it was previously, was the client would come in as homeless, intentionally -- yes, exactly -- they are probably in a temporary accommodation which would cost us way more than £2,400, and if we do then decide to assist them, we will probably pay another £3,000 to another landlord to rehouse them. It is schemes like that that are beginning to come out and which -- but these are early days, so I do not think we have actually had time to sit down and like, okay, how many preventions have we had, what impact is it having.

Sian Berry AM (Chair): Has this happened in Wales yet, in terms of evaluation?

Jennie Bibbings (Campaigns Manager, Shelter Wales): Yes. It is still relatively early days in terms of evaluation. We have done some work around evaluating people's experiences and looking at the data. The Welsh Government has commissioned a full longitudinal evaluation, which is about midway through at the

moment and I think that is going to be -- it is going to throw up some really interesting findings around the effect on people representing because the work that we have done certainly suggests that people feel that they are being helped more effectively, not everybody, I have to say. You know, some people, particularly non-priority, are not always getting the root issues which are causing their homelessness to be addressed. Some of the interventions do look like a bit of a sticking plaster intervention, I have to say. I am particularly interested to find out what happens over time and do we see people representing in a few months, because at the moment it is still early days and we will have to wait for that information.

Sian Berry AM (Chair): Okay. Thank you very much.

Deborah Halling (Senior Policy Officer, Housing and Land, GLA): Just on you mentioning, Vincent, the trail blazer funding that you are using to kind of pilot some of the provisions of the Homelessness Reduction Act. Now, my understanding from conversations with the Department for Communities and Local Government is that evaluation is kind of built into that funding and that all the way through they want to be evaluating that. Also, there are a number of reports which I can certainly kind of forward on to the costs of not preventing homelessness. Those provide some good evidence. What we do see is that some of the difficulty arises from the fact, and I do not know whether there is some kind of learning from Wales on this, but that sometimes where savings result from helping someone, the savings will accrue to an agency other than the local authority. Say, for example someone does not end up in prison or does not end up making heavier use of A&E because they are sleeping on the streets and very prone to illness and injury, so that the difficulty there is that when public funding is not looked at in a total pot you sometimes get one agency making savings and the others having to kind of spend to deliver savings to them which just does not stack up on budget sheets.

Vincent Lawal (Housing Solutions Manager, Southwark): That is true.

Jenny Barnes (Head of Policy and Research, Centrepoint): I was going to make exactly the same point, actually. We did a cross benefit analysis of our support and the big savings were to the benefits bill, to criminal justice and a small amount to health. Those are obviously not savings that local authorities see directly. With regards to young people, the main prevention service that we have looked at is mediation services and basically from the evaluations that do exist they suggest that it can have a massively positive impact on the young person, but it does not necessarily mean that they go home. If they can rebuild that relationship but not necessarily living at home, that will improve their long-term outcomes and improve the chances of them moving into education and work but does not necessarily mean that they are not in the short term needing to be supported by a local authority, so then asking a local authority to fund that service when the benefits are to other agencies - that has not necessarily always been a successful ask unfortunately.

Sian Berry AM (Chair): I wanted to follow on with some questions now, which actually do follow on really well from the questions that Nicky was asking. As I understand it, Southwark has in its housing strategy an aim to work with schools and colleges to educate children and young people about housing and homelessness issues and obviously one of the things we have found is that people were not even approaching local authorities, because they just did not have the knowledge about that. Can you tell us how your borough staff are doing that work to engage with schools, voluntary groups, to get homelessness prevention into --

Vincent Lawal (Housing Solutions Manager, Southwark): We have not done a lot on that yet.

Sian Berry AM (Chair): Right.

Vincent Lawal (Housing Solutions Manager, Southwark): At the moment we trying to do what we have called a predictive modelling. For example, around 35% of those who approach us have just come from their parents' accommodation, parents or families and relatives, that is the biggest reason. Compared to the rest of London, where it is short tenancy evictions, which is like 50% on average for the rest of London, so in Southwark actually short hold evictions is just around 29% in terms of people coming in for assistance. The big one for us is parenteral eviction and we know that we have --

Sian Berry AM (Chair): Sorry, 35% of your presentations are parenteral evictions.

Vincent Lawal (Housing Solutions Manager, Southwark): Yes, are parenteral evictions.

Sian Berry AM (Chair): Amongst young people or across the board?

Vincent Lawal (Housing Solutions Manager, Southwark): Across the board. Across the board, yes.

Sian Berry AM (Chair): Wow!

Vincent Lawal (Housing Solutions Manager, Southwark): That is why we are trying to invest in getting family reconnection officers who will then go in and try to get to the bottom of why that is such a big issue in Southwark. Of course, we know one of the reasons for that is parents are waiting, being on the waiting on the list for this property, they are not getting it, the bidding time is taking longer, and because the families are overcrowded over time they ask the young person to leave. It is in engaging with the parents and engaging with the young people and that is where we are focusing our attention on right now and we are hoping, if we get that right, then that can then help us to target the schools we need to go into and then provide presentations and what we then want in preventing homelessness.

Sian Berry AM (Chair): Okay. Well, thank you for that. That is really interesting. Can I ask Jenny Barnes what level of engagement you are doing with local authorities and schools? I know obviously, the new helpline is already focused on young people. What are you doing there to get people to use it?

Jenny Barnes (Head of Policy and Research, Centrepoin): As it is fairly early days we are doing a big push of advertising later in the year, so hopefully we will be able to provide some more detailed feedback later in the year. In terms of schools specifically, it is not something we are doing with regards to the helpline but it is something we have done in the past. We have had programmes where essentially young people -- we train young people to go into schools and run sessions about hopelessness to try to break down some of the stigma around homelessness, getting young people to actually understand what it can be in reality and in some cases recognise that in themselves, that that could be a risk for them. It had really positive feedback when we delivered it, but unfortunately it is not something we do on any scale any more. There is the odd ad hoc session.

The challenges are funding, so it is a difficult thing to get funding for, and also, we also had problems with schools having too much else to focus on, to be honest. With the schools that were likely to be requiring us the most, they did not necessarily feel they had time on their timetables to be running these kinds of sessions. The ones that were approaching us were often actually the more affluent schools that wanted to run a kind of charity session busting stereotypes type sessions, which is obviously valuable in a different way, but in terms of direct homelessness prevention is trickier.

It is certainly something that we support and that we think should be more widely done, but it is linking the kind of local authority agenda with making sure it is also a priority for schools and in terms of what they are going judged by and the pressures that are being put on them as well.

Sian Berry AM (Chair): Sorry, just one quick question. Are schools the right place though? Surely it might be colleges -- if we are talking about evictions, you would probably would not get that until you are 18. Would it better to work with colleges or --

Jenny Barnes (Head of Policy and Research, Centrepont): The vast majority of the young people who come to us it is about family break down, so that does start early. I think there is definitely a role for -- to be honest, I cannot see how else can do it other than schools, to reach the spread that is needed. It is certainly not the only answer. Yes, we have also worked with colleges and certainly there is a big question about the social media, so a lot of the work we try to do with the helpline is around trying to access the networks that young people are using to try to advertise it in those kind of spaces rather than kind of our traditional ones.

Sian Berry AM (Chair): We are doing this investigation into what we are calling hidden homelessness, people who are between homes. Do you find that there is the level of understanding that, if you are sleeping on someone's sofa, you are technically a homeless person, even if you are just squatting around on different people's sofas, your status is that of being homeless and you are entitled to some help potentially. Is that something that young people in your experience understand or not?

Jenny Barnes (Head of Policy and Research, Centrepont): Certainly not all of them, no. Young people that we are currently supporting say that they did not realise that they were homeless at the time. It is certainly not a tag they want to give themselves, so there is still a very stereotypical view of homelessness among the public that it is a drunk-on park bench, so that is not of view of themselves that they want to have. Certainly, from previous surveys that we have done with the general population of young people, it is suggesting quite low numbers would know where to go for help if they were homeless, so I think there is quite a low level of awareness, because for many younger people it is just not something that has ever come up from them, that has ever been discussed. If there is not this kind of level of education, it is not something that they would think to investigate, I suppose. It is obviously something that no one hopes to come across in their own personal experience, so, if we are not actively offering that information to young people, I think it is hard for them to know the realities and where to go for help.

Vincent Lawal (Housing Solutions Manager, Southwark): We had a few meetings with support workers who work with teachers in schools to talk about homelessness, where we have had presentations directly with students and all of that. I remember years ago I used to go to schools and one of the challenges we had then, apart from, like you rightly said, being busy, where do we put you on, what time can you come in to deliver this session, 30 minutes, out, off you go, all challenges, and we saw an example actually of the challenge when they told us there are cases where probably somebody's left school and they are pregnant, they have had a child and they bring the child back to school and then they tell their mate about this baby, "I have my own council place". It is almost like it raises all your efforts in trying to educate people that, look, homelessness is not going to help you either in the short term or long term. Let us try to focus on our studies, let us try to build good relationships. I do know the schools we went to at that time had, and this was a few schools, had that challenge that, yes, you have come in -- because we were asking for feedback at the time. This work really begins in schools and all that. Yes, yes, it works until someone comes in with a baby and tells them, "Look, we have our council place, we are living there, so we are independent now" and it is almost like that is a goal to aspire to.

Sian Berry AM (Chair): Okay. Earlier we heard the problem was you were not approaching councils enough, so that is possibly not quite the issue that is current day, that people don't -- my experience of young people is they do not realise that they should ask for help, that they -- this idea that if have you a baby suddenly you get a house, that has kind of gone away a bit. Were you talking about the past then, were you not?

Vincent Lawal (Housing Solutions Manager, Southwark): Yes, this sort of situation.

Sian Berry AM (Chair): Do you know what the situation is now with that?

Vincent Lawal (Housing Solutions Manager, Southwark): I think now I do not -- well, like I said, in Southwark, for example, if people know that they are not likely to get any assistance, they are less likely to come in through our doors, so, yes, if you know you are going to get assistance, then you will need to come here. Yes.

Sian Berry AM (Chair): Yes.

Andrew Boff AM (Deputy Chair): That is very much in the sort of urban consciousness, though, that thing about if you get a child you will get a home. It is still there?

Vincent Lawal (Housing Solutions Manager, Southwark): Yes. Definitely. Yes.

Andrew Boff AM (Deputy Chair): I remember saying that outrageous thing back in the early 1980s. I was accused of being fascist, that that was in some ways --

Sian Berry AM (Chair): I am slightly worried we might - Joanne, did you want to say something about the --

Joanne McCartney AM: I just think teenage pregnancy rates have dropped dramatically, dropped so much.

Andrew Boff AM (Deputy Chair): They have dropped, yes.

Joanne McCartney AM: That I am not sure that is a great issue.

Andrew Boff AM (Deputy Chair): What Mr. Lawal was saying is that it is the effect of that on the perceptions of homeless amongst other younger people. Is that right?

Vincent Lawal (Housing Solutions Manager, Southwark): Yes. Exactly. Yes.

Andrew Boff AM (Deputy Chair): Because it is still there.

Sian Berry AM (Chair): Did Jennie [Bibbings] from Wales want to add something to that point there? Does Wales do anything to educate young people about the help is available, to destigmatise it, or to do anything else in the way of communications?

Jennie Bibbings (Campaigns Manager, Shelter Wales): We run a service funded by the Welsh Government and education service and that goes into the school around Wales, also people referral units as well as. The emphasis of that service is about leaving home education, so it is about leaving home in a planned way and it incorporates financial literacy and relationship education. It could be expanded, I think, a lot more than it is, it is a very small service at the moment. We have lobbied in the past to ask for leaving home

education to be part of the curriculum in Wales. That was not successful. Obviously, the curriculum, as other people have indicated, in a term is really, really packed.

The approach that we have found works the best is a peer approach, and so the work that we have done is with teenagers. If you delivered it to children who are too young, it is too abstract, they do not get it, but teenagers up to the age of about 21 have quite informal sessions that are led by someone, a young person, who has been homeless themselves and we have found that is the most effective way of really kind of bringing these issues home to young people.

It is a part of the picture in Wales, this kind of early prevention, but I think in an ideal world it would be a lot higher in the mix than it is.

Sian Berry AM (Chair): Thank you very much. To Deborah then finally, the question is there are role for the Mayor in doing anything to convene education on homelessness to encourage or support local authorities in what they are doing there?

Deborah Halling (Senior Policy Officer, Housing and Land, GLA): Yes. There is one example where the Mayor is already involved in that through the No First Night Out pilot project that has been funded from City Hall and that is a project that is focused primarily on prevention of rough sleeping, but is still about prevention, early intervention and so on and that is a project that has been carried out by Tower Hamlets, City of London and Hackney in partnership. They have done some really interesting work with community groups like, for example, the East London Mosque. Schools are one really obvious kind of outlet, but certainly in the posts I have worked in the local authority housing option, services came up against some of those same problems of kind of full curricular. Perhaps the scope for working with other local authority groups as the No First Night Out project has been doing, so one thing that some of my colleagues are working on at the moment is working with that project to see how they can it disseminate the learning from their work with community groups to other local authorities.

Jenny Barnes (Head of Policy and Research, Centrepoint): The tool kits are there so from other previous work we have tool kits that, when schools ask, we can provide them with sort of the exercises they can do with young people and I know other organisations have similar things. It is just how do we get that out to the people that need it.

Sian Berry AM (Chair): Thank you very much. David Kurten has some questions asking about the Housing Act in Wales, I think.

David Kurten AM: Thanks. Yes. I would like to ask in this section about the Homelessness Reduction Act which applies to England and London and also the Housing Act in Wales, and I know in some of your answers already we have alluded to this and talked about some of the impacts that it is already having in Wales and what it might do in the future and I will start with you, Jennie [Bibbings], in Wales there, as you already mentioned some things about it. Is there anything else that you would like to say about the Housing Act of 2014 in Wales and how it works to prevent homelessness and what has worked in the Act and what has not worked. Is there anything else that would be useful to London in what you can say about that?

Jennie Bibbings (Campaigns Manager, Shelter Wales): Of course. In terms of the Act I think the most frightening thing from a point of view of hidden homelessness is the increase in presentations that we have had since the law changed. We have not quite got two years of data yet, but in the first year there was a 26.5% increase in the number of people who were approaching local authorities. Now, we have nine months in the second year but the increase has been even greater and quite striking. 46% more people approaching local

authorities in the most recent nine months that we have data for, compared with the same period for previous years. The number of people keeps going up and up.

Local authorities record their success rates under prevention and relief and the final duty and they do seem to be holding relatively steady, despite annually increased work that councils have to do individually with all of these people. Broadly speaking around two thirds of people who are threatened with homelessness and go to their local authority have their homelessness successfully prevented and of course the standard for assessing successful prevention is higher than it was in the old days when all of this was happening under the old legislation.

Most people are not being assisted to stay in their own home and I think this is something that we all hoped would be higher because obviously, that would be a great result in terms of relieving pressure on the housing system but so far it is just under a quarter of people who have a successful prevention outcome are actually assisted to remain in their own home. Most people are going into new tenancies primarily in the private rented sector.

I think that looking at our case work and looking at the research that we have done so far with people, some people are getting a really excellent service compared to what they would under the old system, particularly single households, single people, who in the old days would have been only helped under advice and assistance, some are getting a much more in depth level of help than there used to be and better referrals to support services. That said, we have picked up a clear trend among other clients and the people who we have done research with for some local authorities to be relying on quite a generic service, quite a generic set of reasonable steps. Kind of the standard response seems to be when someone approaches a local authority now, even if they have a child, even if, obviously, they will be a priority need, the standard response now is here is a list of private landlords, off you go, good luck, and if you manage to find somewhere then we will help you with the rent in advance and we will help you with the bond. They are helped with the rent in advance; that is new, we would not have had that under the old system but for some people this system presumably looks very similar to the old advice and assistance duty and some of these that the Welsh local authorities are using, the lists of private landlords, are not kept up-to-date regularly. We have some people who are told to ring every landlord on the list and they feel they have to do that, because of the new power to end the duty if someone is found to be "unreasonably failing to co-operate". This creates a pressure on people to really do a lot and be very proactive. One council that I am aware of in Wales is actually requiring people to keep a reasonable steps diary. It is similar to a kind of Department of Work and Pensions approach to requiring people to account for the amount of time they spend house hunting. This puts a lot of pressure on people at a time during which they are already under a lot of stress and we are quite concerned about a potential limited range of reasonable steps.

Jennie Bibbings (Campaigns Manager, Shelter Wales): We do still have issues with people dropping out of the system as well, and I think from the point of view of hidden homelessness, again, this is a relevant consideration. About 20% of people who approach Welsh local authorities now, they drop out of the system for one reason or another. About 6% are dropping out because they are being found to be unreasonably failing to co-operate. Most people are withdrawing their application or they are just losing contact. Now, we do not know enough yet about why that is. You know, is it because people are managing to sort themselves out and there is nothing necessarily wrong with that, that is what this whole new legislation encourages people to help themselves but what if that is not the outcome, what if people are becoming street homeless and losing contact because they are losing faith in the local authority's ability to help them. There are some issues there around drop outs on the system that we need to understand a bit better.

The last point that I will make as well is that you will have to consider, and of course this also be an issue when the Homelessness Reduction Act comes in, are the proportion of people who get all the way through the system and are assisted under relief and then found that relief interventions are not successful and are still homeless at the end of that process but they are not in a priority need group, and for us it is 11.9% of people who approach local authorities are subsequently not helped effectively and they end the process and they are still homeless. Where are they going? These are questions that we have at the moment because I think we recognise in Wales that this is a step in the right direction. We used to see an awful lot of people not getting assisted, and now the numbers are fewer but they are still there and I do think it needs to be remembered as well that over the last year we can see substantial increases in rough sleeping in Wales. We do not monitor rough sleeping in a very rigorous way in Wales, I have to say. Data is not our strong point. We do not have budgets for that. The Welsh Government's own statistics suggest that a lot more people are sleeping rough now than they were just a year ago, and we are now certainly seeing a lot more people who are rough sleepers. The Shelter summary system for assistance, we have seen an 80% rise in one year, which is huge. While the system might be good at preventing homelessness, my questions are: (a) about the sustainability of those request outcomes; and (b) what about the people who are actually homeless and particularly if they have significant support needs, are under a risk of rough sleeping.

David Kurten AM: Thank you.

Andrew Boff AM (Deputy Chair): Can I just ask, David, you said you are data light at the moment, but is there an indication of why there is an increase in rough sleeping particularly? Any particular demographic group or circumstance that has produced that?

Jennie Bibbings (Campaigns Manager, Shelter Wales): As yet, no.

Andrew Boff AM (Deputy Chair): Okay.

Jennie Bibbings (Campaigns Manager, Shelter Wales): We are trying to persuade the Welsh Government to put some money into these issues, but no one has fully got to grips with that yet.

Andrew Boff AM (Deputy Chair): Okay. Thank you.

Sian Berry AM (Chair): Can I just -- before we move on to the Homelessness Reduction Act, is it possible, Jennie, that you could outline what requirements there are in the Housing Act in Wales and what is the difference between that and the Homelessness Reduction Act requirements?

Jennie Bibbings (Campaigns Manager, Shelter Wales): I am not 100% up to speed on the Homelessness Reduction Act, but my understanding is that it is broadly similar to the duties that we now have in the Housing Wales Act. In Wales the definition of threatened with homelessness has been extended to 56 days, which I believe is the same for the Homelessness Reduction Act, and a new duty on local authorities to help all eligible households with prevention services, as long as they are not threatened with homelessness.

That duty asks for up to 56 days. Then the relief duty kicks in. If households become homeless, then local authorities have up to 56 days to relieve that homelessness. The success rates for that second stage are substantially lower for a variety of reasons. You know, it is easier to prevent homelessness than deal with it once it is happened, of course. We also think that a number of priority households are being fast tracked through that stage, because they get higher points on their allocation system, so that they go to the final, as we have seen. There is the prevention duty, the previous duty and then if they are unsuccessful then the final

duty kicks in, which is very similar to the law that you have currently. That is when local connection and intentionality are considered and priority needs of course. That is the system in a nutshell.

I think another point which is important to mention is that alongside this legislative change, the Welsh Government has pushed a strong culture change agenda, not only with local authorities but also with us and other homelessness agencies. Prior to the law change it is fair to say that there is quite an adversarial relationship often between us and the Local Authority and the Welsh Government were clear that we need to be working more collaboratively and that is something which I think is a process of change but it is happening. For example, we do a lot of homelessness prevention work ourselves, particularly technical stuff, where it comes to representing people in court, for example, and liaising into private landlord things that local authorities in Wales were not that hot on always in the past. We can work together to help to prevent homelessness now and some local authorities in Wales have got embedded Shelter Cymru case workers now. Local authorities actually fund these case workers. They are independent, they work for us but they are there to consult and to advise the local authority on what is and is not going to pass from a legal perspective. The idea is that we have reduced the amount of formal legal challenge that is going on, and of course there is also a big drive, when we talk about culture change, it is not only between us agencies, it is also about the way that we have worked with individuals and so people using homelessness services are supposed to have their needs taken into account in a much more meaningful way than under the old system and part of this has been about personal housing plans, which Shelter Cymru actually invented the concept of personal housing plans going back a very long time now. All local authorities use these and they are supposed to be a tool for involving people in defining what housing solutions they want and how to go about getting it. At the moment, they are not really working as intended, I think it is fair to say. Most people just see it as another piece of paper and the local authorities as well just see it as another piece of paper and it is in itself quite a bureaucratic system. This is something else that I think that English local authorities have to be very aware of. This multi-stage homelessness requires you to notify people what stage they are at and what duties they are owed and that is very paperwork heavy and some councils are really struggling with this now. If there are some innovative solutions here around notifying people by text or different ways, I think that this is worth looking at because it is something that in Wales we did not anticipate the level of bureaucracy that this system has brought and in some ways that bureaucracy is trailing resources away from the primary purpose of helping people. That is something to consider, moving forward.

David Kurten AM: YI will move on to ask Vincent now from Southwark. What did you think are the impacts of the implementation of the Homelessness Act going to be on your housing services in Southwark?

Vincent Lawal (Housing Solutions Manager, Southwark): Basically a positive impact in terms of clients and, by the way, I agree 100% with everything that Jennie has said. We have experienced that already. More people have been assisted, which is a positive thing. We brought in Shelter to our service and then the first time we brought it was in 2013, to review our service and kind of tell us where we are failing, where things are not working, and we have had them 2013, 2015, 2017 to just keep us on our toes and, like, what are you not doing properly and all that and we have been making improvements. Also, like Jennie said, we are looking to bringing Shelter in to offer an advocacy service to our client at our reception, from September thereabout, we are working on that. Yes, more help for customers.

Our officers are happier and the reason for that is prior to when we got this £2 million to fund this trail blazer in Southwark, we take the highest number from listed applications in London and we are the third highest nationally. Last year we had 2,500 homelessness decisions which were made and we are very, very robust in our decision. We take an application from all our clients in through the door but when we are building this, the questions our officers were asking was, okay, you want to change the process, you want to move us away from being investigators to negotiators, but what product are you giving us to do that with, which was why we then

came up with list of products that I mentioned earlier, housing first, incentive payments, accommodation service, reconnection officers, resettlement officers, all kind of products which would help us prevent and relieve homelessness, and that has been good and we are seeing a culture change amongst officers also, which is more like, okay, we are trying to help that client issuing a 15-page intentionality decision letter, let's try to help them. Applying to priority and applying to intentionality, we have had a few cases where a client came in, £11,000 rent arrears, prevention stage, we have offered him two properties, he's declined both and my officers were like can we issue the intentionality decision now. No, you cannot, sorry, this is a new way of working. He's going to move on to relief when he does become homeless and he's going to come back and we will still need to help him. If all of that fails, then we need to consider intentionality right at the end.

Something else we had to do was move away our full assessment officers from the triage pre-assessment stage and put in customer services officers, because one of the feedback we got from Shelter is you need to offer advice and assistance at the earliest opportunity backed up with a good customer service. When we had a full assessment, which I think you have mentioned already, when we had full assessment officers right at the door, that was a challenge, because, once the client comes in and, like, I have evicted for anti-social behaviour, but I need assistance from the Council. Straight away in the mind of the officer is that, oh, yes, you made yourself intensely homeless, and things like that. We had to move them away and put customer services officers right at the front so we can gather information, try to provide advice and assistance early. We feel it is early days, but we feel it is working. We feel there is a culture change amongst staff.

I chair a panel of a subgroup. We have a homelessness forum in Southwark, we have 40 odd organisations coming to that, and within that homelessness forum we have agreed out a group of agencies who hold us to account on our action plan for the trail blazer. We meet every quarter and they then they tell us, yes, you have done that, you have not done this, and we have seen better relationships with agencies. They know what to tell clients whether they go back to their offices in terms of, okay, this is what Southwark has to offer. That has worked.

The bugbear, the big problem, the big issue we have, or one of the big issues, is of course the bureaucracy is just killing us. There is so much to do in terms of the paperwork, what they need to complete, you need notification, you need to issue each stage. Previously, prior to November last year, our officers knew that if you have a case, you have got six weeks to make your decision and move on it, and that was good, when they knew what they needed to do. Now they would have a case and you have got that case open for three months, six months, because they have come in at the prevention stage, section 21, you are working with the landlord. If all of that fails, that could last more than 56 days sometimes, it will last up to 100 days, and then it goes to relief stage of 56 days, and then you have got those three days to make your final decision, and then when you bring in the seven new reviews, the seven new appeals, it is going to make it complex and difficult in terms of service provision, and my fear, like Jennie said, is officers then concentrating their efforts on doing all those bureaucratic elements of the work rather than helping the customers.

Compared to last year I would say, I do not have the figures, but compared to last year we have seen more preventions, more relief now than we did before and bottom line is just down to which had more funding to actually help more people.

David Kurten AM: When it comes to funding, do you think that you have had adequate funding to put in place all of the extra things that you need to do to make all of these things happen?

Vincent Lawal (Housing Solutions Manager, Southwark): I would not say so, no, but I would not tell you either that I know exactly how much we need. We have seen a spike; we have seen an increase in number of people coming in through our door. Previously on average in a month we had 180 full assessments. Now that

is moved up to 240, 260 and we expect that to continue, because the more we speak to our advocates, the more we speak to agencies, the more people know that we go to Southwark now, some people might actually be assisted. They have got schemes which would help you and all that. The more we expect people to come in through our service, or personally I am thinking, at the end of this financial year, we'll probably see a 50% increase in the number of people coming in through our doors.

David Kurten AM: Yes. Maybe I can move on to Deborah. Do you think that that the same picture around London as well as we have in Southwark?

Deborah Halling (Senior Policy Officer, Housing and Land, GLA): Yes. Southwark is in the distinctive position of piloting some of the prevention measures that will be required of all local authorities from the point when the act is implemented and Government are talking in terms of next April, but we do not quite yet know when that will be implemented. Southwark and the other authorities that were involved in that sort of prevention trail blazer work are seeing impacts now that other local authorities are not seeing. I think local authorities are in a very difficult position with knowing what the increased demand will be, but certainly those services have already been under sort of very heavy pressure over the last five years or so. There has been a big increase in the number of households who are becoming homeless, particularly from the private rented sector. They are likely to see even heavier year kind of foot fall and I think there is an issue about what they are able to offer and the risk that there is that sort of heavily bureaucratic, kind of seeing people through processes, but that without the funding for services, but also without the housing options out there in the housing market, they may struggle and find that resources are kind of going in directions that are not very helpful.

There is an issue around funding. The Government have kind of committed to covering all of the costs resulting from the Act, but the funding that is in place is £61 million over two years for the whole country to that is based on the assumption that after two years the measure will be kind of cost neutral for local authorities. Interesting to hear Jennie saying that from Wales, that has not proved to be the case, even kind of with three years transitional funding, and there was an estimate from London councils that just for London boroughs to implement the measure for one year would cost £77 million.

There are some real questions about the ability of local authorities to kind of meet the new demands on them, especially in the context where homelessness is rising anyway and the affordability crisis compounded by welfare reform is making it very difficult to offer substantive opportunities. Yes, very mixed views really.

David Kurten AM: Do you think it is particularly difficult in London because of the affordability in the private rental sector?

Deborah Halling (Senior Policy Officer, Housing and Land, GLA): Yes, absolutely, and I think in the discussion around the Homelessness Reduction Bill, as it was, so there is a lot of looking to Wales and the practice that was being rolled out there and I think one of the difficulties is that we are looking at a very different kind of context in Wales. Just at the size of the population and the supply of social housing and the affordability of private rental sector housing, the context is a very different one, so I do not think we can assume that what has happened in Wales, which, hearing from Jennie, obviously delivered some good things but have run into some problems. I do not think we can assume that we will see the same impacts here from similar legislation.

David Kurten AM: London has three times the population of Wales, something like of that order. Yes. In terms of bureaucracy that is something that a lot of you have mentioned. Have you got any ideas, perhaps, Jenny or Vincent, is it possible to streamline and reduce the bureaucracy? Is that something that the

Government need to look at which would make this a lot easier? Or is the bureaucracy that you have got, is it a necessary part of providing the service.

Jennie Bibbings (Campaigns Manager, Shelter Wales): We have been exploring different options around this, but the challenge of course is that your notifications, they do have to meet the legal requirements set out in the Act and one solution which has been discussed but not got to the stage of piloting yet is, rather than having notification letters going out to people, that you use the personal housing plan itself as the basis of the notifications. Rather than sending a letter to somebody to say you are no longer being held under prevention, we are now helping you under relief, all you could do is you would update the plan and you would send that back out to them, and also have a conversation with people. This is something which has come through our research and our case work very clearly that, when people are going through this process, letters and things are not necessarily what they want. What they want is for someone to be there to support them through this dreadful process of being hopeless. They want their officer to be available to them if they need to call them for whatever reason and they want regular contact, not necessarily even if there is any new information to update them with, but just to say we have not forgotten about you, because I think one of the worst things for people who are homeless running over time is the fear and the stress of being felt that they have been abandoned in temporary accommodation, for example, the feeling that they have been forgotten about. There is a kind of twin challenge here around communication and notifications and I think that there could be some work usefully done to, rather than have letters, to use the plan itself and to keep bringing it back to the plan and the focus of the conversation of the relationship between the officer and the person using the service.

David Kurten AM: Thank you very much. I just have one final thing I can just quickly ask everyone, is do you think the Act coming in in 2017 will help to gather a more accurate picture of how many people are homeless, particularly hidden homeless? I do not know if anyone wants to say anything about that.

Vincent Lawal (Housing Solutions Manager, Southwark): Whether it will go 100% I am not sure. It will start it off. I believe more people will come out. I think they have seen an increase in Wales, we have seen an increase in Southwark. Clearly, more people are coming out. Where the challenge will be, especially if we are talking about hidden homelessness and we are talking about single people, will be if we cannot find an accommodation in the private sector and they cannot find accommodation themselves in the private sector, what impact would that have over time. Well, maybe we are not giving a generic lease, maybe we are given an incentive payment, but you still cannot get the property because of benefit caps, the impact of welfare reform. For example, an 18 to 21-year old, some of them will not qualify for the housing element of universal credit or housing benefit and that would have its own challenge. With all the will in the world you want to help them but if they are not going to get the benefit to pay the rent, how is that going to happen.

Over time we might see an initial surge but if we do not fix the broken housing market I fear that in maybe five years' time, or I do not know how long, people might drift back into what is the point. That is my fear.

David Kurten AM: Okay. Thank you. I think I am going to have to hand back to the chair, as I --

Tom Copley AM: To Vincent first of all. This is about voids and often now, whereas in the past people could access short life housing on a temporary basis, that tends not to happen now. Do you think the voids allocation process for social housing could be improved?

Vincent Lawal (Housing Solutions Manager, Southwark): I think so. Yes, definitely yes, I think the more we are able to bring properties back into use the better. It would reduce the number of people in temporary accommodation and it will save money across the board. Yes.

Tom Copley AM: In Southwark, where you have got regeneration schemes and where there is going to be a regeneration scheme sometimes people will be put on a short life tenancy, is that something that you do with homeless families in Southwark?

Vincent Lawal (Housing Solutions Manager, Southwark): Yes.

Tom Copley AM: Do you do that -- so that is something you do in -- okay. What about using better technology to get further efficiency such as new real time logging systems?

Vincent Lawal (Housing Solutions Manager, Southwark): For --

Tom Copley AM: For voids. Sorry, I have this as a question here and I am not actually sure what these real-time logging systems actually are.

Sian Berry AM (Chair): Apparently, it is technology use in general to get a better idea in real-time of where voids are and what voids are coming up, as opposed to payment systems, which believe councils currently use at the moment.

Vincent Lawal (Housing Solutions Manager, Southwark): Yes. That would be useful. That would be very useful.

Tom Copley AM: Just moving to Deborah. You know, there is a big emphasise now on encouraging build to rent, something that the Mayor is very keen on doing, and although of course, they are not part of the social housing system, this is private housing, do you think there is a role there potentially for build to rent providers, where they have voids, to agree to have homeless families allocated there on a temporary basis.

Deborah Halling (Senior Policy Officer, Housing and Land, GLA): Yes. It is a tricky one. Clearly, it is really important, given the pressure on London's housing, that we make the very best use of what we have got. Looking across the board there have been some sort of short life systems using voids, say in regeneration and so it is for temporary accommodation, that has not been without problems. Sometimes families have been moved into estates on a temporary basis and then there has been a lot of criticism of local authority for moving them on when regeneration is going ahead.

Looking at the build to rent sector specifically, I think rents that on the whole are relatively higher, and although the Mayor is committed to the build to rent sector delivering some affordable housing, I think that is more likely to be at sort of London living rent levels or sort of people in work are perhaps struggling to save a deposit in the private rented sector rather than necessarily for homeless families. I think the nature of that sector is that they have not particularly kind of struggled with voids because they tend to go for sort of longer term tenancies and security, although a fuller picture might emerge as that sector becomes more established. I do think build to rent can have some indirect positive effects for homeless households, because I think one of the issues that homeless households and the local authorities seeking to assist them have faced in recent years is a really kind of fierce competition within the private rented sector from the much wider kind of cohort of London that might previously have lived in that sector. Home ownership is becoming increasingly unaffordable and people are moving kind of further out, a tenancy that might once have gone to a kind of low income family facing homelessness will now kind of have a far wider section of Londoners competing for it. Insofar as build to rent has potential to relieve some of the pressure on the private rented market it can indirectly help homeless households.

Tom Copley AM: Right. People will move into those and then free up homes in the amateur landlord sector potentially.

Deborah Halling (Senior Policy Officer, Housing and Land, GLA): Yes. I would not necessarily want to look at it in that way, but --

Tom Copley AM: You know, the landlord that owns one or two properties rather than institutional landlord.

Deborah Halling (Senior Policy Officer, Housing and Land, GLA): Yes, and I think that local authorities are reporting difficulties securing tenancies for households facing homelessness, whether that is as formal temporary accommodation or as a bid to kind of intervene earlier on and to prevent households from moving into the temporary accommodation.

Tom Copley AM: What about a potential role for the Mayor here. Could there be, for example, some sort of London wide allocation system which the Mayor could coordinate?

Deborah Halling (Senior Policy Officer, Housing and Land, GLA): For social housing or for --

Tom Copley AM: I think this is under sort of build to rent.

Deborah Halling (Senior Policy Officer, Housing and Land, GLA): Yes. Most build to rent landlords are private companies who are kind of having no difficulty securing tenants. I think for London living rent there is potential for a system that looks a bit more like the kind of First Steps website, where there is a pan London approach.

Tom Copley AM: Okay.

Sian Berry AM (Chair): Can I ask one further question about the supply of homes that might be able to be used to help fulfil the Homelessness Reduction Act duties. I do not know if Southwark are doing any of this, and I would be interested to know, because you are a Inner London borough basically. I went to visit Enfield where they had a forum for landlords and they were outlining their new packages that they were going to offer to landlord as an incentive to get them to take more people who are on housing benefits who refer to them by the Council, and it was things like trying to get them to trade off a security of having somebody there all the time, where the Council were guaranteeing void periods, against the lower rent and is Southwark trying to do any of that to bring down the costs it will face.

Vincent Lawal (Housing Solutions Manager, Southwark): Yes.

Sian Berry AM (Chair): How are you getting on, because it is a different market then Enfield, I imagine?

Vincent Lawal (Housing Solutions Manager, Southwark): It is, yes. February, March, April and probably May, we met with I think it must have been about 20 or 25 of our biggest providers of temporary accommodation as a council and basically our discussion with them was we need to move away from this nightly-led costly accommodation to more settled accommodation and short term tenancies, and initially the answer was no, it is too risky because for all the above forms of accommodation the Council pays on behalf of the tenant, temporary accommodation is paid, so the income is guaranteed but where you have a short settled tenancies, the Council is not involved in that, that is done by housing benefit than or universal credit, so it is a lot riskier for the landlords. Then having those conversations, we were then like, okay, so what can we do, what will make you happy, what would you make you give your properties to us on a settled basis and it was

things around guarantee the rents through rent guarantee scheme, maybe an insurance in place to ensure that we get use out, so things like that. It was ongoing support they were asking for. I know most boroughs will pay an incentive and once the tenant is in the property, that is it, done. Now the landlords are asking us for ongoing support even after we have placed clients into the property. They were asking for a one stop shop type of arrangement where if they have got any issues with the council, either with the planning department and their long-term help, private tenancies or procurement, just one officer will be able to deal with a lot of those issues. They were asking for a bond scheme for disrepair, so if the client trashes the property the Council will pay, and those are the kind of products we are putting together. Now we are coming up with two products. If a landlord just wants the money, the incentive payment - , what we are coming up now is "we could pay you, let's just say, £3,000 we give you tenants, tenants into your property", and end of story; the relationship is between the tenant and the landlord, which is the way it is meant to be, "or we could pay you £2,000 or £1,500 and offer all this wrap around service with the tenancy" and it is for landlords then to choose which one they would go for. Those are the kind of things we are doing.

We have a regular landlord forum in Southwark where we bring them together and we keep challenging one another, how do we move things forward, how do we make things work. Yes, we have the products, yes.

Sian Berry AM (Chair): Okay, and is that successful in bringing more landlords into the fold?

Vincent Lawal (Housing Solutions Manager, Southwark): Landlords are listening to us, yes, and they are offering us properties and once we identify what kind of products would work, we present that based on the landlord's requests and then will we house more people? Yes.

Sian Berry AM (Chair): Thank you very much. Does anyone else have any more questions?

That is the end of our discussions with the guests. Can I thank all of you for your contributions but also Jennie for doing this via Skype which cannot have been easy!

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MINUTES

Meeting: Housing Committee
Date: Tuesday 4 July 2017
Time: 10.00 am
Place: Committee Room 4, City Hall, The Queen's Walk, London, SE1 2AA

Copies of the minutes may be found at:

www.london.gov.uk/mayor-assembly/london-assembly/housing

Present:

Sian Berry AM (Chair)
Tom Copley AM
Leonie Cooper AM
David Kurten AM
Susan Hall AM

1 Apologies for Absence and Chair's Announcements (Item 1)

- 1.1 An apology for absence was received from Andrew Boff AM for whom Susan Hall AM attended as a substitute.

2 Summary List of Actions (Item 2)

- 2.1 The Committee received the report of the Executive Director of Secretariat.

2.2 **Resolved:**

That the completed and outstanding actions arising from previous meetings of the Committee be noted.

3 Declarations of Interests (Item 3)

3.1 The Committee received the report of the Executive Director of Secretariat.

3.2 **Resolved:**

That the list of offices held by Assembly Members, as set out in the table at Agenda Item 2, be noted as disclosable pecuniary interests.

4 Membership of Committee (Item 4)

4.1 **Resolved:**

That the membership and chairing arrangements for the Housing Committee, as agreed at the Annual meeting of the London Assembly on 3 May 2017, be noted as follows:

**Sian Berry AM (Chair)
Andrew Boff AM (Deputy Chairman)
Tom Copley AM
Leonie Cooper AM
Tony Devenish AM
Nicky Gavron AM
David Kurten AM.**

5 Terms of Reference (Item 5)

5.1 **Resolved:**

That the Terms of Reference for the Housing Committee be noted.

6 Standing Delegation of Authority (Item 6)

6.1 **Resolved:**

That the Standing Delegated Authority arrangements be noted.

7 Housing Monitoring Report (Item 7)

7.1 **Resolved:**

That the Housing Monitoring Report be noted by the Committee.

8 Community-led housing in London (Item 8)

8.1 The Committee received the report of the Secretariat as background to putting questions to the invited guests on the models of community-led housing in London.

8.2 The following guests were in attendance:

- Tom Chance, Grants and Development Manager, National Community Land Trust Network;
- Maria Brenton, Older Women's Co-Housing;
- Calum Green, Communities and Campaigns Director, London Community Land Trust and Citizens UK;
- Alex Smith, Chairman, Camley Street Neighbourhood Forum and Community Trust;
- Ruth Moulton, Director, St Ann's Redevelopment Trust; and
- Tony Wood, Director, St Ann's Redevelopment Trust.

8.3 A transcript of the discussion is attached at **Appendix 1**.

8.4 During the course of the discussion, the Committee requested Tom Chance to send figures of on how many homes could be delivered using Community Land Trusts (CLT) and the invited guests to send additional comments you believe would be beneficial to the Committee's investigation

8.5 At the conclusion of the discussion, the Chairman thanked the guests for their attendance and contributions to the meeting.

8.6 **Resolved:**

That the report and discussion with invited guests be noted.

9 Housing Committee Work Programme (Item 9)

9.1 The Committee received the report of the Executive Director of Secretariat.

9.2 **Resolved:**

That the work programme be noted.

10 Date of Next Meeting (Item 10)

10.1 The next meeting of the Committee was scheduled for 5 September 2017 at 10.00am in the Chamber, City Hall.

11 Any Other Business the Chair Considers Urgent (Item 11)

11.1 There were no items of business that the Chair considered to be urgent.

12 Close of Meeting

12.1 The meeting ended at 12.05pm.

Chair

Date

Contact Officer: Clare Bryant, Committee Officer; telephone: 020 7983 4616;
Email: clare.bryant@london.gov.uk; minicom: 020 7983 4458

London Assembly Housing Committee – 4 July 2017

Transcript of Item 8 – Community Led Housing

Sian Berry AM (Chair): Moving on to our main item, which is the start of our investigation into community-led housing, can I ask Members to agree the focus of the discussion? We will receive an overview of the broad community-led housing projects in London and we will aim to understand their advantages and disadvantages and whether further support or a different approach is needed to facilitate community-led models in London.

All: Agreed.

Sian Berry AM (Chair): Thank you. Can I now welcome our guests? Who we have here is Tom Chance, who is the Grants and Development Manager from the National Community Land Trust (CLT) Network. We have Maria Brenton, who is from a project in Barnet, the Older Woman's Co-Housing (OWCH) Project. We have Calum Green, Co-Director, London Community Land Trust and Senior Organiser, Citizens UK. We have Alex Smith, who is the Chair of the Camley Street Neighbourhood Forum and also the CLT that is aiming to be set up in Camden. Ruth Moulton and Tony Wood, both come from the St Ann's Redevelopment Trust (StART) in Haringey. We will get on to discussing your issues now. Thank you very much for coming.

Each of you have a project that is at various different stages of inception, completion or being proposed. Can I start with Calum? Can you give us a very short - but as complete as you like - overview of your community-led housing project, why you are pursuing it, what happened, what obstacles there were and how you overcame them?

Calum Green (Co-Director, London Community Land Trust and Senior Organiser, Citizens UK): As Sian said, my name is Calum. I am Co-Director of the London CLT and I also work with Citizens UK.

I am feeling quite good at the moment because our first residents moved into St Clement's, basically as we speak, which is our first site in East London. It was put out to tender by the Greater London Authority (GLA) back in 2011/12. Our model is that we sell family affordable homes linked to local incomes. You can guarantee that someone on an average income in the local area can afford to buy one of the homes. At St Clement's that means a one-bed for £130,000, a two-bed for £182,000 and a three-bed for £235,000, which, compared to the private ones, is about a third of the market rate. It would probably be a bit more now because incomes have gone up.

What that means is a bunch of people who would not be able to buy their own homes and are struggling and would not be able to even rent homes in the local area are able to buy homes and maintain the roots they have in the area. The people who have got hold of those homes are people who both are in housing need and can afford the mortgage and also have a really strong relationship with Tower Hamlets. A lot of them have lived there for decades. We went through a series of criteria, things like, "My nan lives down the road and looks after my kids when I go to work". That is of value and therefore being able to stay in the local area is particularly important for someone with that kind of dynamic, rather than just purely based on housing need or whether you can afford the mortgage payments on a monthly basis.

In terms of what is next, there is a planning application going on in Lewisham in the autumn for another site. There are two models of how we get these homes built. One is the one at St Clement's, which is where

someone else is building the homes and, as part of the affordable housing requirement, some of those homes are CLT homes. The second model is when someone sells us land, often at a nominal rate, and we build 100% affordable housing on it. It is that second one which is what we are doing in Lewisham with the help of Lewisham Council on an estate down there at Sydenham.

Tom Copley AM: Is it the Rural Urban Synthesis Society (RUSS)?

Calum Green (Co-Director, London Community Land Trust and Senior Organiser, Citizens UK): No.

Tom Copley AM: That is not yours? That is a different one?

Calum Green (Co-Director, London Community Land Trust and Senior Organiser, Citizens UK): No, although it is confusing because RUSS is a member of Lewisham Citizens which is who we are working with and so I spend a lot of time with them talking about plans together and talking with Lewisham Council, but RUSS is the Church Grove site and our site is Brasted Close in Sydenham. Just in terms of the short overview list here, the way we are getting Brasted Close off the ground is by running a community share offer last summer, which raised £500,000 of investment from a range of people investing £100 to social investors investing £20,000 or £30,000. That allows us to have redevelopment finance to draw up plans for what we do with the site. Once we get planning permission, we go out for development finance. We already have two or three people interested in providing that. Then there are sites identified in Croydon, Peckham and Redbridge and campaigns to get further sites in Lambeth and Greenwich.

Really, the way it works is, while we started as East London CLT and were very much based in Tower Hamlets, Lewisham citizens said, "You took four or five years to set your thing up. We do not really want to do that again but we like your model. Can you change your name, change your remit and come down to work with us?" That is the way it works in terms of our model. If a local group wants to do this thing, they can invite us down and we will have a conversation about whether we want to work with them on it. They will choose things like who the architects are and where the site is in conjunction with whoever the landowner might be. They will lead on allocations in terms of those conversations with us. There will be a Resident Management Strategy and so there will be a bunch of decisions devolved down to whatever that local group is, but we have the model and we will look to raise the finance and we have the governance structures. In terms of our governance, it is the classic 'a third, a third, a third', one third now residents, one third local community representatives and one third stakeholders/experts who we need to run the organisation.

On lessons learned from what we have done so far, one is to have the local community group client-side. If you want to have community-led housing involved in any site and you are going to release it as a public landowner, rather than saying, "You, community group with very little resource, compete over the course of months or years for this site", you could have the local community group come on the side of the public landowner and say, "You guys may want to compete for it", and whoever picks them will be the community that lives here and is already invested in the area in terms of time and energy; whereas at St Clement's there was a process of bidding over the course of a year to try to get hold of it and we ultimately lost it. It was only through the broad support in the area for it that Galliford Try, the successful bidder, was asked to work with us on it. Rather than having local community-led housing organisations compete for land, bringing them into the process and working collaboratively can save on resource, time and energy. That is certainly something we learned in Lewisham. RUSS had to go through a full Official Journal of the European Union (OJEU) process in order to access land and that cost a lot of time and energy.

Sian Berry AM (Chair): Can you explain what that is, please?

Calum Green (Co-Director, London Community Land Trust and Senior Organiser, Citizens UK): Yes. Other people will know better than me, but my understanding is that it is the European Union (EU) Regulations about how you can release public assets. You have to pay best value and prove that you are getting best value, and often that is misunderstood to be the most amount of money. People have shifted to doing it by best value in terms of what it provides for people, but it is also - as is everything, often, with EU Regulation - quite a long process. Trying to do that as a community organisation on a first site can be quite difficult. Therefore, one lesson learned is certainly to try to get people to collaborate and have the community housing organisation client-side or on the side of the local authority if it were to be releasing land or the GLA if you were to be releasing land.

The other is that we often have conversations with public land owners about the worst sites. The best sites can be sold for money or a registered provider is interested, but often there are very difficult back-land sites and those are the ones where the focus comes from public landowners when they say, "I cannot really do anything with this land otherwise". We are happy to have those conversations, but there is a difficulty of getting organisations with the best track records to do the most difficult sites in any particular place. I guess it would be interesting to have a conversation about what the best site is that we have and what community housing on that site would look like and have a level of ambition.

Tom Copley AM: I just wanted to go back and just clarify. At your CLT at St Clement's, a three-bed is £235,000. Do you know off the top of your head what the average three-bed in Tower Hamlets would cost?

Calum Green (Co-Director, London Community Land Trust and Senior Organiser, Citizens UK): It would be three times as much as that, roughly.

Tom Copley AM: About three times as much? Thank you. That is a third of that?

Calum Green (Co-Director, London Community Land Trust and Senior Organiser, Citizens UK): Yes. It tends to be between a third and a half of the market rate. It is permanently affordable and so that person gets a home that is genuinely affordable, but when they sell it on they sell it on according to local incomes again. It is affordable in perpetuity. They do not make a huge amount of money off it. It goes up in line with incomes. There is a floor and so you cannot lose money on the home. They sell it on through the CLT, which will allocate it to someone who needs it again.

Sian Berry AM (Chair): Can you explain, basically, who ends up owning what at the end of this process of setting up a CLT and what the conditions are?

Calum Green (Co-Director, London Community Land Trust and Senior Organiser, Citizens UK): The models will all be slightly different. At St Clement's, the land was given over to a community foundation that will own it and the London CLT is the head lessee. Normally in a CLT those two things would be the same and so the CLT would own the freehold or the head lease. Then the purchaser would have a 125-year sublease bought from us and, within that lease, there is a resale price covenant that says, when you sell it on, you have to sell it on according to incomes again.

Tom Copley AM: Local incomes?

Calum Green (Co-Director, London Community Land Trust and Senior Organiser, Citizens UK): Local incomes again.

Sian Berry AM (Chair): In your case, they have to sell it back to the CLT first?

Calum Green (Co-Director, London Community Land Trust and Senior Organiser, Citizens UK): They sell it through us. They sell it straight to the other person but we allocate it. We say who they sell it to.

That means that they are buying a home rather than an asset. It does not appreciate in value in that way, but the monthly mortgage payments are significantly less than the private rented sector would be, which is where they would be living otherwise. There is scope to save up money on a monthly basis and go out and buy in the market if they were that way inclined, but generally we expect people to stay there for a long period of time because they are getting a home rather than an asset with a price that jumps from year to year.

Sian Berry AM (Chair): Can we move on to Maria Brenton from OWCH? Can you tell us about your project, please?

Maria Brenton (Older Women's Co-Housing, Barnet): The OWCH group is in existence. It came into being at the end of 2016 after 18 years of work in gestation. It is a Co-Housing Community and, although it has had many of the same energies and motivations as CLTs, etc, it is much smaller in scale and is geared to being an old-fashioned community based on mutuality and neighbourliness, particularly for this group and this demographic, who are older women.

It is the first Senior Co-Housing Community in the country and at the moment it is the only one. There are something like 12 groups trying to establish senior co-housing communities around the United Kingdom (UK). It is purpose-built with 25 self-contained flats with shared facilities and it is totally self-managed by the group of women themselves. They had an influence on the design and were involved each month with the build at the site committee meetings, etc, and had a lot of input into what is rather a beautiful building and is winning awards all around the place.

However, the more important aspect of their development is the social architecture rather than the physical because they have built a group that is self-managing, self-sustaining and mutually supportive. They hope not to remain the only senior co-housing community in the country but to provide a model for other older people to emulate. It was forward-funded by the Hanover Housing Association and it is mixed-tenure.

The problems that it addressed, really, which I will not rehearse but just mention, are the rapid aging of our society.

It is two thirds leasehold and one third proper social rental. It is a response to the rapid aging of our society and the increased tendency for older people to live alone. Among older women over 75, 60% live alone. The older you get the more likely you are to live alone. There is a huge cost to the public purse of isolation and loneliness and the consequent ill-health, self-neglect and depression of older people as they get frailer and less mobile and make demands on health and social care.

I would argue that there is a huge best-value argument if you take value across the board and not just in terms of money, which is a point that Calum [Green] made. If you did social accounting, you would see that encouraging such models, which intend to keep older people happier, healthier and more active for longer, would bring great savings to the public purse and particularly to the health service and to social care.

There is increasing demand among the old for this model of housing. We had some BBC exposure before Christmas and we had 400 emails from women wanting to join the waiting list or to be told how we did it. Our own work over the last 18 years has increased the brand name of 'co-housing' so that older people now are googling for co-housing groups near them rather than having to be introduced to what the notion is because

they understand it. They like it; they want it. They do not like going into care. They do not like sheltered housing. They do not like settings where they lose their autonomy and their right to make decisions about their own lives.

The difficulties that we have encountered over those 18 years I would sum up as an unreceptive culture, unreceptive to self-help, unreceptive to self-management. Local authorities and housing providers are not used to listening to the voice of the end users of any housing development, except when they get to the marketing phase when they are schmoozing all over them to get them to buy. However, there is a very strong voice among the community-led housing movement for people to have some say on where they will live and how they will live.

In our experience over the years - partly because the group was always mixed-tenure by choice - we needed housing association support and we have been through about eight or nine housing associations in that time. For a while they were interested in us and we were sexy for a few months, but then they lost interest. The site in High Barnet, which was bought for us by Hanover, is the fourth serious site. The others have been lost.

It has been extremely difficult to keep the group going over the years against unreceptivity in the public sector. In terms of moving into Barnet, Barnet Council delayed our project by at least two years. We were told informally at the very beginning that they did not want older people moving into their borough because we would make demands on their social care budget. They could not have made such a remark in relation to 26 individual women over 50 moving into the borough, but we had a lot of blockage from people in middle management who kept saying to us, "We have got sheltered housing. We have alms houses. We do not need you". It was a big fight, but we won in the end. I see in Barnet's housing strategy that they would like another co-housing project, not that they have been to see ours yet. It is the lack of keeping pace in the housing sector with the wishes and preferences of people that I am talking about.

What do we need? We need more infrastructure support for groups like us. I based this model on research that I did in the Netherlands. This model has been established in the Netherlands for three decades, encouraged by Central Government and facilitated by local authorities and housing associations, on the grounds that it would address their aging problem and it would keep older people healthier, fitter, happier and more active. There grew an infrastructure of support in Holland. You could go to adult education classes on how to live in a group and take decisions and deal with conflict, for instance. Housing associations were very ready to work with people rather than for them, a big contrast to the very top-down culture of many housing associations in this country.

There is seedcorn funding in the Netherlands. It has two motivations. One is to reduce the uniformity of the volume builders plastering little boxes all over the land and encourage small builders and developers. It is also to encourage small groups. You can get a seedcorn grant.

Sian Berry AM (Chair): Cool. That is fine. Maria, can you tell us more about how you got the money together for your project? Did you get grants in the beginning?

Maria Brenton (Older Women's Co-Housing, Barnet): As I said, Hanover [Housing Association] forward-funded and bought the land and funded the development. Then 17 women sold their homes and bought the flats. A small housing association is the landlord for the eight social rental flats, which we have had a huge amount of help with funding from the Tudor Trust, which really wanted us to happen. Hanover [Housing Association] is relinquishing its role in the whole development now and, yes, we are carrying on that basis.

Sian Berry AM (Chair): The ownership structure now is partly housing association but then moving on.

Maria Brenton (Older Women's Co-Housing, Barnet): Yes. The freehold is held by a small housing association, Housing for Women, because the Tudor Trust asked for that as a guarantee for the future. OWCH is the superior landlord by some legal chicanery and we do the allocations for the social rentals. Barnet has no voice in this what-so-ever. They were unable to require us, because of some feasibility study, to have social housing and the planning committee was rather puzzled as to why we were demanding it. We have agreed eligibility criteria for the social rentals with the Tudor Trust and with Housing for Women, the small housing association that is the landlord.

There is no distinction between the tenures in the life of the group. They have set up their own procedures of governance. They have an elected management committee, which I was at yesterday. They bring back issues for the general meeting, which takes decisions by consensus. They have a whole series of work teams. There is a garden group, a cleaning group, a procurement group, a finance group, a legal group, a communications group, etc. That has just carried on from before when they were building this virtual community and has always been a means of building the social solidarity within the group that is making it the success that it is.

Sian Berry AM (Chair): Thank you. I am sorry. We will have more questions for you in a bit. Can we move on to the Haringey StART group? I know that you are at a very different stage. Can you tell us what you have done so far and how that is going and what you can see now?

Tony Wood (Director, St Ann's Redevelopment Trust): Yes, we are going to do half each and we will not take longer than anyone else, we promise.

Sian Berry AM (Chair): Thank you.

Tony Wood (Director, St Ann's Redevelopment Trust): Just to explain the scheme, the mental health hospital in Haringey is needing to sell two thirds of the land on its site so that it can redevelop the rest of the hospital. Most of us in Haringey want to see that hospital redeveloped because we know people who have used the hospital. We totally support the hospital being redeveloped and we want them to get the money to be able to do it as quickly as possible.

When the land came up, some of us thought it would be good if we tried to have some form of community-led development on that site. We held a consultation and about 40 people turned up. It was amazing. Everyone said, "We should own it all". There was no disagreement between anyone at that meeting, which threw some of us who had called the meeting. We then took it to a survey. We had 350 replies by doing street stalls and an online survey. Again, there was huge support for a community-led development for the whole site. We did ask people whether we should have a little bit of it or the whole thing. Most of the local people - and Ruth [Moulton] and I have lived in Haringey for years - wanted the community-led development to take the whole site.

It presently has planning permission for 470 homes. It took a lot for the health and safety authorities to get that through because there was huge opposition. No one wanted more than 470 homes. We have paid architects to put together a masterplan. In our masterplan, we are suggesting 800 homes, community-led. Nearly everyone in the community totally supports that higher density if it is affordable houses for local people and run by the community. It is amazing how we got it through so quickly. Even with some of the most - I was going to say 'extreme' - opposition, they are happy to have the discussion.

At the moment, as I say, we have employed Maccreevor Lavington. We crowdfunded £25,000 to put this masterplan together. We have a development manager cost all of our plans, which we are now looking at with

other people. We have employed a large firm of solicitors. We have employed a development manager. We know that as community organisers, activists and local people, we do not have the skills to do this. We know we need to use people who have those skills, but our aim is working with people who have those skills to get this together. There is a load of other things I could say but people want to keep it fairly quick.

Lessons learned? It is a steep learning curve and it has been really difficult to find the right people to speak to early on. It took us ages. We would speak to one person and then go to the next person and the next person. It is having somewhere where you could just go to, where someone has all those answers. We went and spoke to Calum [Green] from the East London CLT as it then was and they gave us inspiration, but it is difficult to find the people you need to talk to when you have not been involved in it. It is a huge learning curve.

I suppose another lesson learned is that people - and I use the term 'people in authority' fairly loosely - are supportive but a number of people just do not think the community can do this, even though we are using professionals who have done it. Convincing people that the community can be involved is incredibly difficult.

The community just loves being involved. When we do street stalls, so many people just stop and are really passionate about the whole project. Loads of people say, "When can I move on there?" A large number of people are actively involved in doing it.

Also, the other thing is the enthusiasm people have when they see that local people are doing it and that they have a say and that it is not a developer over here building houses but it is actually their neighbours and their friends and the people they are meeting at the school gates who are making the decisions and they can be part of that. Just seeing people who feel really inspired because they feel part of it is just ... sorry, I am just really passionate about this.

On the points down here, barriers to future progress are us not being taken seriously, us not getting the land and finance is always a big problem at all stages. I will finish there. Ruth is going to talk about some other bits.

Sian Berry AM (Chair): Thank you.

Ruth Moulton (Director, St Ann's Redevelopment Trust): Tony [Wood] did not mention the model. We hope to build a community of some 800 homes. Our intention is to have about 75% of the homes as truly affordable, truly secure rented properties in perpetuity and about 25% of the homes that the community will control would be sold at intermediate rates. Similar to Camley, there would be structures so that if they are sold on they would come back to the community and they stay affordable, again, based on a third of the median income in some way. We are still talking about that.

One of the things we want to do is to show that a good rental cuts out the need to purchase a property. If it is a good quality home, secure and affordable, then you do not need to buy.

Tony touched on finances. It has certainly been a problem. As Maria said, there is a real lack of seedcorn funding in the UK. We have managed to raise about £60,000 through donations, crowdfunding and some small grants. We heard just last week that we have a grant for £50,000 from the Tudor Trust and we are continuing to fundraise. We need that in order to employ and pay our professional team because we cannot do it on our own.

I do want to say as well that we have something like 30 or 40 over the time active members of StART who are putting a lot of time into the project and that is not costed. Many of them are professional and, if you were to cost out their time, it would be a huge input as well and we could not do it without that.

Our current structure will change when the site is built and there is a community on the site, which will manage and have control over the management of the site. Currently, we have a membership made up of local people, organisations and individuals who have an interest or live in Haringey. They elect 12 directors. All our meetings are open and we publicise them on our website. We encourage members of the public from the local community to come and join us. We have a lot of subgroups working and they bring decisions to directors' meetings that happen fortnightly. Again, we reach decisions through consensus. If that is not possible, then the directors have a casting or a deciding vote. Since I have been involved, we have never had to action that. Then, of course, directors can make decisions outside of that.

Local membership at the moment stands at about 150 individuals and some 40 organisations. We have only just opened it up to organisations. We also have a supporters list of some 700 local people, who get our newsletter and of course can join in. We do have big local support.

We are also keeping our governance under review because this is part of the learning curve. How do you run an organisation that is truly community-led?

Sian Berry AM (Chair): Can you tell us about the land and how you plan to get hold of it?

Ruth Moulton (Director, St Ann's Redevelopment Trust): Yes. The land is the hospital land. That is how we came together. We think it is going on the market early next year and at the moment we have been in talks with the GLA because we feel that the best way to do this is for the GLA to acquire the land and then work with us in some way or another to build out the community and develop our plans.

Sian Berry AM (Chair): Yes, we will have some further questions for you later. Can we move on to Alex from Camley Street? Again, yours is an early-stage project.

Alex Smith (Chairman, Camley Street Community Land Trust): The Camley Street Sustainability Zone is a CLT and the structure is a non-profit company limited by guarantee. It is unique, from listening to the other models that we have heard about here, in that it is a project run jointly between the residents in the area and the businesses in the area. It is a joint project run by the community within the Camley Street Neighbourhood Forum. We have, in effect, two projects running, first of all the neighbourhood plan being run by the Camley Street Neighbourhood Forum and secondly the development project, the Camley Street Sustainability Zone. These two are working together to make sure that the neighbourhood plan and the sustainability zone are delivering and aim to deliver the needs and requirements of both the resident community and the business community. We have been working from about 2013 on this.

We are planning on three major phases in the project. The first one will deliver 625 houses. After all three phases are built, we are planning on 950 houses onsite, plus 20,000 square metres of affordable light industrial space. All of the houses will be for rent at approximately the London Living Rent level and all of the space will be given over to essential businesses serving the needs of central London, including rehousing the 500 jobs that are in the area at present.

Sian Berry AM (Chair): Can you tell us where it is, how big the site is and what is on the site at the moment? That is the question we all have now.

Tom Copley AM: I only know about the Natural Park. That is the only bit I know about.

Sian Berry AM (Chair): Yes. It is not the Natural Park at Camley Street?

Alex Smith (Chairman, Camley Street Community Land Trust): No.

Tom Copley AM: That would be controversial.

Alex Smith (Chairman, Camley Street Community Land Trust): If you look at this front page here, the Camley Street Natural Park is the green bit right at the bottom of the page. The first phase is the orange sections to the north. Camley Street goes north from the Natural Park and it goes over the canal. You can see the canal there. There is the huge Argent site to the right-hand side. The big King's Cross development site by Argent with Granary Square is right adjacent to us. It is about a 3.5-hectare site there.

We have a great team of professionals working on this. We have letters of interest from two funders to fund all of this. It would be long-term funding. It would be pension companies funding it over a 50-year period. Camden Council, which owns the freehold, would retain the freehold. AECOM, the largest property consultants in the world, built us a financial model to model the finances of this. Camden would receive £148 million for the use of this land over a period of time, which is equivalent to £94 million net present value. There is no money coming in from the Government at all. Camden would get a very substantial income or sum from this, as well as retaining the freehold.

As you can see, it is called a 'sustainability zone' because of the four foundational elements of sustainability that would be incorporated into this. The financial model is a long-term sustainable financial model. The governance structure is open and accountable and governance is an essential element of sustainability. The environmental would be incorporated into this. We have big gardens in the area. The construction would be passive house or thereabouts. The construction would be cross-laminate timber to embed lots of carbon.

Most importantly in my view, the fourth foundational element of sustainability is the community, both the businesses and the residents, who are very keen. As we have heard from Tony, the support that we get for these sorts of projects within the community is amazing. All of the community is very much engaged with this process. It would be a development that is built with the community, not for the community, as Tony said. There is a lot of support for it.

We have got to a stage now with Camden, of persuading Camden to sell us a lease on the land. That is where we are at. We had some very good engagement with it until about the beginning of 2016. They then got a property consultant, Lambert Smith Hampton, which was supposed to report at the beginning of this year on what to do with the sites that Camden has in the borough and is considering how to use. Lambert Smith Hampton, in my understanding, has six potential disposal models for this site, two of which a CLT would fit within to some degree. However, while Lambert Smith Hampton is doing its review, Camden has said that it is refusing to speak to us. We have been battling up against a brick wall with Camden now for over a year and a half. Lambert Smith Hampton was supposed to report at the beginning of this year. It has been postponed once; it has been postponed twice; it has been postponed three times. Now they are not expected to report till the middle of summer. That is our position.

Sian Berry AM (Chair): Thank you very much, everybody. I expect you all have loads of questions now. I saw Susan [Hall AM] and David [Kurten AM] put their hands up a while ago while one of the other groups was talking. Then I will come to Tom [Copley AM] and then Nicky [Gavron AM], if that is OK.

Susan Hall AM: First of all, I am not one of the team normally and I do not know a great deal about housing, but I have been so inspired by your various tales today. I would say to you, Tony, that I think the reason often that the residents are inspired is because you are so passionate and it is very infectious.

Tony Wood (Director, St Ann's Redevelopment Trust): Thank you

Susan Hall AM: I am particularly interested - I have two questions but I will be quick - in the OWCH. Do older men do it as well? You said that there are 12 other groups, because it is so important. There are older men out there as well as older women. Do you know if older men get involved in this?

Maria Brenton (Older Women's Co-Housing, Barnet): I have been trying to encourage gay men's groups because it is particularly needed for older gay men, but not as far as I know. The other groups in the country are mixed-gender. There are men's groups in Holland and Denmark, but it is something that men seem to shy away from on their own.

Susan Hall AM: It is something that we should try to encourage men to get involved with as well for all the reasons you have said and it does save boroughs money as well. It is brilliant.

Maria Brenton (Older Women's Co-Housing, Barnet): Certainly, yes.

Susan Hall AM: One of the main questions is how do you decide? Obviously, there are real benefits to all of these different projects. How do you decide the criteria that you need for somebody to tick those boxes? There must be far more demand than supply. Is it transparent for all of you in your different ways or is there a universal way of looking at this? You all have to decide who gets these wonderful properties and I want to know, really, what it is that makes you choose that person and not that person.

Tony Wood (Director, St Ann's Redevelopment Trust): We are going through quite a long discussion within the local area about how we make choices. Some of the houses we have we want to be houses that the local authority has nomination rights on. Some of them we want to be the private-rented and - let us call it - the intermediate sales along the lines that Calum [Green] was talking about.

At the moment, the discussion within the local area is some sort of income level and then maybe other criteria. What people really like is the idea of an open lottery to decide the people because people think it is really open, whereas a points system is really complicated and then you have to have an appeals procedure. It has really galvanised people locally. The idea is that we have some sort of income level as the main criteria and some other criteria that we are still working on but that then there is a really public lottery for each of the homes. That is what we are moving towards.

We do not have the land let. Whoever gets the land we will have to have those discussions with, but that is definitely the way that local people want. Local people who are getting involved anyway really seem to like that idea. That is where we are at the moment.

Susan Hall AM: Thank you.

Maria Brenton (Older Women's Co-Housing, Barnet): To answer your question in terms of a small-scale community like the OWCH one, there is a membership process. People wanting to live there have to agree a core set of values in the group. They also have to be known in the group. The group is maintaining a pool of about a dozen non-resident members - one of whom is in the audience - to participate in the life, come to the

parties, help do the gardening and the cooking, etc, so that they are known when they come in. In such a small-scale group, it is really important that people know each other.

Calum Green (Co-Director, London Community Land Trust and Senior Organiser, Citizens UK): We put a survey out to our members and 192 people replied. They went for a full application process as opposed to a lottery. What that means is people take an eligibility test. We had 300 people take the eligibility test for St Clement's, where there are 23 homes, in terms of CLT homes, and 109 took the full application. You have to have a demonstrable need; you are overcrowded, in bad conditions or something similar. You have to be able to afford the mortgage based on evidence of deposit. You have to have some qualitative relationship with the area. I mentioned the example before of your nan looking after your kid when you go to work. You have to have a quantitative relationship. You have to live there for five, six or seven years. At the end, you have to sign up to be a member of the London CLT and agree to the values, as Maria [Brenton] has just said. That then goes into an information technology (IT) system and points came out the other end and then we scrutinised it and went through. We were quite clear that we wanted to be able to say, "According to what the members have said, these are the 23 households that need these homes the most".

Susan Hall AM: What happens if 40 families have the same points because they are all really in need of these properties?

Calum Green (Co-Director, London Community Land Trust and Senior Organiser, Citizens UK): All of them did differ because it was out of 100 and they went down to 0.1. All of them were different, but there is a membership manager who runs through it and then a director checks and then there is a panel of board members that comes and scrutinises it. They all change slightly. There are all these very small differences.

The way we make sure that it is open and accessible is that we run workshops all across Tower Hamlets. We went to people's mosques, churches, schools and community buildings with a couple of computers and said, "Come and we will talk it through and we will have someone who speaks another language if you cannot speak English", and we talked them through the process.

Ultimately, it came out with the points and there were not any that had exactly the same number of points. Luckily, we did not have that problem because it could have been difficult. The policy of how we would do that is out in public and people can go through and look at that and we would share it with any of these guys if they need it.

Sian Berry AM (Chair): David, you have some questions?

David Kurten AM: Yes. Thanks, all, for coming and sharing what is going on. It is astounding with the low cost. It shows it is possible to do, which is fantastic.

I just had one specific question for you, Alex [Smith] from Camley Street, and it is great that what you are doing is getting homes and businesses together in the same development. Just one little thing occurred to me to ask. How do you make sure that the existing businesses can carry on and that there is continuity there with what is already there in terms of business? When the development is done and is being done, obviously, some kind of building needs to go on. What happens to the businesses then and do the same businesses come back or are they different businesses?

Alex Smith (Chairman, Camley Street Community Land Trust): They do not leave. As I said, there are three major phases. The first phase would be broken up into four minor phases. We will be expanding the industrial use very substantially and so, as we do the first development, the businesses that are in the second

development will move just once to the first development. We have already plotted out the route by which this would get done. Each business on the site now would move once to new premises.

David Kurten AM: The first phase in your thing is mainly car businesses, is it not, or auto businesses?

Alex Smith (Chairman, Camley Street Community Land Trust): Yes.

David Kurten AM: Will they move to a different site somewhere else on the development and then come back?

Alex Smith (Chairman, Camley Street Community Land Trust): There is vacant space just to the north. There is also a lot of railway arches within the site as well. Those car businesses would get housed in that sort of accommodation as the first stage goes on.

David Kurten AM: All right. For the first nine or ten businesses, you would find somewhere near the site but not on the site so that they have somewhere to move to and then you would move a few at a time

Alex Smith (Chairman, Camley Street Community Land Trust): Yes.

David Kurten AM: Yes. All right. I just wondered how that works. Thanks for your answer.

Sian Berry AM (Chair): Tom?

Tom Copley AM: Thank you, Chair. I have a few questions for each of the groups. It was just wonderful to hear of all the different ways that you are doing it, by the way. It was really inspiring.

On St Clement's, I know that there has been an issue with CLTs and mortgages. I did meet with Nationwide and they said that they had come up with a specific mortgage that hopefully would be transferable to different schemes. Will that also apply? Will it be available on the other scheme that you are developing in Lewisham?

Calum Green (Co-Director, London Community Land Trust and Senior Organiser, Citizens UK): Yes. It is Ecology, Nationwide and Parity. They are the three.

Tom Copley AM: The bank computers cannot cope with the idea that house prices cannot go up.

Calum Green (Co-Director, London Community Land Trust and Senior Organiser, Citizens UK): Yes. What Nationwide has agreed to do is to identify one branch and they brief everyone in there so that there is no "computer says no" thing and everyone can know that they may get this particular kind of person coming in and asking for a mortgage.

Tom Copley AM: That is excellent. This question does not apply just to your scheme, but you talked about your application process and how applications are done. When we do, for example, job interviews here, in order to avoid any kind of unconscious or conscious bias, you would not be able to tell, for example, the race or even the gender of the person who is applying. Do you similarly do that to make sure there is no unconscious bias, for example?

Calum Green (Co-Director, London Community Land Trust and Senior Organiser, Citizens UK): No, but the computer does not have a bias.

Tom Copley AM: Yes, but there will be people reviewing it at each stage.

Calum Green (Co-Director, London Community Land Trust and Senior Organiser, Citizens UK): Then we afterwards check and nudge it up this way and that way. We are trying to make sure that there are equal numbers getting out there and doing the workshops and then, right at the end, we will just check that the person is who they say they are not just from references but from having a conversation with them. Given that the base number that is allocated is done by a computer, we do not then feel the need to run through and take this out or that out.

Tom Copley AM: I am obviously not suggesting that there would be any sort of overt racism, but in any self-selecting community that kind of issue can sometimes arise.

Calum Green (Co-Director, London Community Land Trust and Senior Organiser, Citizens UK): Yes. It was the first time we had done it and there is going to be a review over the summer about how we want to do it better. We are keen that we make sure that we keep holes in quite some detail about the applications.

Tom Copley AM: On the co-housing schemes, I have a few questions. It seems to me as well that there would be benefits in terms of, for example, a scheme like this for older lesbian, gay, bisexual and transgender (LGBT) people because often there is a problem when older LGBT people are going into residential care and have to go back into the closet. If there was an alternative like this, a scheme whereby people would be able to live with likeminded people or whatever, it would seem to me to be quite a positive thing for people socially.

Maria Brenton (Older Women's Co-Housing, Barnet): There are some LGBT groups in the pipeline.

Tom Copley AM: Fantastic. I know that there is Tonic Housing.

Maria Brenton (Older Women's Co-Housing, Barnet): Yes.

Tom Copley AM: Yes. They are very good, but I do not think they are a CLT though.

Maria Brenton (Older Women's Co-Housing, Barnet): No.

Tom Copley AM: Is the sort of scheme that you have necessarily small? Would it, for example, not work with 800 homes? Is there a size restriction?

Maria Brenton (Older Women's Co-Housing, Barnet): The whole point is mutuality and neighbourliness. Where there are larger co-housing communities in other countries, they segment them. There are families around a shared kitchen and a place to eat like around a staircase so that they are in smaller units. Making decisions over 50 adults - you just would not bother - is chaos.

Tom Copley AM: Yes. Also, I suppose, one of the benefits as well is downsizing. We did work on older people's housing in the past and one of the big advantages of people moving into specialised housing is that you end up with a five-bedroom house being freed up. Would you say that that is another benefit of people moving in?

Maria Brenton (Older Women's Co-Housing, Barnet): Absolutely. Quite a number of the OWCH women have downsized. They were capital rich but cash poor. It is a very attractive alternative for older people. It is the message of the Housing our Ageing Population: Panel for Innovation [HAPPI] report, really. With what has been on offer to older people, trying to encourage them to right-size, there has not been any attractive

alternative to small one-bedroom little boxes that people do not want to live in, really. That has been a big lure for older people, particularly as a lot of the larger houses are totally unsuitable for growing old in. Most of the housing stock is unsuitable for growing old in.

Tom Copley AM: Absolutely. In terms of your leasehold properties, do you have a similar system to the other CLTs where the price increase is restricted to wages or is it the open market?

Maria Brenton (Older Women's Co-Housing, Barnet): It is open market. It was sold on the open market by Hanover [Housing Association] to the women. There is a succession policy in relation to people's heirs. Nobody can move into the OWCH scheme who is not a woman over 50 and preferably, if we can help it, they will be an OWCH member already. If not, they have to become an OWCH member and subscribe to the values.

Tom Copley AM: OK. Moving to Camley Street, I am interested that yours is a CLT where the council owns the freehold because my understanding of CLTs was that it was necessary for the land to be held by the community. I am quite interested to hear that you have a model where the freehold can be owned by someone else.

Alex Smith (Chairman, Camley Street Community Land Trust): Yes. We would take a lease.

Tom Copley AM: All right. How long would the lease be? 100 or was it 99 years?

Alex Smith (Chairman, Camley Street Community Land Trust): The model that we have had done would be over a 99-year plus lease and after that period the buildings and the freehold would revert back to Camden Council.

Tom Copley AM: That is interesting. It would be a lease on the land rather than freehold?

Alex Smith (Chairman, Camley Street Community Land Trust): A lease, yes.

Tom Copley AM: I was thinking that that had implications because, for example, we have done a lot of work on Transport for London (TfL) land and one of the questions is whether a CLT could work on TfL land. I was under the impression that because TfL would not release any freeholds, it would not work on TfL land. Apparently, if we follow your model, it would?

Alex Smith (Chairman, Camley Street Community Land Trust): Yes.

Tom Copley AM: Excellent.

Alex Smith (Chairman, Camley Street Community Land Trust): You do not need to have that. There are two models for CLTs. There is a charitable model and I am not sure quite what the governance structure for that would be. There is also a company limited by guarantee, which ours is. Certainly with a company limited by guarantee the financial structure is such that we can work on a leasehold. The borrowing from the pension companies is structured to fit within that lease. It is borrowed for a 60-year period.

Tom Chance (Grants and Development Manager, National Community Land Trust Network): If could just jump in there, there are other CLTs that have also taken leases on land and have taken a freehold, including the London CLT. The important thing is that the CLT leases that asset as much as a freehold in a sense and has control over that and is able to determine the terms of that in negotiation with the freeholder.

It is perfectly compatible with having a lease. It is better to have the freehold because then the community has that long-term ownership, but if that is not possible then leasehold is a model that works.

Calum Green (Co-Director, London Community Land Trust and Senior Organiser, Citizens UK): Also, it is very much understandable that public landowners would want to retain and see it, maybe, as good practice for them to retain the freehold and so having a 99-year lease, a 125-year lease or a 250-year lease is definitely doable and is practised.

Tom Copley AM: Out of interest, are you in any way involved with the Camden High Line idea? It is going to run through where you are, I think.

Alex Smith (Chairman, Camley Street Community Land Trust): I have talked with Simon [Pitkeathley, Camden Town Unlimited, Chief Executive] about it and we are definitely interested. It is more to bring passageways between Camden Lock and the King's Cross area. Certainly we are very interested in it and it is a lot better than the spur line linking High Speed 1 (HS1) and High Speed 2 (HS2), which was planned for that originally. It is a fairly difficult project, especially making it safe and accessible down there, but we are interested.

Tom Copley AM: Excellent. Finally, I have a question for StART. In terms of, say, the GLA buying the land, would the GLA get its money back or would the GLA have to accept that it is doing something for the social good?

Ruth Moulton (Director, St Ann's Redevelopment Trust): We are open to looking at different models and we would be open to discussion. We envisage that there are a number of different models that could be taken up for it, yes.

Tom Copley AM: Thank you.

Sian Berry AM (Chair): Nicky [Gavron], your question?

Nicky Gavron AM: Yes. I just wanted to reiterate what other people have said because it was really inspiring. Having talked about CLTs and community ownership for so long, it is great to see it is no longer embryonic and is really there. It is good. It is really good.

Maria [Brenton], we were talking about co-housing before the GLA was here, were we not? We had a Planning Committee last week on family-friendly housing and, listening to you, it struck me that it would work very well for certain kinds of families. I just wondered whether you knew about models elsewhere, obviously not here yet; that we could pick up on.

Maria Brenton (Older Women's Co-Housing, Barnet): There are about 20 family-based co-housing communities in the UK already. There is one down near Lewes, one in Stroud, one in Lancaster and one in Leeds. They are all various sizes and different models but very much intergenerational.

Nicky Gavron AM: Brilliant. On the downsizing, it struck me that a lot of people do not downsize because they cannot find anything in their local area. Your group have come from all over, presumably, because you have been looking for sites for years. Do you think it could work with a group of people in an area going to a local authority and saying, "Look, we would all move out and release these sites, these homes, if we could move into that site"? Can you imagine that kind of thing happening?

Maria Brenton (Older Women's Co-Housing, Barnet): Yes.

Nicky Gavron AM: Has that happened anywhere?

Maria Brenton (Older Women's Co-Housing, Barnet): It has happened in other countries. It has not happened here yet.

Nicky Gavron AM: Which other countries?

Maria Brenton (Older Women's Co-Housing, Barnet): Holland, Denmark, Sweden, Germany, Italy --

Nicky Gavron AM: They are local? They stay within their community?

Maria Brenton (Older Women's Co-Housing, Barnet): Yes. There is a co-housing group in Lewisham and Lewisham Council is quite helpful with the idea. There is the Featherstone Group which is in progress and they are people locally. We happened to start from London-based networks of older women. We came from at least 12 different boroughs, which is one reason why having a neighbourhood referendum and that kind of route to neighbourhood planning was not suitable for a group like us. Local authorities in London are really very tribal and they do not want you coming into their patch from another borough, on the whole. That is the message we received loud and clear. Eventually we overcame it.

It is perfectly possible to do it locally if there is a bit of land. I live in Hammersmith and Fulham, where there is not really any land. People who want to go into this, if they want it enough, have to move, sadly.

Nicky Gavron AM: OK. Just going to Camley, the lease, who would collect the rents?

Alex Smith (Chairman, Camley Street Community Land Trust): It is a community build project. It would be Camley Street Sustainability Zone Ltd that would collect the rent.

Nicky Gavron AM: Can you just remind me what proportion is going to be social rent?

Alex Smith (Chairman, Camley Street Community Land Trust): 100% would be rented at about London Living Rent level. That is the model that we have at the moment, and that works.

Nicky Gavron AM: OK. It was St Clement's, so this is for Calum [Green]. Can you just remind me, if you wanted to buy it was at the median rent, is that right? Medium income.

Calum Green (Co-Director, London Community Land Trust and Senior Organiser, Citizens UK): It is based on the median income. You figure out the mortgage that someone on a median income can afford. You say, "For a one-bed it is ..." There are lots of median incomes but in Tower Hamlets we are working out that that is around £33,000. For a two-bed you say it is one-and-a-third median incomes, for a three-bed you say it is one-and-two-thirds median incomes and for a four-bed, although we do not have any of those in St Clement's, you would say it is two median incomes. You assume an increase in the number of people earning as the household gets bigger.

Nicky Gavron AM: The median income is over how wide an area?

Calum Green (Co-Director, London Community Land Trust and Senior Organiser, Citizens UK): For St Clement's it is Tower Hamlets. Our assumption is that we do it by local authority but we would be open to

talking about doing it in a smaller area if a particular borough felt that one part of the borough was very different to another. So long as it is local authority or smaller, we are open to that conversation.

Nicky Gavron AM: That would not be so good for St Clement's, would it, because it is a rich borough.

Calum Green (Co-Director, London Community Land Trust and Senior Organiser, Citizens UK): This is why we are going with the median. If you go with mean or average income you get to £42,000 because of Canary Wharf, whereas median takes it right back down.

Nicky Gavron AM: Yes. That is good. For the Haringey scheme, you said you were going for a very high percentage of social rent.

Tony Wood (Director, St Ann's Redevelopment Trust): 75%.

Nicky Gavron AM: In terms of the rest, you were going to sell them at a third of median income. Do I have that right?

Ruth Moulton (Director, St Ann's Redevelopment Trust): Yes.

Tony Wood (Director, St Ann's Redevelopment Trust): Just to clarify, I know Ruth [Moulton] said social rent but at the moment our financial appraisal is looking at London Affordable Rent levels for the homes.

Nicky Gavron AM: Up to 80% of market rent?

Tony Wood (Director, St Ann's Redevelopment Trust): No, £144 for a one-bedroom.

Tom Copley AM: They are benchmarks for social rent?

Tony Wood (Director, St Ann's Redevelopment Trust): Because we do not have the land, we have to make a number of assumptions in our financial forecast. At the moment, we are using the Mayor's London Affordable Rent level.

Nicky Gavron AM: I get it. It is a benchmark that is set already.

Tony Wood (Director, St Ann's Redevelopment Trust): Yes. In the discussions we are having, people are looking at one third of gross household income for the ward or the three wards around the hospital. That comes in around about the same levels as the London Affordable Rent in [Mayor of London] Sadiq Khan's proposals.

We would ideally like 100% of the homes on the site to be genuinely affordable. We know we might not be able to achieve it. There will probably have to be some houses sold at the open market value but they could be, a number of them, sold to something like a co-housing project. I am actually in a housing co-op. It could be that a number of houses are sold to a housing co-op. Although we are saying some of the homes will be sold at market value, we might - if possible - look at restricting who they are sold to. It might be local people as well, who want to downsize or move homes.

Nicky Gavron AM: OK. Thank you. Who owns the railway arches? Is it TfL?

Alex Smith (Chairman, Camley Street Community Land Trust): Probably TfL, yes, but there has been light industrial in them previously.

Nicky Gavron AM: There was light industrial?

Alex Smith (Chairman, Camley Street Community Land Trust): Yes. They are now more or less vacant.

Nicky Gavron AM: They are gone?

Alex Smith (Chairman, Camley Street Community Land Trust): They are not being used for anything at the moment.

Tony Wood (Director, St Ann's Redevelopment Trust): It would be Network Rail, would it not?

Alex Smith (Chairman, Camley Street Community Land Trust): Yes, probably Network Rail, yes.

Nicky Gavron AM: I have heard that rents are going up in railway arches. Another discussion.

Sian Berry AM (Chair): In some of them, definitely they are. Thank you very much for all of that. We are going to have some policy questions now that mainly Tom [Chance] will answer but if there is anything relevant, please put your hands up. Susan [Hall AM], I think you were going to ask the first question to Tom [Chance].

Susan Hall AM: There was just one question I was going to comment on. Development by a CLT and OWCA has obviously taken longer to deliver than a commercial development would and the question was why.

Alex [Smith], you have mentioned that Camden Council is putting a spanner in the works there. Have you approached the Mayor? He is particularly keen that these go ahead. In fact, he promised to deliver over 1,000 community trust houses by 2020 and at one of his hustings he said he wanted to do this in his first year. He is already out of time on that. Perhaps if you approach him to see what he can do with Camden Council, he might be able to assist. One of his manifesto promises here is in danger and that might be something to twist his arm, if that is at all helpful.

I will go straight on to Tom [Chance]. Do the issues from these projects reflect the experience of the community-led housing sector generally? Are there any other examples you would like to highlight to us?

Tom Chance (Grants and Development Manager, National Community Land Trust Network): They reflect the experiences of other groups doing this in London and in certain other areas. They tend to be urban areas with very high market values and very competitive land markets. There has been a much stronger growth of community-led housing in other parts of the country where the circumstances are a bit more favourable and there is better support infrastructure in place. That is particularly, for example, in the Southwest of England, Cornwall, Devon and Dorset up toward Wiltshire and parts of East Anglia, where we have umbrella organisations to support groups and provide what Tony [Wood] referred to earlier as 'hand-holding', holding your hand through the whole process, where local authority culture is a bit more supportive of this - sometimes, not always - and where land is easier to get hold of. You can get hold of what are called rural exception sites, which is a policy that does not really apply in London.

In London, the experience of trying to get hold of land, if you are a group that does not have assets or any track record, is extremely difficult and often depends on a local authority taking the leap of imagination to be

able to support them. That is a common process, trying to overcome the culture in those authorities of “Is this viable? How can we support it? What is the business plan?” and so on.

Susan Hall AM: Do you take anything from the other big cities, Manchester and so on? Do they have exactly the same problems because of land prices and the ‘not handholding’ aspect?

Tom Chance (Grants and Development Manager, National Community Land Trust Network): The different cities in the UK have very different circumstances. Last year I was doing some work on this and talking with authorities in Gateshead and Newcastle, places where they have negative land values and they have difficulty making a market sector scheme stack up. In Liverpool, there has been a lot of growth in Middlesbrough starting from empty homes, trying to stop street clearances and demolitions and instead renovate those properties and bring them to use.

Probably the most comparable place where there has been real movement is Bristol, where there are a number of established CLTs and co-housing groups already. There are completed schemes in and around the Bristol area and others that are coming through with schemes. The Council has now become very supportive of this and is working with the local sector to try to set up an enabling hub for the city, which may also expand out to the Bristol City region. It are looking at its own sites, looking at right of way and trying to be generally supportive of this, to see it as part of the housing market in Bristol alongside private development, housing association development and the Council’s own company. This community land sector can add to the market.

Susan Hall AM: Thank you.

David Kurten AM: I want to carry on and ask you, Tom, what needs to be in place in order to make the types of models that we have heard about today work. I am particularly thinking about governance structures, access to finance and access to land, which are things we have heard are necessary.

Tom Chance (Grants and Development Manager, National Community Land Trust Network): We at the National Community Land Trust Network and also the other national bodies, the UK Co-Housing Network and the Confederation of Co-operative Housing - the three main bodies representing particular approaches, along with others like Locality who are in this space - have done a lot of work looking at the process, from when you first form a group through to people living there, and all the different barriers along the way. There are lots, as there are with any other sort of housing development. No housing development is straightforward.

I would say the main thing is to have a good local enabling organisation, a hub that understands the local market, that has connections with other local stakeholders like housing associations that operate in the area, local authorities, potentially other public landowners and maybe even private landowners, builders and so on. They can provide a function to support groups to go through this process, to learn what is possible, to understand what these different concepts of co-housing, co-operatives and CLTs are, how you can combine them and so on. That is an absolutely crucial element of the way of working to try to put in place across the country. We might talk about it a bit in relation to London, where the GLA is now supporting that.

Early seedcorn finance has been mentioned. Some of it exists. If you are a CLT we can provide some technical support and then £4,000 in a grant. Locality operate a system where you can get some grants. There are bits and bobs of this around but sometimes if you decide you do not want to do a CLT you cannot get access to it or if you are in a different part of the country you cannot get access to it. We are trying to make sure that groups can get early-stage money to get going.

Then you need to investigate sites and put together a proposal to go to Planning. That can cost in London anywhere from £50,000 to £500,000 depending on the complexity of your scheme and getting access to that money is currently quite expensive. There are organisations that are set up specifically trying to provide that kind of finance but it tends to be very expensive and you can have things like success fees of 25% if you get planning permission. It is not always easy to get hold of that finance.

Then you have the development finance, which can be difficult if you have no assets already. There are a number of specialist lenders in the sector like Ecology Building Society, Triodos, Charity Bank and so on who would be the senior lenders and might lend 70% of the cost, and then you have to try to find somebody to bring in the remainder. Again, there are some people in this space but that can sometimes be challenging, particularly if you are doing a very large scheme. If you are talking a development value of a couple of million it is not so hard to get it but, if you are doing something on the scale of Camley or StART, that is a lot of money you are trying to get someone to lend.

After that point, it gets a bit easier. It is then working out your long-term finance as a community enterprise, where you are getting support and how you manage it all, how you deal with allocations, how you can go on to be a good landlord and what have you. It is a whole other process. We work as a national body with funders, with people from the finance sector, with groups, with authorities, local government and so on to try to put in place all these different elements to make the whole thing work more easily.

One other one that Tom [Copley AM] mentioned was mortgages. We have done a lot of work to bring more lenders into the space. We are trying to get Nationwide to help with St Clement's, for example, and we are also looking at setting up a mortgage brokerage scheme so the residents have access to a wider range of the market if they want to move into the space and they do not necessarily just have one option. We are trying to get to the point where a resident could have a wide range of options in the market in order to get a mortgage. There is a lot.

Sian Berry AM (Chair): Alex [Smith] mentioned pension fund finance in connection with his scheme. Is that correct?

Alex Smith (Chairman, Camley Street Community Land Trust): Yes.

Sian Berry AM (Chair): Is that something you have seen elsewhere? Is that unique or new?

Tom Chance (Grants and Development Manager, National Community Land Trust Network): It is new because they are not interested in something of the scale of, say, OWCH. It is too small. Even Camley Street on its own we are not sure would be interested in putting money into that and whether it is big enough. They are having discussions on that and they have the support of the developers. Alex [Smith] might talk a bit more about that.

We have also talked about the potential of a portfolio of schemes that would start to add up to a big enough development value that a pension fund would be interested in putting serious money into it but that is quite difficult because you have schemes that are not quite concurrent and have risks associated with them and so on. It could be a really interesting one for the GLA to facilitate, a number of schemes across London where pension funds would collectively be interested in investing.

Sian Berry AM (Chair): Alex [Smith], do you have more to say about that?

Alex Smith (Chairman, Camley Street Community Land Trust): We have been talking with two pension companies for funding our scheme. We have had detailed discussions with one of them. Both of them have given substantial letters of interest. We believe that the models that we have where they would fund it over a long-term match very well with their pension requirements. Certainly the chair of one of the pension companies said that right now there is £5 trillion being invested at negative interest around the world and that when you look at the sort of scheme we are talking about here, where you have a very long-term secure income stream, there is a very good correspondence between the pension payment requirements and the income stream we get, these two elements and the type of governance and management. Because ours is a big scheme that does cost a lot of money, this is of interest and worth putting time into.

Calum Green (Co-Director, London Community Land Trust and Senior Organiser, Citizens UK): In this country, community-led housing is at 0.3% of total housing and in Germany it is 10%. I know there are significant differences between those two housing markets. Pension funds are investing in community-led housing in Germany.

One barrier I would add is that often it is so difficult to do one that once you do one, particularly if you are one of the people who is going to move in, you then move in and you just want to relax. There is an interesting conversation about those who do break through and get that first one done, and how you encourage them to do a second or third if they are that way inclined? That is often the approach to good schools. If there is a good school, the local authority will go and say to them, "Do you mind opening up another one?" That would be another interesting conversation that is not really happening.

Sian Berry AM (Chair): Tom [Copley AM], did you have a question?

Tom Copley AM: Yes, to Tom [Chance]. In terms of accessing funding, the Mayor obviously has his innovation scheme, which I know some CLTs have applied to. As far as I am aware, to apply for the Affordable Homes programme you have to be a registered provider. Are any CLTs registered providers or is that not compatible?

Tom Chance (Grants and Development Manager, National Community Land Trust Network): Some CLTs are registered providers. Most do not want to be because the process is not really appropriate for such a small, community-based landlord. Registered provider status is meant for bigger housing associations and they do not want to go down that route because of the bureaucracy and so on. Some CLTs partner with registered providers. I mentioned down in the southwest there has been a very strong current and there are housing associations that already have quite a good ethos of partnering with a CLT to get access to affordable housing finance.

Tom Copley AM: Has the Homes and Communities Agency (HCA) given funding?

Tom Chance (Grants and Development Manager, National Community Land Trust Network): Yes.

Tom Copley AM: Has that happened in London yet?

Tom Chance (Grants and Development Manager, National Community Land Trust Network): No. There was a previous community-led housing funding programme the HCA ran in other places where there was a bit more flexibility on it and the GLA ought to be considering more flexibility on this where you can use something like locally approved provider status. There are local authorities that say, "We have done the due diligence on you. We think that you are sufficiently well set-up and the regulatory environment you are in is

good enough, you have good governance and so on, and so we are willing to recognise you as a partner in this”.

Tom Copley AM: There is nothing stopping the Mayor doing something similar, is there?

Tom Chance (Grants and Development Manager, National Community Land Trust Network): I am not sure whether the Mayor has the power to or whether it would be local authorities but we would be advocating that that is something the GLA should be doing, in conversation with the boroughs. For example, Leeds City Council has recognised Leeds Community Homes, which is a CLT, as a section 106 provider so that it can go on and take on section 106 homes. Of course, as Calum [Green] will know, the London CLT took on the section 106 affordable homes component at St Clement’s. There ought to be routes to be able to do this. If you want to unlock innovation, making registered provider status a requirement is going to stop innovation. It is going to squash a lot of really interesting schemes that would otherwise happen.

Tom Copley AM: Yes. I am just working on the basis that I assume it is a requirement of Affordable Homes funding.

Tom Chance (Grants and Development Manager, National Community Land Trust Network): The GLA makes it a requirement.

Tom Copley AM: The GLA makes it. Perhaps we need to look at the GLA being more flexible.

Sian Berry AM (Chair): Alex [Smith], did you want to say something about your attempts to get grants?

Alex Smith (Chairman, Camley Street Community Land Trust): Yes. We have a bid in to the Innovation Fund at the GLA for our scheme but because we are not a registered provider, the amount that we can ask for is absolutely miniscule.

Tom Copley AM: I feel a Mayor’s Question coming on.

Calum Green (Co-Director, London Community Land Trust and Senior Organiser, Citizens UK): We also have a bid in, one which we have done with Lewisham but also one that Southwark Council have done, have led on, and said that then we can partner with Southwark Council on it.

Tom Copley AM: Which one is that?

Calum Green (Co-Director, London Community Land Trust and Senior Organiser, Citizens UK): They are doing a council housing programme. They were going to build 20 shared ownership homes onsite as part of the mix and instead of doing that, they have put a bid in to build CLT homes.

Tom Copley AM: Brilliant.

Calum Green (Co-Director, London Community Land Trust and Senior Organiser, Citizens UK): There is an interesting partnership conversation to be had about how local authorities can be more proactive with some of this stuff.

Sian Berry AM (Chair): In terms of the Mayor’s funding, there is no clarity so far on what conditions the Government have put on what he can give. We may need to write to him about that.

Tom Copley AM: Yes.

Sian Berry AM (Chair): Susan [Hall AM], you wanted to follow up?

Susan Hall AM: Yes. Other than funding, which is always a problem for everything, clearly the other issue that you all have is finding the land. I was really interested by your point earlier, Tom [Chance], and the things that you are doing with leasehold. Given that, would you like the Mayor to make available small pockets of land? There is such a housing crisis. Sometimes these things can be done on much smaller pockets of land.

Tom Chance (Grants and Development Manager, National Community Land Trust Network): I will caveat it first by saying: not just small sites. There are lots of projects that we have heard of that would work well on very large sites and we would not want the sector to be pigeon-holed.

Susan Hall AM: No, I accept that.

Tom Chance (Grants and Development Manager, National Community Land Trust Network): Given that caveat, the GLA has a small sites initiative and there have been discussions the whole way through the development of that that community-led housing could form part of that process. There would be lots of scope for TfL sites and other local authority sites to be provided for community-led housing. The idea would be if particular sites were identified and then a covenant was put on them.

The process is the key thing and that is obviously what the small sites initiative is seeking to address, the problems that public authorities create for themselves, getting into a complete tangle over procurement rules and best consideration rules that are poorly understood. There have been several examples - this is experienced by small developers as well as community-led groups - where councils get themselves very confused about what their requirements are, how they work, how they use planning policy and so on. They put very burdensome and unnecessary hurdles in the way of groups being able to take on sites. Through the small sites initiative, there could be huge scope.

I have seen some of the initial sites they are looking at and for any of them, if you said, "This is for a community-led process. Who is local and could come forward to try to do it?" there would be no problem getting demand, groups coming forward to take on those sites and drive the schemes forward whether they were leasehold or freehold, which does not matter.

Nicky Gavron AM: Is this the TfL pilot?

Tom Chance (Grants and Development Manager, National Community Land Trust Network): Yes, the TfL pilot should definitely have some earmarked in it and then the rest of the pipeline should as well. Lewisham is an interesting example of an authority that learned halfway through doing it with the RUSS how not to do it and now has worked out with RUSS a better way of doing it. They have realised that it is perfectly possible and there is no legal impediment to them doing it in a way that does not put everyone through hundreds of thousands of pounds' worth of pointless work. That is something that we could be seeing many more public authorities coming on board with.

Susan Hall AM: Yes. Lovely, thank you.

This is to Tom [Chance] and Calum [Green], really. Are there any particular reasons for public subsidy to support community-led housing projects rather than social or affordable housing through council and registered provider groups?

Tom Chance (Grants and Development Manager, National Community Land Trust Network): The question makes a mistaken assumption that there is a big difference between the two. Community-led housing could be providing social rented housing. It could be working with a registered provider. What makes community-led housing different is just that the community has a very central role in the process and it gets to determine what its role is, it is not being told that by somebody else. Insofar as some of the examples we have heard about or other groups like Brixton Green or RUSS, what have you, are providing social and other kinds of genuinely affordable housing, they should get public subsidy like any other provider of that kind of housing.

You have heard there are many other benefits that come through community-led housing in terms of cohesive communities, meeting the needs of groups that are not met by the current market and strengthening local communities where people struggle to keep up a local connection, where their nan cannot look after their kid because they have had to leave. They have all those other sorts of benefits. One of the things that we have been trying to do is to more robustly demonstrate that wider social value of community-led housing that you do not tend to get through other sorts of approaches. Then it is how local authorities or the GLA consider that as part of their housing strategy. You are getting all those additional benefits as well.

Then there is the fact that you tend to get more homes. London CLT had the same experience. RUSS has had the same experience. They have all gone in and built considerably more homes or are planning to build considerably more homes than the local authority originally envisaged. They get far more community support. You will always have some opposition but they tend to get more community support for it and given that housing development in London is so controversial and there can be so much opposition to things, you would think that this would be an obvious way of starting to turn that around and get more support for housing supply in London.

Susan Hall AM: How would you like to see the Mayor help you in all of this?

Tom Chance (Grants and Development Manager, National Community Land Trust Network): We have more specific things that we will talk about later but the key things are help with land through things like the small sites initiative, not just that but that is a good example; helping to support an enabling hub for London so that there is that one-stop shop for groups wanting to do this whole process; looking at ways in which he can strategically promote it through his strategies, the London Plan and so on; and also working with us on things like the mortgage market. The GLA has had a lot of discussions over the years with lenders about shared ownership. There are similar issues there. The GLA has a lot of sway and access. It could bring us into those conversations or help us to deal with some of these areas of access to finance, access to mortgages and so on. There has been a culture change that I have seen in the last seven years. Now the GLA is much more open to this stuff than it has been previously. If it takes that opportunity to see this as a major part of its housing strategy, not just a funny nuisance or a curiosity, then it can really support the process.

Susan Hall AM: That would be a good thing. I agree. Thank you.

Leonie Cooper AM: Just to follow up on that one slightly and then just to move on the issue of numbers that you referred to, public subsidy is normally linked with the ability for the local authority to allocate and have control over the allocations. A lot of housing associations in the past used to run their own allocations and did all sorts of weird and wonderful things but the amount of subsidy that they have received has gone up and down quite a lot.

Just to play devil's advocate a bit, although you were talking about the wider benefits, you are also talking about money, public subsidy, going to something where the CLT controls the allocations. It goes back to some

of the points that Tom [Copley AM] was making about equalities issues and all that sort of thing. Do you not think that might be an issue? That is a big difference between public subsidy for a CLT and for other social affordable housing, is it not?

Tom Chance (Grants and Development Manager, National Community Land Trust Network): It is not necessarily a big difference. You have maybe heard a selection of experiences in this panel where they have had very little involvement with the local authority and their allocations process. StART is having that discussion with Haringey. In some parts of the country, CLTs have been built where it is just that local people want some form of housing in their village. A housing association runs it and does the allocations process with some local connection criteria and they take from the local authority's list as well as through its own process. It is not that different to what you think of as a conventional housing association development.

It is for negotiation really and I think it depends slightly on the character of the group. So Maria [Brenton] was talking about: they have particular reasons not to want to just go with the local allocation process and that is for negotiation with the local authority.

Maria Brenton (Older Women's Co-Housing, Barnet): Could I also add that at some point back in our history, the OWCH group had a pan-London grant from the then Housing Corporation on the basis that we did not fit in any one borough and that boroughs would be resistant to losing their allocations to a group like us. It vanished along with the Housing Corporation, but it was a good idea.

Networks like LGBT networks are not necessarily local and in fact they are quite unlikely to be solely local, and therefore one local authority is not going to particularly welcome them. There needs to be a Pan-London approach as well as a local one. That is a particularly good role, I would have thought, for the GLA in encouraging London-wide groups who do not fit into those criteria.

Leonie Cooper AM: Does anyone else want to add to that?

Alex Smith (Chairman, Camley Street Community Land Trust): Yes, I will add to that. First, Camley Street plan is not actually taking any subsidy whatsoever and in fact, as I said, our scheme would allow Camden to retain the freehold and get £150 million for the use of its land.

We have also had some unofficial discussions with Camden with regards to the governance structure within the CLT we are proposing. We would not be averse to Camden having a formal role within that governance structure that would then allow us to look at Camden housing needs, for instance. We have talked specifically with them about HS2 developments, which would require quite a lot of rehousing from around the Euston station area. We cannot see really any reason why, under those sorts of circumstances, some of the houses that we are proposing could not be made available to residents around Euston who would need rehousing when HS2 comes in.

Leonie Cooper AM: OK, thank you. It is an important question to be able to answer. My first job was working for a housing co-operative and it was all about exactly those communities of interest. Of course, boroughs are just imaginary lines drawn on maps for somebody else's convenience, but in fact they really have no relevance to most people's lives. The River Thames is more of a challenge and a barrier.

You mentioned, Tom [Chance], though that there is evidence that shows that more homes can be delivered if you go down the CLT route as a kind of throwaway but without any numbers attached to that. Could you unpack that a little bit and give us some sort of sense of how many more homes have been developed in the instances that you are aware of?

Tom Chance (Grants and Development Manager, National Community Land Trust Network): Yes. I am not going to do numbers off the top of my head because I will get them wrong, but I can certainly send a note to the Committee with them.

Leonie Cooper AM: We are very happy to get that afterwards, yes. That is fine.

Tom Chance (Grants and Development Manager, National Community Land Trust Network): Yes and Calum [Green] maybe can talk specifically about St Clement's. RUSS, for example, in Lewisham: the local authority was originally envisaging that it would dispose of the site, probably to a local developer that would build a few four-bed homes and that would be it. The community got involved and they looked at it and said, "We could get far more homes here and we know that there is a need for housing in the area". They have come up with a scheme - I am not going to give you the number - but many more homes than that with a mixture of one-bed flats through to four-bed family homes.

Brixton Green was a similar one where the local community looked at a site which is in the heart of Brixton and they are quite happy with what is really quite dense development with 300 flats for rent. They came up with their own way of determining the mixture of rents there. It is from social rent through to market rent to try to reflect the full mix of community they have in Brixton. They have people behind the idea of that fairly dense development.

It is basically, as Tony [Wood] was saying with StART, that when the community feels that they are control of the process and they start to try to say, "This is going to meet local needs and we can see that this is going to be something we will have some influence over. This is going to be something for local people and it is not just going to be sold off to the foreign investors" and all that sort of stuff that you read about in the *Standard*, generally people get much more supportive of housing being built. We have seen that even in the rest of the country it has particularly filled the need locally. Normally if a builder came along and said, "We are going to build ten homes on the side of your village", people say, "No, you are not" and there will be a big campaign against it. This is instead local residents coming forward and saying, "We need some homes for the sons and daughters of our village to be able to stay here or for our town or what have you". They are getting landowners to come forward and bring sites forward that would not otherwise be brought forward and they are getting the community to support homes being built that would not otherwise be built.

It is a theme running through this approach. It is similar to neighbourhood planning where there is some research that neighbourhood plans on average are producing about 10% more homes than the local authority's plans. It totally turns on its head the assumption that most people are not-in-my-backyarders (NIMBYs) and they do not want stuff built in their area.

Sian Berry AM (Chair): Does anybody want to add to that?

Leonie Cooper AM: You may want to avoid the use of the words "sons and daughters" because that does of course speak to some pretty hideously, unpleasantly enforced policies of the past. I would not throw that around either, sorry.

Tony Wood (Director, St Ann's Redevelopment Trust): I can only talk about our side. When the health authority initially went to get planning permission on the site - they wanted to go to 700 homes - there was huge local opposition. They very quickly got rid of that application and went in for 470 to which there was a lot of opposition, too, but got passed.

When we went to speak to the local authority planning office, they were hoping to get 750 homes on that site. StART has the local community agreeing to 800 homes on that site if it is truly affordable homes for, as a general description, “local people”.

Leonie Cooper AM: Sorry, I am not quite following how we got from 470 to 800 because --

Nicky Gavron AM: Local buy-in.

Tony Wood (Director, St Ann’s Redevelopment Trust): We talk about the “community”. Obviously, there are loads of different elements of the community and it is an overused term, I feel. I do feel worried about calling us ‘the community’ because we are an element of the community or elements of the community. Throughout the consultation we have done, people realise there is a need. They can see their friends are moving out, their families are moving out. My child has had to move out of London because he wants to be independent and cannot live in London. A number of people see their communities are having to move or are dispersed. In all the consultation we have had, people have said, “If it is homes that are genuinely affordable, we would accept a higher density on that site and would not oppose it”. Speaking to other groups that are doing the same sort of stuff as us, you hear that again and again; that people will accept higher density if they have some control over the housing and it is genuinely affordable for people that broadly live in the local area.

Leonie Cooper AM: It is getting that local buy-in that leads to the acceptance of the higher density. Calum [Green], you wanted to come in.

Calum Green (Co-Director, London Community Land Trust and Senior Organiser, Citizens UK): Our original bid with St Clement’s was with Igloo and Chris [Brown, Chief Executive Officer, Igloo Regeneration]. As soon as people realised they get a percentage of these homes on the site, they do start talking about all they want in their area lot more.

Also, it is not just that there is more but there was a plan before we went and had a look, which had been completely turned down by a particularly formidable individual. 73% of Londoners want more homes built and if you go to planning committees, you do not see those people there. London Citizens had 6,000 people at Olympic Stadium at the Copper Box and every time you talked about affordable housing, everyone cheered.

This is the way or this is one really clear way that you galvanised that 73% to be actively saying, “Yes, we need to build these homes”. They know that they are going to get a say in who gets to live there, how much they cost and where they are going to go. It does not mean they have to be all homes necessarily, but by activating those people through that route you get everyone in London talking about getting these homes built that we really need. At the minute, if it is someone else coming to you in your area and trying to get it done, the initial response is, “Well, there is no trust built and I am not convinced that you are going to do what we need”.

Leonie Cooper AM: Thank you.

Sian Berry AM (Chair): Four more questions, including one about what the Mayor is doing about this.

Tom Copley AM: Yes, I will be quick. Tom [Chance], is there a role for Registered Social Landlords (RSLs) to deliver homes through community-led housing models to ensure they are affordable in perpetuity? You have already talked about this, yes.

Tom Chance (Grants and Development Manager, National Community Land Trust Network): Yes. They can partner with a co-operative, community-led co-housing group. They have in some of the cases we have heard about now.

Tom Copley AM: There have been cases in the past where, for example, smaller housing associations have been taken over by bigger ones. Their own governance structures have been then removed and there has been a lot of resentment then towards the larger housing association. Is there a danger that could happen with RSLs partnering with CLTs? Or can that be sorted out in advance to make sure it does not?

Tom Chance (Grants and Development Manager, National Community Land Trust Network): Yes, it depends on the nature of the partnership. A CLT would be designed with clear governance structures to prevent that kind of thing from happening. It has asset locks and so on. Normally they would get into a partnership with a housing association where the housing association would be a partner that helps develop and then wanders off or takes on a lease for the homes in order to rent them out or something like that. It is all in the detail.

Maria Brenton (Older Women's Co-Housing, Barnet): It is the smaller housing associations that are, for instance, encouraging working in partnership with co-housing groups, Hastoe, Synergy. Hanover [Housing Association], for instance, has brought us to fruition and done very well by us, but they are not going to do any more co-housing groups.

Tom Copley AM: They are not going to do anymore?

Maria Brenton (Older Women's Co-Housing, Barnet): No, because there would need to be an utter change of culture in Hanover [Housing Association] to get on with it and there is not. It is a very top-down organisation. It is an aberration as far as they are concerned, even though their business is older people's housing.

Tom Chance (Grants and Development Manager, National Community Land Trust Network): Like the Arlington Housing Group in the Southwest who have now decided they are only going to do development with CLTs. They have done a number of partnerships with CLTs in the southwest though now says all of their housing association activity in future will be done with CLTs, particularly around Bristol.

Tom Copley AM: Interesting. My next question is on Right to Buy. Is the extended Right to Buy likely to have an impact on community-led housing, especially in London? I know that community-led schemes are exempt at the moment.

Tom Chance (Grants and Development Manager, National Community Land Trust Network): They are not quite exempt. Co-operatives have always been exempt from the Right to Buy. CLTs, the current registered providers or the partner of a registered provider are potentially vulnerable to it and there is basically uncertainty around this. The voluntary Right to Buy: the agreement drawn up with the National Housing Federation and ourselves says that CLTs should not normally be exposed to it and that if they have homes that are with a partner housing association that they would not be subject to the Right to Buy. Gavin Barwell [former MP for Croydon Central] when he was Housing Minister said there was an expectation that CLTs would not be affected, but it is legally ambiguous.

Tom Copley AM: Having said that, housing associations are perfectly within their rights to turn around and say, "Sorry, Government, we are not going to do it".

Tom Chance (Grants and Development Manager, National Community Land Trust Network): Yes. We have worked with Wessex which is the enabling hub for a large part of the Southwest. They have drawn up a clause for leases between CLTs and housing associations to make sure that it is in the lease that they cannot be subjected to the Right to Buy. They are now trying to roll that out through other CLTs that are coming forward around the country and retrospectively adding it into leases, particularly to try to give comfort to landowners.

I was talking about landowners being willing to come forward and provided land for CLTs on the basis that this is going to remain permanently for the community. If there is any kind of a risk that it will not be, the landowners - often country gents, stewards of the community kind of people - do not want to give their land forward because of that uncertainty. We have continued to lobby the Government to put it in a ministerial statement or in some way make it crystal clear that CLTs, co-housing groups and other forms of community housing are completely exempt.

Tom Copley AM: All right. Thank you.

Sian Berry AM (Chair): David [Kurten AM]?

David Kurten AM: Great, thanks. Yes, I would like to ask about what you think about what the Mayor is doing and I will ask Tom [Chance] first of all and then open it up to everyone else. He has something called the Community Housing Hub and I wondered if you could tell me. How do you think that is going to facilitate community-led housing in London? What else does it need to do or to offer to you to be a success? I will start with you, Tom [Chance].

Tom Chance (Grants and Development Manager, National Community Land Trust Network): Yes. We are not sure yet. I have been involved in a lot of the discussions with the GLA about what this hub does and it is partly that we know how these hubs have worked in other parts of the country and how they have been very successful at getting a phenomenally huge increase in the rate of these groups coming forward and succeeding. But London has a particular context that is different and so we are still slightly exploring exactly what it is going to do.

The core of it is basically that the hub should be a business; that it should be able to sustain itself after a period of time; that the GLA is priming it and that the hub takes a group like StART or like OWCH, skills them up, helps them find a site, supports them in developing partnerships, access to finance and so on and sees a scheme through to completion and that the hub is earning money by charging a fee for that process, which it recovers at the end. It may also take on a management function. We work with something call CDS cooperatives, which as well as having its own homes is a secondary housing co-operative and provides management services to housing co-operatives that do not themselves feel like they could take on management. It could provide a range of services to the community-led housing sector in London to try to speed up development.

Then of course secondary to that is also potentially awareness-raising, networking and so on, working with GLA officers to have discussions with lenders and so on and so forth. The core bit of it is really supporting a group to go from, "We have this great idea for a scheme in Croydon", through to having the thing built.

Maria Brenton (Older Women's Co-Housing, Barnet): If we had had such a hub, we would not have taken 18 years. This hub, the idea behind it, is to provide the skillset that ordinary groups of citizens do not have - and why would they have them - and to help them on the legal side, help them mobilise finance, help

them write a business plan, help them do community development, etc, and advise them on which direction to follow. It is a very good sort of synergy.

Calum Green (Co-Director, London Community Land Trust and Senior Organiser, Citizens UK): It is a useful part of a community-led housing strategy that the Mayor should have. It helps with what is supposed to have been discussed. It might provide opportunities to come up with significant plans for finance, planning and land; it does not directly address those which are, I would say, the barriers that everyone faces. There is a particular thing like community-led housing about expertise and so it helps with expertise where you get to know how it helps with the other three.

David Kurten AM: Yes, thanks.

Alex Smith (Chairman, Camley Street Community Land Trust): Certainly, what I would hope for this hub would be that it helps - and what to be honest Camley Street now needs is lobbying. We need a route back into Camden Council. I am concerned, especially now with the situation in Camden with Chalcott, which is an extremely urgent, serious issue, what skills they may have in Camden. Especially, they are going to need to. They have just lost £15 million or £20 million from their reserves. The tendency for them to throw up their hands at this sight and say, "Look, we have been offered all of this money. We need to fill our reserves. We do not have any headspace to look at alternative options for it", will be increasing all the time. For them to have a nudge to say, "Look, this is actually a reasonable scheme. It does give you a lot of income over a period of time. It does meet a whole series of your needs in terms of affordable housing and it does retain and enhance the sort of jobs that are really needed in central London. It is worth your while taking it seriously".

Tony Wood (Director, St Ann's Redevelopment Trust): Just very quickly, I guess a lot of us have skills. We know how to find grants, finance people and legal people. How a group which does not have those skills initially gets to the stage where any of us have got to must be incredibly difficult. If the hub achieves what it seems to be saying it wants to achieve, it is incredibly important for those new groups to come forward, but also for local authorities. Local authorities do not yet understand. I am not saying all; some local authorities do not yet understand the whole concept of community-led housing. Having that hub that local authorities could go to and talk to as well potentially is a fantastic thing.

David Kurten AM: Like you are saying, there is huge room for growth. I think it was Calum [Green] who said it was 0.3% here but 10% in Germany. So that is another aspect, not just the activities but helping the local councils?

Tony Wood (Director, St Ann's Redevelopment Trust): Yes, and schemes like ours and Camley Street and others are looking to upsize from what is London.

David Kurten AM: All right, thank you. Thanks. Yes.

Sian Berry AM (Chair): Thank you, David.

Nicky Gavron AM: The first one is about the Planning and Housing Act, which came in in the back of last year, and what impact you think that is going to have, good and bad. Perhaps start with Tom [Chance] and then go on to Calum [Green].

Tom Chance (Grants and Development Manager, National Community Land Trust Network): We have discussed already the right-to-buy issue. It has added some further powers from the Self-Build and Custom Housebuilding Act, which could be helpful in that local authorities now have a duty to maintain a

register of people who are interested in doing self and custom build, including as groups, and also now to provide sufficient plots to satisfy that demand. There are legal instruments there that communities themselves can use to try to put pressure on their local authority to bring land forward. That was a not very well discussed positive part of the Act. I do not think it has otherwise a great impact. The much greater thing the Government is doing is with the £60 million community housing fund, which we are still in discussion with the Government about how that is going to be deployed. If it could be deployed in a way that contributes to what we have been talking about here in terms of the hub, support and access and finance and so on, it could be much more transformative.

People's response to it was slightly sniffy when it first came out, saying, "£60 million is not very much in the housing world", but for the community housing sector it will be very significant.

Nicky Gavron AM: You can go direct for that. It does not have to go through the GLA?

Tom Chance (Grants and Development Manager, National Community Land Trust Network): The Government has not yet decided what it is going to do with the fund this year. Last year, it gave it to local authorities and we worked quite hard with the GLA to try to support local authorities in London that received some money to work out how to use it and some of that has gone towards the hub. We are now in discussion with the Government about how it will be decided for the next four years.

Nicky Gavron AM: What would you like to see happen in terms of that fund?

Tom Chance (Grants and Development Manager, National Community Land Trust Network): We have put forward a sector-led proposal that has four main components, building up the support infrastructure of these enabling hubs and a training accreditation programme to go along with them; revenue and capital funds to get groups up to planning permission and then provide them access to capital to develop without the sorts of restrictions that the affordable homes programme has; and then a research programme because part of it is that we are still not exactly sure how all this needs to work and we need to be continually monitoring, evaluating, researching it and adjusting the structure of it all as we go along.

Nicky Gavron AM: Really the idea of capital funds until you get to planning and that support which is really important - it is almost the Valley of Death equivalent, is it not, really a difficult area - I like very much. Calum [Green]?

Calum Green (Communities and Campaigns Director, St Clements Community Land Trust and Citizens UK): We took advice on the Act and it does not have a significant impact on our current model and the way we deliver homes. Tom [Chance] has mentioned the £60 million; that is a somewhat significant thing and, yes, there is a question about how it gets spent the next time around. We have been part of applying for it in the first round in a couple of boroughs, but it was very varied. Some local authorities were very aware it was coming and some local authorities were not aware it was coming. Yes, there is a question about the best way it can filter down so that people can access it in a way that is helpful.

Nicky Gavron AM: OK. I am not going to extend that, but I will extend the next question. Our final question is: the Mayor is bringing out his London Plan later this year. This is a huge policy window this year for London, for Londoners and, of course, for the Mayor. All his strategies are up for review. The housing strategy is coming out, too.

What would be your pitch? Let us try Calum [Green]. What would be your pitch to the Mayor in terms of what he should be doing in the London Plan and the Housing Strategy? What would you like to see? There is very little mention of CLT.

Calum Green (Communities and Campaigns Director, St Clements Community Land Trust and Citizens UK): Yes, I would describe it as I did earlier, which is that this is the way to get Londoners involved and backing his rather ambitious plans for delivering genuine and permanent affordable housing across the city; that there should be a strand of community-led housing running throughout the London Plan to make sure that people are bought in and support it; and that there is a clear plan around land, finance and planning. The London Plan will already have that planning in some way, but there is a clear strategy around finance and breaking the back ideally of pension funds and land, about a preference if a local group is interested in land; that there should be some kind of concept of first dibs on it. If you already live in the area, you should have a say about how a particular bit of land is delivered if you have already identified it as something that you are already keen on.

Nicky Gavron AM: Now, Tom [Chance], policies. What policies would you like to see in housing initiatives and the Housing Strategy and in the London Plan? What mentions would you like to see because there are hardly any in there?

Tom Chance (Grants and Development Manager, National Community Land Trust Network): One very small one would be to include the sector's definition of 'community-led housing' in the Strategy. There is often a lot of confusion about what it means, and once you put money into policy against a concept, everybody says, "Oh, we do that". There is a sector definition of 'community-led housing' that would be good to have in the Housing Strategy and endorsed by the GLA.

The other thing is that actually the last mayoralty had all sorts of things about community involvement and engagement in the Housing Strategy, but none of them ever really had any teeth; none of them ever really were translated into money put into programmes or applied to any of his policies.

Looking across the Housing Strategy at things like Housing Zones, which would be perfect for this sort of approach, to look for opportunities for community-led development as part of Housing Zones or a community-led approach to the Housing Zone planning. Look at the London Housing Bank and therefore the Homes Programme as well as the innovation fund and how they could be used to support the sector. Basically, try to mainstream this across the different functions that the GLA has, rather than having a policy buried somewhere in the Housing Strategy. As we like community-led housing so much, it would be nice.

On Planning Policy, again where there are opportunities to say with things like estate regeneration, with Housing Zones, with publicly-owned land, the presumption that this is explored or if a community-led group comes forward that is properly incorporated and formed comes forward that they are considered. The proposal should be discussed with them. It could be really ambitious.

More general encouragement in the London Plan would be good and to date there has been next to no mention of us at all in planning policy. The Housing Strategy is more the place for it.

Nicky Gavron AM: You have to have a hook in the Plan.

Tom Chance (Grants and Development Manager, National Community Land Trust Network): Yes.

Nicky Gavron AM: You have to make a hook in the Plan. Do any other contributors have ideas of what you would like to see in the Housing Strategy or the London Plan?

Maria Brenton (Older Women's Co-Housing, Barnet): I would like to see a recognition of the wider social value of older people's housing and to take a broad-brush approach to it so that it is positively encouraged by - I do not know what is in the Mayor's powers, to be quite honest - making it exempt from section 106, exempt from the Community Infrastructure Levy (CIL), seen as a social good and a social asset that is going to have a knock-on effect along the line, freeing up family housing for people, providing for people's old age, and relieving pressures on the health and social care services. That social investment which you cannot put a cash value on should be expressed in making the planning restrictions easier for older people's building.

McCarthy & Stone has to go to appeal for 60% of its applications for housing for older people.

Nicky Gavron AM: Who?

Maria Brenton (Older Women's Co-Housing, Barnet): McCarthy & Stone.

Leonie Cooper AM: McCarthy & Stone. They are a specialist.

Maria Brenton (Older Women's Co-Housing, Barnet): A specialist provider has to go to appeal for 60% of its planning applications. There is a sort of built-in resistance to housing for older people and yet it is crazy.

Nicky Gavron AM: It is ageism.

Maria Brenton (Older Women's Co-Housing, Barnet): Yes, of course it is.

Nicky Gavron AM: And a lot of other things as well. That is really important. You are saying really good stuff here, Maria [Brenton]. This is really good.

Maria Brenton (Older Women's Co-Housing, Barnet): I am just saying: wider social value if we look at all the knock-on effects of older people being trapped in unsuitable housing and over-large housing. It is to everybody's benefit to free up the system. It is planners and developers who have the know-how, the tools and the instruments to do that rather than penalise it. Older people's housing is penalised in very many ways. It should not be made subject to deterrents and disincentives; it should be encouraged.

Tony Wood (Director, St Ann's Redevelopment Trust): The London Plan could include in sections on social infrastructure and retirement housing and so on the specialist housing needs that could encourage boroughs to explore these as part of how they address this issue. It could be mainstreamed in that way.

Nicky Gavron AM: Yes and this under-occupation is an area where we could push the downsizing argument as well. That is all very helpful. Other people?

Alex Smith (Chairman, Camley Street Community Land Trust): Certainly, there are two things, coming back to what Tom [Chance] said about the Community Housing Fund. Camden got just under £200,000 from the Community Housing Fund. It did not actually put it into community housing at all; it went into a general pot for rehabilitation which I thought was extremely disappointing.

The other thing is the GLA Innovation Fund. Again, I made an application to the Innovation Fund or we made an application to the Innovation Fund and we thought it would be providing support for innovative housing. It

actually was not. We had to be a registered provider. You have seen yourself how, if you are a registered provider under any circumstances, you are leaving yourself open to Right to Buy now. Being a registered provider is not a good route for many.

Nicky Gavron AM: I do not think you have to be a registered provider, do you, to go for the Innovation Fund?

Sian Berry AM (Chair): Even for the Innovation Fund?

Nicky Gavron AM: You do not have to be a registered provider to go for the Innovation Fund.

Alex Smith (Chairman, Camley Street Community Land Trust): You do not have to be but to get grants under the Innovation Fund, you do; to get loans under the Innovation Fund, you do not. We were hoping for a grant, but we could not get a grant because we are not a registered provider. We could apply for a small loan at quite high interest rates.

Nicky Gavron AM: Anyone else, just quickly? We have been given a little minute extra. Does anyone else have anything else to say about the pitch to the Mayor in terms of the London Plan and the Housing Strategy?

Ruth Moulton (Director, St Ann's Redevelopment Trust): Social value is really important. One of the things we want to do is have a health legacy and good relationships with the hospital we will be neighbours to, and we have stuff in our plans about that. Also, the environmental value. We have put a lot of planning into that for our site. We have a wonderful legacy there, which we want to maintain.

Finally, something about building communities. With a site our size, 800 homes, we have a real opportunity to have lifetime homes there with people being able to move around and build a real community there who will have control over their housing. There are those elements as well.

Nicky Gavron AM: Excellent. Can I just make one pitch and I will be about one minute? In a few weeks, the Planning Committee is bringing out its report on offsite housing and how the Mayor can help accelerate the taking up of precision-engineered -- these are not the boxy prefabs of the past. Just look at Bacton in Camden: very eco-efficient, very quick to put up and it might be something that you would want to look at. Also, lifetime homes; you can move the walls around inside. It could be very good. Just a plug for that, but very eco-efficient. Most of the bills are slashed. For a four-bed three-storey house or apartment, you are talking about £300 instead of £1,500. That is a lot of disposable income.

Tom Chance (Grants and Development Manager, National Community Land Trust Network): A number of CLTs in other parts of the country are looking at offsite manufacturing and talking to companies that do very high-spec classic houses offsite and so on.

Nicky Gavron AM: Brilliant.

Sian Berry AM (Chair): Thank you, Nicky. Thank you to all the guests. I realise we got to the end there and there may be other things you may want to suggest to us in terms of mayoral policies or planning policies. If there is, please do write in to us. We will take your submissions. Thank you all for your contributions.

Subject: Summary List of Actions

Report to: Housing Committee

Report of: Executive Director of Secretariat

Date: 5 September 2017

This report will be considered in public

1. Summary

1.1 This report sets out actions arising from previous meetings of the Housing Committee.

2. Recommendation

2.1 **That the Committee notes the completed and outstanding actions arising from its previous meetings.**

Actions Arising from the Meeting of 27 June 2017

Minute Number	Topic	Status	For action by
5.	Tackling 'Hidden Homelessness Authority was delegated to the Chair, in consultation with party Group Lead Members, to agree any output from the discussion.	Ongoing.	Scrutiny Manager

Actions Arising from the Meeting of 28 February 2017

Minute Number	Topic	Status	For action by
7.	<p>Rough Sleeping Update</p> <p>During the course of the discussion, the Services and Commissioning Manager, Greater London Authority (GLA) committed to provide the following additional information:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Details of the rough sleeping services commissioned by the GLA, including an organisational chart demonstrating the GLA's and other organisations' roles in coordinating these services; and • Borough-by-borough statistics on referrals to Street Link and associated outcomes. 	In progress. The Chair has written to request this additional information.	Services and Commissioning Manager, GLA
	<p>During the course of the discussion, the Street Population Coordinator, London Borough of Tower Hamlets undertook to provide a copy of the London Borough of Tower Hamlets' response to the Homelessness Reduction Bill.</p>	In progress. The Chair has written to request this additional information.	Street Population Coordinator, London Borough of Tower Hamlets
	<p>Authority was delegated to the Chair, Andrew Boff AM, in consultation with party Group Lead Members, to agree any output arising from the discussion.</p>	In progress.	Scrutiny Manager

Actions Arising from the Meeting of 24 January 2017

Minute Number	Topic	Status	For action by
6.	<p>Mayor's Affordable Housing and Viability Supplementary Planning Guidance and Funding for Affordable Housing</p> <p>During the course of the discussion, the Chief Executive, London & Quadrant (L&Q) undertook to confirm the percentage of affordable homes delivered in the last year that were built in London by g15.</p>	Completed. Attached as Appendix 1 .	L&Q

Actions Arising from the Meeting of 6 December 2016

Minute Number	Topic	Status	For action by
5.	<p>Building Smaller Homes to Combat the Housing Crisis</p> <p>Authority was delegated to the Chair, in consultation with party Group Lead Members, to agree any output from the discussion.</p>	In progress.	Scrutiny Manager

Actions Arising from the Meeting of 1 November 2016

Minute Number	Topic	Status	For action by
6.	<p>Making Transport for London (TfL) land work for Londoners</p> <p>During the discussion, invited guests undertook to:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Discuss with the Deputy Mayor for Planning, Regeneration and Skills the Committee's request to consider the detail included in, and provide input into, the London Plan review, particularly any section that relates to housing, before the draft is published in 2017; 	In progress. The Chair has written to request this information.	Deputy Mayor for Housing and Residential Development
	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Consider, as a part of the skills and capacity audit, appointing one full-time equivalent member of staff to work with small and medium enterprises, housing associations, local authorities and smaller developers to help identify smaller sites and bring development forward; 	In progress. The Chair has written to request this information.	Assistant Director, Strategic Projects and Property
	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Provide the Committee with the key milestones and targets in relation to TfL's target of 10,000 starts by 2020, both for the following six months, and more broadly to 2020; 	In progress. The Chair has written to request this information.	Property Development Director, TfL

	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Clarify whether the 50% 'genuinely affordable' homes in the 10,000 target applied to units, or to habitable rooms; and • Share with the Committee TfL's appraisal of OPEN Dalston's proposals to recycle heat and carbon dioxide (CO₂), and to capture CO₂ for local housing. <p>Authority was delegated to the Chair, in consultation with party Group Lead Members, to agree any output from the discussion.</p>	<p>In progress. The Chair has written to request this information.</p> <p>In progress. The Chair has written to request this information.</p> <p>In progress.</p>	<p>Property Development Director, TfL</p> <p>Property Development Director, TfL</p> <p>Scrutiny Manager</p>
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3. Legal Implications

3.1 The Committee has the power to do what is recommended in this report.

4. Financial Implications

4.1 There are no financial implications to the GLA arising from this report.

List of appendices to this report:

No background papers.

Local Government (Access to Information) Act 1985	
List of Background Papers: None	
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g15 Response

At the 24 January 2017 meeting of the Housing Committee, it was requested that additional information be provided on the number of affordable homes delivered by g15, the 15 biggest housing associations in London. The below figures relate to the financial year 2016/17.

	In London	In England (Overall)
Starts	10,717	15,759
Handovers	7,226	9,550

60% of starts are considered affordable, of which 25% were affordable rent.

70% of handovers are considered affordable, of which 40% were affordable rent.

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Subject: Property Guardianship in London	
Report to: Housing Committee	
Report of: Executive Director of Secretariat	Date: 5 September 2017
This report will be considered in public	

1. Summary

- 1.1 This report sets out the background information for a discussion with invited guests on property guardianship in London.

2. Recommendation

- 2.1 **That the Committee notes the report as background to putting questions to the invited guests on property guardianship in London.**

3. Background

- 3.1 London is in a housing crisis. An increasing population coupled with a lack of affordable housing has led to problems of affordability for many in the capital. Security companies offering property guardian services have stepped in to fill this gap in the housing market. Guardianship offers accommodation at cheaper costs than the mainstream private rented sector (PRS) in return for protecting vacant property.
- 3.2 Ongoing pressures of the housing crisis have created a growing demand for guardianship opportunities and the number of companies providing guardian services has grown rapidly. The Mayor has the potential to lead policymaking around guardianship, ensuring that this rapidly growing sector does not exploit those with few choices living in London, while seeking to maintain the advantages it can offer.

4. Issues for Consideration

- 4.2 The total number of property guardians in London is unknown. In 2015 it was estimated there were approximately 4,000 guardians in the UK.¹ In 2016 there were approximately 1,000 guardians protecting local authority buildings in London alone.²
- 4.3 A wide range of people become property guardians. According to written submissions to the committee's investigation, guardians can range in age from 20 to 70 with an equal split between males and females. Guardians also have a wide range of jobs, from key workers to creatives.

¹ [The Guardian, 2015, Property guardians: a solution to the UK's housing crisis?](#)

² Sian Berry AM Freedom of Information request
City Hall, The Queen's Walk, London SE1 2AA

The benefits of guardianship

- 4.2 For guardians themselves, the overwhelming reason given for taking on the role is the lower cost of housing compared to the mainstream private rented sector (PRS). However, the cost of guardianship is increasing, with some rooms being advertised at a similar cost to those in the PRS. For property owners, guardianship is seen as a favourable way to protect vacant property. This model of property protection can be an efficient use of vacant space, beneficial for the community and local authority. A continued presence in the community may mean that shops stay open and there is less chance of anti-social behaviour. The occupation of vacant property also creates an income for local authorities from council tax payments.

The legal rights of guardians

- 4.3 Property guardians are issued with a licence to occupy instead of the Assured Shorthold Tenancy (AST) which is commonplace in the PRS. Like an AST, these licences are protected by the Protection from Eviction Act 1977, requiring that a licensee is given a minimum of 28 days' notice before being asked to vacate a property. However, it appears that some property guardian companies may be evicting guardians illegally, giving them less than the minimum 28 days' notice required.

Property conditions

- 4.4 There are no specific standards or guidance on conditions for guardian properties and how these should be defined and treated by local authority housing enforcement teams.³ Environmental health officers use the Housing Act 2004 to enforce against properties protected by property guardians.
- 4.5 The Committee has received written evidence from a range of property guardian companies which describe a variety of works that they carry out to make sure properties are 'safe, habitable and secure'.⁴ These include cleaning, asbestos and legionella testing, electrical and gas safety tests and fire safety.⁵ However, the committee has received responses from current and former guardians highlighting ongoing concerns about the condition of properties.

Best practice

- 4.6 Parts of the property guardian sector have recognised some of these issues and are looking to improve conditions for property guardians. Some guardian companies have formed internal charters or standards, for example, Ad Hoc and Dot Dot Dot, which allow guardians to hold them to account. Several companies within the sector are also looking to form a Guardian Association which will champion best practice and establish minimum standards in the industry. Despite moves to improve the sector, some companies express concerns as to how effective self-regulation will be in improving standards.
- 4.7 The British Security Industry Association (BSIA) has also recognised a need to ensure there are minimum standards in the sector. The BSIA has developed a British Standard Vacant Property Protection code of practice to provide guidance for various methods of vacant property protection, including property guardianship. The guidelines for property guardianship include information on the preparation of properties before guardians move in, for example with respect to fire safety and appropriate facilities, property inspection and compliance, and property guardian conduct. However, this code of practice is not mandatory and only acts as guidance for property guardian companies.

³ Chartered Institute of Environmental Health written submission to London Assembly investigation

⁴ Global guardians written submission to London Assembly investigation

⁵ Numerous property guardian company submissions to London Assembly investigation

Terms or reference

4.8 The terms of reference for this investigation are:

- To identify the extent of property guardianship in London, highlight good and bad practice and emerging self-regulation in the sector;
- To examine the impact of property guardianship on Londoners, including local authorities, communities, businesses and property security companies; and
- To consider the effectiveness of current legislation and whether it protects property guardians adequately.

Invited guests

4.9 A panel of guests has been invited to discuss these issues with the committee, including:

- Professor Caroline Hunter and Jed Meers, York Law School, University of York;
- Lord Kennedy of Southwark, Shadow Spokesperson (Communities and Local Government, Housing and Home Affairs) and Opposition Whip (Lords);
- Rubina Nisar, Valuation and Strategic Assets, London Borough of Lambeth;
- Jon Castine, Environmental Health Officer, Westminster City Council; and
- Stuart Woolgar, Representative of the BSIA Vacant Property Protection section, and Director of Global Guardians.

5. Legal Implications

5.1 The Committee has the power to do what is recommended in this report.

6. Financial Implications

6.1 There are no direct financial implications to the Greater London Authority arising from this report.

List of appendices to this report:

None.

Local Government (Access to Information) Act 1985
List of Background Papers: None
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Subject: Housing Committee Work Programme	
Report to: Housing Committee	
Report of: Executive Director of Secretariat	Date: 5 September 2017
This report will be considered in public	

1. Summary

1.1 The Committee receives a report monitoring the progress of its work programme at each meeting.

2. Recommendation

2.1 **That the Committee agrees the update to the work programme for the 2017/18 Assembly Year, as set out in paragraphs 4.1 to 4.4 of the report.**

3. Background

3.1 Members receive a report at each Committee meeting on the progress of the projects agreed as the basis for the work programme. Additional projects will be included in the work programme from time to time reflecting the need for the Committee to respond to tasks such as consultations or other events as necessary.

3.2 *Criteria for topic selection*

The criteria for selecting topics are some, or all, of the following:

(a) Addresses a strategic challenge relating to housing in London, with a particular emphasis on:

- developing and maintaining sustainable communities; and
- reducing inequalities and offering opportunities to all Londoners.

(b) Relates to the responsibilities and priorities of the Mayor and Greater London Authority (GLA) Group;

(c) Provides an opportunity for the Committee to influence policy; and

(d) Provides an opportunity for the Committee to add value by bringing significant new evidence or new perspectives to the debate.

4. Issues for Consideration

Provisional timetable for 2017/18

- 4.1 The table below sets out the allocated dates for the Housing Committee in 2017/18. The table notes suggested business for the meetings up to November 2017.
- 4.2 The work programme is subject to change in future as the Committee develops proposals for its work. Dates may be used for formal committee meetings, informal meetings, site visits or other activities for the Committee. The work programme also provides for the Committee to respond to any matters that arise during the year.
- 4.3 The publication of the draft London Housing Strategy is now likely to be later than previously expected. As a result, it is now proposed that the Committee use its November meeting slot to discuss the new draft strategy.
- 4.4 This would leave the October slot free. During its July meeting, the Committee heard from representatives of a range of different community-led housing projects. Members did not have an opportunity at that meeting to hear from housing co-operatives. It is therefore proposed that the Committee continue its investigation into community-led housing in the October session. Representatives of the housing co-operative movement would be invited to discuss how they have successfully overcome the barriers to developing community-led homes in London. The Committee could then discuss what further policy measures are needed to help break down these barriers with them and other invited guests. These might include GLA staff supporting the Mayor's new community housing hub and organisations and individuals helping to finance and nurture community-led schemes.

Meeting Date	Proposed topic
5 September 2017	Property Guardians
5 October 2017	Community-led housing
8 November 2017	Housing Strategy
5 December 2017	To be confirmed
23 January 2018	To be confirmed
27 February 2018	To be confirmed
15 March 2018	To be confirmed

5. Legal Implications

- 5.1 The Committee has the power to do what is recommended in the report.

6. Financial Implications

6.1 There are no financial implications arising from this report.

List of appendices to this report: None

Local Government (Access to Information) Act 1985
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List of Background Papers: None

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