

For General Release

REPORT TO:	CABINET 15 July 2013
AGENDA ITEM:	13
SUBJECT:	Proposed change of use of Gillett Road retirement housing scheme to generals needs temporary accommodation for homeless families with children
LEAD OFFICER:	Hannah Miller, Deputy Chief Executive & Executive Director Adult Services Health and Housing
CABINET MEMBER:	Councillor Dudley Mead, Deputy Leader (Statutory) (Capital Budget and Asset Management) and Cabinet Member for housing
WARDS:	Thornton Heath

CORPORATE PRIORITY/POLICY CONTEXT

Delivering high quality public services

Improving value for money

Achieving better outcomes for children and young people

Improving health and well being

FINANCIAL IMPACT

Implementation of preferred option (option 2) by September 2013 would deliver savings to the Council. A cost savings summary which details a range of scenarios and assumptions is provided as **appendix 1**. Based on these, a minimum saving of £13,680 could accrue to the General Fund in 2013/14 followed by an annual saving of £218,800 2014/15, rising to £360,000 in 2015/16 and each year thereafter. A cost of £305,000 will be incurred in respect of an initial investment and it would be appropriate to meet this cost through the housing revenue account; this will be more than offset by the longer term savings.

KEY DECISION REFERENCE NO. 1242

This is a key decision as defined in the council's constitution. The decision may be implemented from 1300 hours on the 5th working day after it is made, unless the decision is referred to the Scrutiny & Strategic Overview Committee by the requisite number of Councillors.

The Leader of the Council has delegated to the Cabinet the power to make the decisions set out in the recommendations below:

1. RECOMMENDATIONS

The Cabinet is recommended to:

- 1.1 Consider the responses to the consultation on the proposal to change the use of Gillett Road retirement housing block (Gillett Road) to general needs temporary accommodation for homeless families with children and officers comments on these as detailed in the report and appendices.
- 1.2 Consider the equality impact assessment relating to this proposal at **Appendix 3 (e-copy only)**.
- 1.3 Agree that Gillett Road retirement housing scheme be converted to general needs housing for use as temporary accommodation for homeless households in priority need (Option 2 for consultation purposes), and to note that existing tenants will be given the choice of remaining in the scheme or moving to alternative accommodation(with support provided).
- 1.4 Subject to the above, agree:
 - 1.4.1 To implementation of the activities and processes from September 2013 to realise the effects of change of use to general needs temporary accommodation as soon as possible.
 - 1.4.2 To implement the actions proposed at **Appendix 8 (e-copy only)** to mitigate the concerns raised by existing tenants.
 - 1.4.3 To commit an average sum of £4,000 per household to cover the costs associated with resettling the existing tenants who choose to move to alternative accommodation on the basis of the Re-housing Policy and Procedure at Appendix 4.
 - 1.4.4 That the Executive Director for Adult services health and housing in consultation with the Deputy Leader (Statutory) (Capital Budget and Asset Management) and Cabinet Member for Housing be delegated authority to agree any further steps necessary for the implementation of the Option 2.

2. EXECUTIVE SUMMARY

- 2.1 This report provides an overview of the results of the consultation and presents a series of recommendations including a recommended option as a way forward.

- 2.2 Demand from statutory homeless households has been rising at a significant rate, and the council is experiencing increasing difficulty in meeting its statutory duties towards homeless households in priority need.

One particular manifestation of this growing need is increasing reliance on non self-contained bed and breakfast accommodation for families with children, clearly not a suitable type of housing for anything but very short periods. As well as developing a programme of measures to increase access to self-contained private sector housing, the council is also seeking to make the most effective use of its own housing stock. There is an imbalance between the supply of retirement housing and that of general needs housing; the average wait for retirement housing ranges from one month to just under two years as opposed to between eight months and 11 years for a one-bedroom general needs property, this waiting time being greater again for family-sized homes. At the same time, some retirement housing schemes are unpopular with housing applicants and therefore difficult to let. Whilst acknowledging the importance of retirement housing in meeting the needs of older people, a modest level of conversion to general needs housing will help to rebalance the stock and better manage the increasing homelessness problem, and ensure that the council can fulfil its statutory obligations.

- 2.3 Consultation with residents at Gillett Road retirement scheme started on Thursday 7 March 2012 and ended on Monday 8 April 2013 and the full results from the survey are provided at **Appendix 5**.
- 2.4 A record of the issues raised and comments made at the public meeting on 16 May 2012 is provided at **Appendix 7**. A summary of the results is provided in section 4.4.
- 2.5 The survey results indicate an overwhelming preference to maintain the status quo, with 92% of respondents indicating that they fully disagree with the proposed change of use to Gillett Road. Only 4% partially agreed and another 4% fully agreed with the proposed change.
- 2.6 However, the rationale for the proposal - contributing to a reduction in the reliance on bed and breakfast accommodation and helping to limit the length of time that families must stay in bed and breakfast - is very compelling. Gillett Road would provide a safe alternative to bed and breakfast hotels by providing self-contained flats which meet the Decent Home Standard and which will be suitable for stays of longer than a few days or weeks.
- 2.7 Of 66 properties at Gillett Road, 6 are vacant and 12 tenants have indicated that they would like to relocate if the use of the block were to change. Additional vacancies would arise due to natural turnover.
- 2.8 A full Equalities Impact Assessment (EqIA) has been undertaken in respect of the recommended option and with reference to the results and issues raised are provided at **Appendix 2**. The EqIA does indicate negative impacts however, as detailed in Section 3 of the EqIA, there are measures that would be taken to eliminate or mitigate those impacts.

2.9 To summarise, three measures would help to mitigate the negative impact on the existing tenants making the option to convert a much more palatable choice. The first is that each tenant will be able to choose for her/himself whether to remain or whether to request alternative housing.

The second is a programme of measures which will on the one hand remove or reduce the possible problems at the scheme (such as anti-social behaviour or access for the existing tenants to communal facilities) and, on the other, ensure support, including a financial package for people who move elsewhere. The third measure is that available in the placement of families at Gillett Road, greater sensitivity will be applied in the selection of families to ensure that any problems are not exacerbated.

2.10 A cost savings summary is provided at **Appendix 1** and sets out a range of scenarios and assumptions. Based on these factors, a minimum saving of £13,680 could accrue to the General Fund in 2013/14 followed by a saving of £218,800 in 2014/15, rising to £360,000 in 2015/16 and each year thereafter. The summary illustrates that although there will be a cost implication, this will be more than offset by longer term savings. Given the nature of the costs which are directly related to council tenants and properties, it is appropriate that these are met from the housing revenue account.

2.11 Therefore, it is recommended that option 2 be progressed.

3. DETAIL

Background to the proposal

3.1 The council is currently experiencing a serious homelessness problem as a result of an increase in demand at the same time as a reduction in housing supply available to the council. A range of factors has contributed to this. The economic downturn has meant that many households are struggling to manage financially and finding the private sector increasingly unaffordable. An increase in the London population, not matched by the growth in the housing stock, has served to force up house prices and private rents as a result of supply and demand imbalances. Private landlords now have more options open to them and the attractiveness of letting to low income or benefit-dependent households (whether directly or via schemes run by the council or housing associations) has diminished, partly because there are more better-off households now looking to rent, and partly because of changes to the housing benefit system (limiting eligible rents to 30% of the local housing allowance rates, the benefit cap and the impending introduction of direct payments to tenants being the main ones). The social housing stock in Croydon is, as a proportion of the total stock, fairly small compared with other London boroughs. As a result, the council relies heavily on private rented housing for accommodation for homeless households and so is suffering disproportionately from the buoyancy in this sector and the falling interest amongst private landlords of letting to our nominees.

3.2 As a result, increasing numbers of homeless families are being housed in bed

and breakfast hotels. This position is not sustainable. Accommodation with shared facilities is not suitable for families with or expecting children for anything but very short periods. Local authorities can only place families in B&B hotels for a maximum of six weeks according to the Homelessness (Suitability of Accommodation) (England) Order 2003. Exceeding this period means that the council is at risk of legal challenge by way of judicial reviews. And there are also financial implications: the average daily cost per family is £15.20 not all of which is covered by housing benefit so the council has to make up the shortfall. A range of measures has reduced the number of households exceeding the six week limit in shared accommodation from 197 at end of September 2012 to two in June 2013. However, there remain pressures of demand and it is expected that these will continue for the foreseeable future. Whilst not exceeding the six-week limit, 229 homeless households are nevertheless living for socially unacceptable periods in shared accommodation experiencing cramped conditions unsuitable for children; and, overall, 1900 families are placed in temporary accommodation.

- 3.3 At the same time, because the expectations and aspirations of many older people have changed and because there are many initiatives now which make it easier for people to stay put in their own homes, some retirement housing blocks have become difficult to let as evidenced by the number of people flats are offered to before someone accepts. Where people have expressed an interest in retirement housing, the main requirement is for ground floor housing, in a quiet neighbourhood close to shops; high-rise schemes in particular do not therefore meet people's preferences. The average wait for retirement housing ranges from one month to just under two years as opposed to between 8 months and 11 years for a 1 bedroom general needs property. For family housing, the wait can be even longer.
- 3.4 Amongst the measures looked at to help alleviate the housing shortage for homeless families, therefore, was the proposal to convert a retirement scheme to general needs accommodation. An appraisal of 11 retirement schemes (all high-rise blocks) was undertaken in order to identify the most suitable scheme which would have the least impact on existing and future older tenants. A range of factors was considered: the number of units in each scheme, the availability of alternative accommodation nearby, the number of adapted properties, age profile of existing tenants and the dependency levels of scheme residents. From a final shortlist of four blocks, Gillett Road was considered to be the most suitable.

4. CONSULTATION

- 4.1 Consultation with residents at Gillett Road retirement housing scheme started on Thursday 7 March 2012 and ended on Monday 8 April 2013 and the full results of the questionnaire survey are provided at **Appendix 5 (e-copy only)**.
- 4.2 The purpose of the consultation was to seek the views of the residents of Gillett Road on the proposal and options presented and fulfil the Council's obligation under Section 105 of the Housing Act 1985 which applies to secure tenancies. Under this legislation, landlords are obliged to make arrangements to carry out

consultation with tenants on matters of housing management.

4.3 Consultation approach

The following methods were used to consult with the tenants:

- The consultation was publicised by sending letters with an accompanying flyer to all the existing tenants at Gillett Road inviting them and their families and/or carers to attend one of two briefing sessions. Both meetings took place on 7 March 2013 and were facilitated by the DASHH Resident Involvement Team.
- A questionnaire was developed to provide a standard format through which the tenants could submit their views.
- A full consultation pack was posted directly to all tenants at Gillett Road. These documents are provided as **Appendix 9 and 10**.
- Face to face – to ensure that as many tenants at Gillett Road block participated, three visits were made to the block on different days and times. Tenants were informed in advance of when officers would be visiting. Where there was no response, slips were left encouraging people to get in touch if they needed help or further guidance on how to complete the questionnaire.
- The consultation began on Thursday 7 March and ended on Monday 8 April 2013.

4.3.1 Level of response

At the time of the consultation 62 households were in occupation and 51 (82%) returned the questionnaire. However, not all respondents answered all of the questions and therefore there are variations in the total number of responses in the survey findings.

4.3.2 Consultation results

A record of the issues raised and comments made at the two meetings held on 7 March 2013 is attached as **Appendix 7** and the full results of the questionnaire survey are attached as **Appendix 5**. Only one letter was received in response to the consultation and this is included in Appendix 5. What follows here is a summary of the key points emerging from the survey questionnaire and letter.

4.3.3 Survey Respondents

- 23% (10) of respondents were aged 55-65. 36% (15) were 65 – 74, 31% (13) and 10% (4 respondents) were over the age of 84.
- 67% (15 households) of respondents who answered the ethnicity question described themselves as being from one of the BME groups. 33% described themselves as white.
- 69% of respondents (27) said that their activities were limited a lot due to health problems or disability.

4.3.4 Survey options and impacts

The following three options were presented and respondents were asked their views including the level of impact:

Option 1: Keep Gillett Road and all other retirement housing schemes as retirement housing (in other words do nothing)

Option 2: Change the use of Gillett Road retirement housing scheme to general needs housing

Option 3: Retain Gillett Road as retirement housing but change the use of another retirement housing block to general needs housing

4.4 Summary of responses to the options presented

Option 1

48 out of 51 respondents put forward their views. Virtually all of the comments were in support of keeping Gillett Road and other retirement housing as is (unchanged). Only one respondent said that they didn't mind.

Option 2

- 92% of respondents fully disagree that the use of Gillett Road should be changed. 4% partially agreed and another 4% fully agreed with the proposed change.
- 69% (27) of respondents said that they would prefer to stay; the other 31% of respondents (12) said that they would prefer to move to alternative accommodation.
- 96% of respondents who answered the question said that having families with children living in the block whilst they (the older residents) were still living there would have a negative impact on them. 4% of respondents said that it would have a positive impact.

Option 3

- 60% of respondents said that they didn't know which of the other retirement housing blocks should have its use changed to general needs temporary accommodation.
- 26% said that none of the retirement blocks should have its use changed.
- Two households said that if there had to be a change, then it should be Sevenoaks and Tonbridge House based on the information given.

4.4.1 As part of their questionnaire responses, respondents highlighted a number of reasons for their views about the proposal and options presented to them and these have been broken down into 11 themes which are listed below:

- Facilities and services: laundry, common room, lifts and potential damage to these facilities.
- Anti-social behaviour: noise nuisance and unknown visitors to the block
- Personal health: perceived effect on the respondent's health, potential effect on existing illnesses.
- Personal safety: fear and anxiety, concerns about intimidation and personal safety.
- Hazards: children running around, elderly tenants being knocked over by children.
- The building: one bedroom flats and overcrowding.
- Life style differences: incompatibility of younger and older residents.
- Illegal activity: drugs on premises, drug use, theft.
- Maintenance: maintenance of building, cleaning and tidiness of the block
- General upheaval: moving away from Gillett Road to alternative accommodation, loss of support network, cost of moving.
- Local facilities: proximity to local shops, proximity to transport, near to buses and bus stops, GP surgery and religious temple.

The actual comments made by respondents by question can be found in **Appendix 5**. The responses by theme are provided as **Appendix 6**.

4.5 Tenant concerns and mitigating actions

- 4.5.1 The survey results indicate an overwhelming preference to maintain the status quo and it is acknowledged that the existing tenants have a range of valid concerns and anxieties, and that the impact on them could well be a negative one. However, this impact must be weighed against the very positive impact which Option 2 would have on homeless families with or expecting children who would benefit from more suitable and better quality housing. Based on the feedback from the tenants, it is considered that a number of measures could be introduced which would help to reduce or remove the problems anticipated thereby mitigating or even negating the adverse impact.
- 4.5.2 The main reasons for objection appear to concern various forms of anti-social behaviour, access to the existing facilities and services, the perceived disruption of moving to alternative accommodation, and concern about the impact that the change and/or moving could have on their health and well-being.
- 4.5.3 Three measures would help to mitigate the negative impact on the existing tenants making the option to convert a much more palatable choice. The first is that each tenant will be able to choose for her/himself whether to remain or whether to request alternative housing. The second is a programme of measures which will on the one hand remove or reduce the possible problems at the scheme (such as anti-social behaviour or access for the existing tenants to communal facilities) and, on the other, ensure support, including a financial package for people who move elsewhere. The third measure is that available in the placement of families at Gillett Road, greater sensitivity will be applied in the selection of families to ensure that any problems are not exacerbated.

- 4.5.4 Should the decision be made to change the use of Gillett Road, existing tenants would be given the option to relocate to alternative accommodation (previous refurbishment projects where older people were successfully re-settled in alternative suitable accommodation provide a good model). A number of tenants have indicated that they would like to move to alternative accommodation if the use of the block is to be changed. Where they choose to do so, additional help and financial assistance will be provided in accordance with the procedure and policy at **Appendix 4**.
- 4.5.5 Responses and proposed mitigating measures are attached at **Appendix 8** as well as in section 3 of the equality impact assessment (**Appendix 2**).

5 FINANCIAL AND RISK ASSESSMENT CONSIDERATIONS

1 Revenue and Capital consequences of report recommendations

	Current year	Medium Term Financial Strategy – 3 year forecast		
	2013/14 £'000	2014/15 £'000	2015/16 £'000	2016/17 £'000
Revenue Budget available				
Expenditure	11,741	11,741	11,741	11,741
Income	(8,680)	(8,680)	(8,680)	(8,680)
Effect of decision from report				
Expenditure	85.5	110	110	0
<i>Savings from change of use</i>	(13.6)	(218)	(360)	(360)
Remaining budget	<u>2,989.1</u>	<u>3,169</u>	<u>3,311</u>	<u>3,421</u>
Capital Budget available				
Expenditure	0	0	0	0
Effect of decision from report				
Expenditure	0	0	0	0
Remaining budget	<u>0</u>	<u>0</u>	<u>0</u>	<u>0</u>

2 The effect of the decision

Implementation of preferred option (option 2) by September 2013 would deliver savings to the Council. A cost savings summary is provided as **appendix 1** and covers a range of scenarios and assumptions. Based on these, a minimum saving of £13,680 could accrue to the General Fund in 2013/14 followed by an annual saving of £218,800 2014/15, rising to £360,000 in 2015/16 and each year thereafter.

It has been assumed that in each year a certain number of vacancies will arise due to a number of factors ie. tenants choose to move, due to natural turnover and/or due to tenants deciding to move once the status of the block has changed and families begin to move in.

A cost of £305,000 will be incurred in respect of an initial investment and it would be appropriate to meet this cost through the housing revenue account; this will be more than offset by the longer term savings. It has been assumed that relocation of each household will cost an average of £4,000 and this is based on the actual cost of resettling tenants to facilitate works at Kuala Gardens retirement housing scheme.

If option 2 was chosen, each homeless household housed at Gillett Road for 180 days (6 months) would result in an average saving to the Council an of £2,736. This is based on an actual average loss to the Council of £15.20 per day per household.

3 Risks

The following risks have been identified in terms of the recommendations in this report:

- The estimated number of voids Gillett Road, in excess of the current six properties, do not materialise within the required timeframe.
- Suitable void properties, which would meet the needs and preferences of tenants wishing to move out, do not become available
- The mitigating measures do not quell the causes of friction resulting from mixing different household types or do not deal with the fears felt on the part of the older residents
- Discontent due to disparity in the support charges paid by tenants in general needs accommodation or their own homes compared with retirement housing.
- Changes to housing benefit rules regarding funding of concierge in that, current rules allow such cost to be covered by housing benefit as long as there is a clear rationale and justification for the provision of services of this type.
- Should the risks above materialize, there would be negative publicity and media coverage with an adverse impact on the reputation of the council.

4 Options

These are detailed and reviewed in sections 4.3.4 to 4.4.1 above.

5 Future savings/efficiencies

Option 2 would deliver an average saving to the Council's general fund of £2,736 per household. This is based on each household being in occupation for a period of 6 months and an average loss to the Council of £15.20 per day per household and

A minimum saving of £13,680 could accrue to the General Fund in 2013/14 followed by a saving of £218,800 in 2014/15, rising to £360,000 in 2015/16 and each year thereafter. The cost savings summary provided as **appendix 1** covers a range of scenarios and assumptions used to arrive at the savings predicted.

(Approved by: Paul Heynes, Head of Finance – DASHH, Interim Chief Executives Department on behalf of the Director of Finance)

6. COMMENTS OF THE COUNCIL SOLICITOR AND MONITORING OFFICER

- 6.1. The Council Solicitor comments that the Local Government Act 1999 which sets out the duty of Best Value means local authorities must show that their services have been influenced by residents' views, and provide the best possible value.
- 6.2 Case law has also emphasised the duty to consult properly, the key elements of which can be summarised as:
- Consult when proposals are at the formative stage;
 - Reasons for proposed changes should be given;
 - Options should be given including the option to do nothing;
 - Sufficient time should be given;
 - Full information should be given, not partial.
- 6.3 In respect of the Council's public sector equalities duty under s.149 of the Equality Act 2010 (**Appendix 3**), and when considering the proposals in this report, the Cabinet must have 'due regard' to the protected characteristics and the specific needs of those within these groups that may arise. Insofar as this decision may affect large numbers of vulnerable people, many of whom have one or more of the protected characteristics, the 'due regard' necessary is very high.
- 6.4 While the Council is entitled to take into account the pressure on resources it is also important to ensure that the outcomes of the consultation, the EqlAs and its statutory equalities duties (Appendix 3) are fully considered in reaching the decision as to the future of the block.
- 6.5 There are also particular requirements where the service in question may affect those with a disability. As a protected characteristic under the Equality Act, the obligation under s.129 (3)(b) to take steps to meet those needs that are different from the needs of persons who are not disabled include, in particular, steps to take account of disabled persons' disabilities.
- This duty must be 'exercised in substance with rigour and an open mind' and goes beyond mere reference to, or a general awareness of, the decision makers to the existence of the duty.
 - Those with a disability who may form part of the particular the group of service users being consulted, should be consulted not only as part of the group as a whole but in a way that shows due regard to the need to take account of their disabilities, even where that may require more favourable treatment than other persons.
- 6.6 Relevant Human Rights issues are considered below.

(Approved by: Gabriel MacGregor, Head of Corporate Law on behalf of the Council Solicitor & Monitoring Officer)

7. HUMAN RESOURCES IMPACT

- 7.1 There are no immediate HR issues that arise from the recommendations of this report.

(Approved by: Michael Pichamuthu on behalf of the Director of Workforce)

8. EQUALITIES IMPACT

- 8.1 **Appendix 3** is an Equalities Impact Assessment on the recommended course of action.

9. ENVIRONMENTAL IMPACT

- 9.1 There is no direct environmental impact arising from the recommendations in this report.

10. CRIME AND DISORDER REDUCTION IMPACT

- 10.1 There is no direct crime and disorder impact arising from the recommendations in this report.

11. HUMAN RIGHTS IMPACT

- 11.1 In relation to the proposal the most relevant Articles of the European Convention on Human Rights are Article 8 (Right to respect for private and family life and home) and Article 14 (prohibition of discrimination).
- 11.2 In relation to Article 8 the consultation and mitigating actions proposed should ensure that the impact of any changes does not infringe their rights.
- 11.3 In relation to Article 14, updating the Equality Impact Assessment during, and at the end of, the consultation period has enabled any issues of discrimination, particularly in relation to disability, to be dealt with appropriately and address concerns that were raised during consultation.

12. REASONS FOR RECOMMENDATIONS/PROPOSED DECISION

- 12.1 Demand from statutory homeless households is at critical levels and the provision plan suggests increasing difficulty in meeting the duty to homeless applicants with families. Changing the use of Gillett Road will provide a supply of cost effective Council owned general needs temporary accommodation and reduce its reliance on unsuitable bed and breakfast accommodation.

13. OPTIONS CONSIDERED AND REJECTED

13.1 These are detailed within paragraph 4.3.4 to 4.4.1 of this report.

CONTACT OFFICER: Leonard Asamoah, Head of housing solutions ext.62384

BACKGROUND PAPERS - LOCAL GOVERNMENT ACT 1972

Appendices: Appendix 1: Cost savings summary attached

Appendices 2-10: e-copy only. (printed copies have been sent to Cabinet & Shadow Cabinet Members)

APPENDIX 1: Cost / savings breakdown

	Year 0 2013/14 Based on two scenarios		Year 1 2014/15	Year 2 2015/16	Year 3 2016/17
Assumptions made*	No tenants relocate Homeless families would occupy available voids from November 2013 120 days)	12 x tenants relocate 6 x existing voids, 2 x natural turnover	20 x additional vacancies due to tenant relocation & natural turnover Each flat occupied by each family for 180 days	26 additional vacancies due to tenant relocation & natural turnover Each flat occupied by each family for 180 days	Transition to general needs complete Each flat occupied by each family for 180 days
Based on the above, total of number of properties available	6	20	40	66	66
Expenditure					
Project assistant	£0	£7,500	£30,000	£30,000	0
Disturbance package @ average £4,000/hh	£0	£48,000	£80,000	£80,000	0
CCTV	£5,000	£5,000	£0	£0	0
Laundry & communal area upgrades	£25,000	£25,000	£0	£0	0
TOTAL COST	£30,000	£85,500	£110,000	£110,000	0
Potential savings					
Potential bed and breakfast savings (based on an average loss to Council of £15.20/day/household)	£13,680	£45,600	£218,880	£361,152	£361,152

* It has been assumed that in each year a certain number of vacancies will arise due to a number of factors ie. tenants choose to move, due to natural turnover and/or due to tenants deciding to move once the status of the block has changed and families begin to move in.

Equality Impact Assessment – the process for analysing the effects on equality

**Appendices 2-10 to item 13
Cabinet 15 July 2013**

APPENDIX 2

Full EqIA template

Guidance on completing equality impact assessment can be found on the council's intranet, and should be read in full before completing your assessment.

This template continues on from the initial equality impact assessment template, which should be completed first.

EQUALITY IMPACT ASSESSMENT (EqIA)

SECTION 1: SUMMARY OF EQUALITY IMPACT ASSESSMENT (EqIA)

1.1	Details of the Policy, Strategy, Function, Project or Activity
	<p>Title of EqIA: Proposal to change the use of Gillett Road retirement housing scheme to general needs housing</p> <p>Date of EqIA: 12 June 2013</p> <p>State whether EqIA is on a policy, strategy, function, project or activity or a combination: Project</p> <p>Indicate whether it is a 'new' or an 'existing' policy, strategy, function, project or activity:</p> <p><input type="checkbox"/> New</p> <p><input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Existing</p>
1.2	Details of the person responsible for the EqIA
	<p>Full Name: Leonard Asamoah</p> <p>Position: Head of Housing Solutions</p> <p>Department: DASHH</p> <p>Telephone number: 62384</p>

1.3 What is the aim and objective of the policy, strategy, function, project or activity?

Introduction:

- 1.3.1 The council is currently experiencing a serious homelessness problem as a result of an increase in demand at the same time as a reduction in housing supply available to the council. A range of factors has contributed to this. The economic downturn has meant that many households are struggling to manage financially and finding the private sector increasingly unaffordable. An increase in the London population, not matched by the growth in the housing stock, has served to force up house prices and private rents as a result of supply and demand imbalances. Private landlords now have more options open to them and the attractiveness of letting to low income or benefit-dependent households (whether directly or via schemes run by the council or housing associations) has diminished, partly because there are more better-off households now looking to rent, and partly because of changes to the housing benefit system (limiting eligible rents to 30% of the local housing allowance rates, the benefit cap and the impending introduction of direct payments to tenants being the main ones). The social housing stock in Croydon is, as a proportion of the total stock, fairly small compared with other London boroughs. As a result, the council relies heavily on private rented housing for accommodation for homeless households and so is suffering disproportionately from the buoyancy in this sector and the falling interest amongst private landlords of letting to our nominees.
- 1.3.2 As a result, increasing numbers of homeless families are being housed in bed and breakfast hotels. This position is not sustainable. Accommodation with shared facilities is not suitable for families with or expecting children for anything but very short periods. Local authorities can only place families in B&B hotels for a maximum of six weeks according to the Homelessness (Suitability of Accommodation) (England) Order 2003. Exceeding this period means that the council is at risk of legal challenge by way of judicial reviews. And there are also financial implications: the average daily cost per family is £15.20 not all of which is covered by housing benefit so the council has to make up the shortfall. A range of measures has reduced the number of households exceeding the six week limit in shared accommodation from 197 at end of September 2012 to two in June 2013. However, there remain pressures of demand and it is expected that these will continue for the foreseeable future. Whilst not exceeding the six-week limit, 229 homeless households are nevertheless living for socially unacceptable periods in shared accommodation experiencing cramped conditions unsuitable for children; and, overall, 1900 families are placed in temporary accommodation.
- 1.3.3 At the same time, because the expectations and aspirations of many older people have changed and because there are many initiatives now which make it easier for people to stay put in their own homes, some retirement housing blocks have become difficult to let as evidenced by the number of people flats are offered to before someone accepts. Where people have expressed an interest in retirement housing, the main requirement is for ground floor housing, in a quiet neighbourhood close to shops; high-rise schemes in particular do not therefore meet people's preferences. The average wait for retirement housing ranges from one month to just under two years as opposed to between 8 months and 11 years for a 1 bedroom general needs property. For family

housing, the wait can be even longer.

1.3.4 Amongst the measures looked at to help alleviate the housing shortage for homeless families, therefore, was the proposal to convert a retirement scheme to general needs accommodation. An appraisal of 11 retirement schemes (all high-rise blocks) was undertaken in order to identify the most suitable scheme which would have the least impact on existing and future older tenants. A range of factors was considered: the number of units in each scheme, the availability of alternative accommodation nearby, the number of adapted properties, age profile of existing tenants and the dependency levels of scheme residents. From a final shortlist of four blocks, Gillett Road was considered to be the most suitable.

1.3.5 A consultation with residents at Gillett Road retirement scheme started on Thursday 7 March 2012 and ended on Monday 8 April 2013. The purpose of the consultation was to seek the views of the residents of Gillett Road on the proposal and options presented and fulfil the Council's obligation to comply with its obligation under Section 105 of the Housing Act 1985 which applies to secure tenancies. Under this legislation, landlords are obliged to make arrangements to carry out consultation with tenants on matters of housing management.

SECTION 2: SCOPING THE ASSESSMENT

2.1 What information is currently available about the different protected groups that the policy, strategy, function, project or activity is likely to effect? (for examples see guidance)

There is a range of information available about the different protected groups likely to be affected by our plans to increase the supply of emergency accommodation for homeless families in Croydon and this is as follows:

2.1.2 Ethnicity: Thornton Heath Ward profile – (source: www.croydonobservatory.org)

The ward population is very ethnically diverse. The 2001 census data showed that:

- 32% Black, African, Caribbean, Black British
- 11% Asian or Asian British
- 2% Mixed/Multiple ethnic groups
- 1% Other
- 51% White

Information from the Office of National Statistics 2001 Census shows that, the Black British community make up over half of the Minority Ethnic population in Thornton Heath which is well above the Croydon average and overall, Caribbean and African groups make up a much larger proportion of the population than in other wards in Croydon.

Gillett Road is located in Thornton Heath and data from the Croydon Observatory shows that 56% of the population are from a 'Minority Ethnic' background, which includes White Irish, White Other, Black, Asian, Mixed and Chinese and Other ethnic groups and 50% of those are from a 'Black and Minority Ethnic' (BME) background, which includes Black, Asian, Mixed and Chinese and Other ethnic groups

2.1.3 Table 1 below shows the ethnic breakdown of all cases occupying emergency accommodation as at October 2012. The table shows that black African and black Caribbean families are over represented in emergency accommodation.

Table 1. Ethnicity	Total cases	Ethnicity of cases (%)	Ethnicity of head of family	Ethnicity of head of household (%)
Asian	10	3.1	8	3.0
Bangladesh	4	1.2	4	1.5
Black African	65	19.9	55	20.9
Black Caribbean	71	21.7	61	23.2
Black Other	17	5.2	14	5.3
Chinese	2	0.6	2	0.8
Indian	3	0.9	3	1.1
Irish	2	0.6	2	0.8
Mixed White Asian	4	1.2	3	1.1
Mixed White Black African	3	0.9	3	1.1
Mixed White Black Caribbean	14	4.3	14	5.3
Other Mixed	5	1.5	4	1.5
Other	6	1.8	3	1.1
Pakistani	5	1.5	5	1.9
White	61	18.7	45	17.1
White Other	17	5.2	17	6.5
Not Known	38	11.6	20	7.6
Total	327	100.0	263	100.0

Age:

In February 2012, there were 600 single older people and older couples households on the register. In addition, there were 250 single older people and 60 pensioner couples who were existing social tenants in total, 9% of people on the housing register are older people.

Date of birth records are held for 100% of the tenants at Gillett Road and Table 2 overleaf shows their age composition as at August 2012.

	Table 2. Age Profile Of Occupants as at August 2012					
	Total number of tenants in occupation	Under 55	Under 65	65 - 74	75 - 84	85+
Gillett Road retirement scheme	71	0.1% (1)	25% (18)	34% (24)	27% (19)	13% (9)

Gender:

Gender records are held for 100 per cent of the occupants at Gillett Road. As at August 2012, the distribution of male and female occupants at Gillett Road was just about equal as illustrated in Table 3 below.

	Table 3: Gender Profile of Existing Occupants as at August 2012		
	Total number of tenants in occupation	Male	Female
Gillett Road Retirement scheme	71	51% (36)	49% (35)

The table 4 on the below shows that compared to other priority need categories, women are over represented among single parent families in emergency accommodation. Of the 263 homeless households with children in emergency accommodation as at October 2012, 229 were female households which include a pregnant woman and/or dependent children.

Table 4: Households accepted with the full housing duty in 2010/11 by household type and gender			
Household Composition/Priority Need Category	Numbers	Male	Female
Couple + 1 child	20	9	11
Couple + 2 children	12	6	6
Couple + 3 children	3	2	1
Couple (pregnant)	7	3	4
Single parent + 1 child	118	10	108
Single + 2 children	54	3	51
Single + 3 children	13	1	12
Single (pregnant)	36	N/A	36
Totals	263	34	229

As show in table 5, which is also on the next page, the composition of homeless households accepted with the full housing duty in 2010/11 by household type and gender and reflects this trend, in that it shows that women are disproportionately represented among lone parent households with dependant children ie. 66%.

Table 5. Composition of homeless households accepted with the full housing duty in 2010/11						
Couple with dependent children	Lone parent with dependent children		One person households		All other household groups	Total
	Male applicant	Female applicant	Male applicant	Female applicant		
89 (15%)	25 (4%)	379 (66%)	44 (8%)	30 (5%)	8 (1%)	575

Disability

In 2010/11 41 people were accepted as homeless and in priority need because of a physical disability, and 21 because of a mental health problem. People who were vulnerable as a result of a physical disability or a mental illness or disability accounted for 11% of all acceptances.

2.2 What are your information gaps? For example service user data, or employment data on a particular protected group. What steps are you/have you taken to fill them as part of this assessment?

As part of the housing application process, some information about some protected characteristics are collected, However, during the public consultation, people responding were asked to provide information about the protected characteristics and given the option to complete an equalities monitoring form. the results are provided in 2.3 below.

Information about religion and sexuality is not available for homeless households.

2.3 Who have you engaged with (staff, service users, community groups etc)?

Describe the methods of engagement you used

What are the issues arising from the engagement?

What are the outcomes of this engagement?

What engagement did not or could not take place?

2.3.1 A consultation with tenants at Gillett Road retirement scheme started on Thursday 7 March 2012 and ended on Monday 8 April 2013 and were consulted on the three options presented below.

2.3.2 Options presented:

Option 1: Keep Gillett Road as retirement accommodation and other retirement housing block as retirement housing (in other words do nothing)

Option 2: (preferred option): Change the use of Gillett Road retirement housing scheme to general needs housing classification

Option 3: Change the use of another retirement housing block to general needs housing classification

2.3.3 How the consultation was carried out

The consultation exercise was designed with the input of an experienced team of officers within the council and internal and external legal advisors. The following methods were used to consult with the tenants:

- To publicise the meeting, letters were sent to all the existing tenants at Gillett Road inviting them and their families and/or carers to attend one of two briefing sessions. Both meetings took place on 7 March 2013 and were facilitated by the DASHH Resident Involvement Team.
- A full consultation pack was posted directly to all tenants at Gillett Road. These documents are provided as Appendix 3.
- In recognition of the potential needs of the client group being consulted and to maximise the number of questionnaires returned, officers from the resident involvement team visited Gillett Road in late March 2013. Three visits were made to the block on different days and times. 'We called' slips were left where there was no response to encourage people to get in touch if they need help or further guidance on how to complete the questionnaire.
- The consultation ran from 7 March until 8 April 2013.

2.3.4 The number of consultation responses

51 out of a possible 62 households returned the questionnaire; this equates to a response rate of 82%. However, not all respondents answered all of the questions and therefore there are variations in the total number of responses shown in each table.

2.3.5 Responses to the equalities questionnaire

Respondents were given the option of completing an equalities monitoring form at the end of the questionnaire. The responses are shown below:

Age	All tenants as at 01.08.12	Response %	Number of responses
Under 55	1% (1)	0%	0
55-65	25% (18)	23%	10
65 - 74	32% (23)	36%	15
75 - 84	28% (20)	31%	13
84+	13% (9)	10%	4
TOTAL RESPONSES			42 out of 51

Gender	Response %	Number of responses
Male	43%	19
Female	50%	22
Male & Female (2 person household)	7%	3
TOTAL RESPONSES		44 out of 51

Disability	Response %	Number of responses
No	28%	11
Limited a lot	69%	27
Do not wish to say	2.6	1
TOTAL RESPONSES		39 out of 51

Religion	Response %	Number of responses
Christian	48%	20
Hindu	12%	5
Sikh	2%	1
Muslim	12%	5
Other	15%	6
No faith/religion	10%	4
Do not wish to say	5%	2
TOTAL RESPONSES		41 out of 51

2.3.6 Comparison of demographic data

Additional analysis was undertaken for this EqIA, comparing the demographic profile of respondents with the 2001 census data (as presented in belowe).

Croydon residents only – aggregated totals	Which of these describes your ethnic background? Gillett Road tenants only - aggregated totals		Thornton Heath ward 2001 Census data
	Number of responses	Response %	%
Asian or Asian British	12	29%	11%
Black, African, Caribbean, Black British	15	36%	32%
Mixed/Multiple ethnic groups	1	2%	5%
Other	0	0%	1%
White	14	33%	51%
TOTAL RESPONSES	42 out of 51	100%	100%

2.3.7 Summary of responses to the options presented

Overall, the survey results indicate an overwhelming preference to maintain the status quo, with 92% of respondents indicating that they fully disagree that the use of Gillett Road should be changed. The key results for each option are shown below.

Option 1: Keep Gillett Road as retirement accommodation and other retirement housing block as retirement housing (in other words do nothing)

- 48 out of 51 respondents put forward their views. Virtually all the comments were in support of keeping Gillett Road and other retirement housing as is (unchanged). Only one respondent said that they didn't mind.

Option 2: Change the use of Gillett Road retirement housing scheme to general needs housing classification (preferred option):

- 92% of respondents 'fully disagree' with the proposal to change the use of Gillett Road to general needs temporary accommodation
- 69% of said that they would prefer to stay the other 31%of respondents said that they would prefer to move to alternative accommodation.
- 92% of respondents fully disagree that the use of Gillett Road should be changed. 4% partially agreed and another 4% fully agreed with the proposed change.
- 96% of respondents that answered the question said that children with families moving into the block whilst they were still living there would have a negative impact on them. 4% of respondents said that it would have a positive impact.

Option 3: Change the use of another retirement housing block to general needs housing classification

- 60% of respondents said that they didn't know which of the other retirement housing blocks should have its use changed to general needs temporary accommodation.
- 26% said that none of the retirement blocks should have their use changed.
- Two household said that if there had to be a change, then it should be Sevenoaks and Tonbridge House based on the information given.

2.3.8 High level analysis of tenant concerns/issues arising from the consultation

Listed below are the 11 key themes were identified from the analysis of the comments made by tenants about the proposal:

- Facilities and services: laundry, common room, lifts and potential damage to these facilities
- Anti-social behaviour: noise nuisance and unknown visitors to the block
- Personal health: perceived effect on the respondents health, potential effect on existing illnesses
- Personal safety: fear and anxiety, concerns about intimidation and personal safety
- Hazards: children running around, elderly tenants being knocked over by children
- The building: one bedroom flats and over crowding
- Life style differences: incompatibility of mixing younger and older people in block

- Illegal activity: drugs on premises, drug use, theft
- Maintenance: maintenance of building, cleaning and tidiness of the block
- General upheaval: moving away from Gillett Road to alternative accommodation, loss of support network, cost of moving.
- Local facilities: proximity to local shops, proximity to transport, near to buses and bus stops, GP surgery and religious temple.

2.3.9 Consultation with stakeholders

- Housing needs and assessment (homeless) – whilst the homeless population is largely transient, the Councils resettlement officer engages weekly with households in emergency accommodation.
- Customer living in bed and breakfast accommodation via
- Stock Investment Section – collaborative working to collate stock condition information
- Early Intervention and Reablement Section – information sharing during scoping phase to identify any cross cutting issues
- Vulnerable Adults and Supported Housing - information sharing during scoping phase to identify any cross cutting issues
- Elected Members

SECTION 3: ANALYSING YOUR EQUALITY INFORMATION

3.1 From the information you have gathered (including information gathered to fill existing gaps) and the engagement you have undertaken how are each protected group affected (positively or negatively, or not affected at all)?
 What changes could be made to the policy, strategy, function, project or activity to mitigate a negative impact?

Age

	Positive Impact	Negative Impact	None	Assessment of impact on protected groups
0–18 years	Yes			<p><u>Age</u></p> <p>In 2010/11, 216 young people under 25 years were accepted as homeless and in priority need (37 per cent of total homeless households accepted)</p> <p>The overall impact of replacing bed and breakfast accommodation on younger people would be positive as the proposal would increase the supply of cost effective Council owed self-contained temporary accommodation for families with children. This would have a significant positive impact on the wellbeing of babies and young children.</p> <p>As at August June 2013, the housing data base showed that none of the occupants at Gillett Road were under the age of 55. At the time of the consultation, none of the tenants who responded were under the age of 55.</p> <p><u>Negative impact</u></p> <p>The overall impact of the proposal to change the use of Gillett Road for older people is negative and. By virtue of the fact that the age criteria for sheltered housing are age 55 and over, the proposal to change the classification of Gillett Road will have a negative impact on the older people currently living at the block.</p> <p>Theses impacts, as stated/identified by the respondents at Gillett Road and various themes have been identified in response to the proposition that younger people with children could be housed in the block alongside older</p>
19-54	Yes			
55-65		Yes		

people. For each themes, at least one example of the concerns raised has been provide and these are shown in italics.

Facilities and services (29 comments)

The responses suggest that issues around being able to access the laundry facilities and common room are one of the main concerns of existing tenants at Gillett Road as well as misuse of the lifts by children making it more difficult for older residents to access them.

“Not suitable for families. A lot of elderly people, children running up and down. The laundry facilities would be misused.”

Anti-social behaviour (20 comments)

The second biggest concern expressed relates to antisocial behaviour particularly the belief that there will be an increase in noise levels in the block thus undermining the quiet enjoyment of their home. A small number of people also expressed concern about increased numbers of people that are unknown to existing residents visiting the block.

“I feel younger people will cause problems i.e.disturbance and intimidating older residents. I also feel facilities i.e. laundry, community room would be abused. I would also not like children running around the corridors causing noise.”

Personal health (17 comments)

Respondents expressed concern about the potential impact that any change of use could have on their health particularly those who already have some degree of pre-existing ill health or are frail due to age.

“Moved here because it was sheltered housing. The proposed change would cause me stress and affect my health”

“I have signed a tenancy agreement with you that stated that is sheltered accommodation, I won't move from here until I die. I don't want to move to nowhere else, easy to go to doctor, easy for shopping, easy for public transport.

"I have been living here in this flat about 20 years. I know the change will kill me. I have made some lovely elderly friends and we look after each other the best we can. What you are suggesting is outrageous. You should find alternative accommodation for this and let the elderly live life with some dignity."

Personal safety (16 comments)

Many respondents expressed concern about older people mixing with younger people in that they feel that their safety would be compromised and they would feel intimidated if children and younger people were also living at Gillett Road.

"Will cause fear and feel unsafe living in my home. Lack of peace of mind. Fear of loss of community spirit which already exists here. Fear of dogs and visitors bringing dogs into the building"

Hazards (16 comments)

Many respondents expressed concerns about children running and knocking the older residents over as well as hazards created by items being left on the landings.

"Children being children will be running will be running around the floors and could possibly hurt or injury elderly and infirm tenants."

Lifestyle differences (9 comments)

Incompatibility of mixing younger and older people in block

"Mix of young and old will not work"

"Children and elderly don't mix"

General upheaval

Concerns we expressed about moving away from Gillett Road to alternative accommodation, loss of support network their and the cost of moving.

				<p><i>“Too ill to even consider moving. I have spent a lot of money on my flat. Flooring especially.”</i></p> <p><u>Local facilities (3 comments)</u> Proximity to local shops, proximity to transport, near to buses and bus stops, GP surgery <i>“Cause stress to elderly residents. Also I have my family within the same area. My medical centre is close by and other amenities close by also.”</i></p>
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Disability

	Positive Impact	Negative Impact	None	Assessment of impact on protected groups
Learning disability			None specifically identified	<p>Disability The overall impact of the proposal to change the use of Gillett Road is negative.</p> <p>69% of respondents at Gillett Road (27) said that their activities were limited a lot due to health problems or disability and generally cited multiple health problems rather than a single illness.</p> <p>A number of tenants made that specifically relate to disability their and how they think that the proposed change of use would impact on them. These comments are detailed below in italics.</p> <p><i>“The stress of moving due to disabilities. Moving away from people who support me. I like my current property - the location, the floor level and layout because I have a visual impairment. I need adaptation I have now including enhanced lighting, visually impaired friendly kitchen”</i></p> <p><i>“I don’t wish to move as this has been my home for many years. I am used to all the facilities and services in the area i.e. doctors, transport and many residents in the block who have become my friends. At this stage in my life, like may elderly people, change is not a good option due to our health and</i></p>
Physical disability		Yes		
Mental health		Yes		
Deaf or hard of hearing		Yes		
Visually impaired		Yes		
Other, incl carers		Yes		

				<p><i>disabilities. this would probably cause disorientation as familiarity is important to me”</i></p> <p><i>“It will directly affect elderly and disabled tenants. The community room would be lost to us because the children would cause issues with noise. The above [option 1] would cause issues i.e. noise, health and safety -children running around could cause accidents e.g. knocking elderly and disabled people over. Damage to the communal areas because people will not take care (lifts /laundry etc.) problem of unknown visitors in the block will increase. laundry schedules will be disregarded. it is already a problem and I feel it will get worse. I have been threatened and abused and I don't want this to happen anymore.”</i></p> <p><i>“I don't wish to move as this has been my home for many years. I am used to all the facilities and services in the area i.e. doctors, transport and many residents in the block who have become my friends. At this stage in my life, like may elderly people, change is not a good option due to our health and disabilities. this would probably cause disorientation as familiarity is important to me”</i></p> <p><i>“I don't wish to move as this has been my home for many years. I am used to all the facilities and services in the area i.e. doctors, transport and many residents in the block who have become my friends. At this stage in my life, like may elderly people, change is not a good option due to our health and disabilities. this would probably cause disorientation as familiarity is important to me”</i></p> <p><i>“It will affect my depression. I am settled here. Having to move will mean changing utilities, benefits, post etc. I will lose my support network and it will affect my health and well being. What about all the money I have invested into the house?”</i></p> <p><i>“...I used to live on Livingstone Road which is general housing. I had so many problems. Kids leaving rubbish in the front of my door, littering the place, noise was unbearable til past midnight and eventually I was diagnosed with depression. Please do not do this again.”</i></p>
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Gender/Sex				
	Positive Impact	Negative Impact	None	
Female	Yes			<p><u>Gender</u> The outcome of the project will affect all existing tenants at Gillett Road irrespective of their gender. Although 43% and 50% of respondents were male and female respectively and information from the housing database shows that as at August 2012, the proportion of men to women was roughly equal ie. 51% and 49% respectively.</p> <p>However, changing the use of Gillett Road would benefit women as women with dependent children are over represented amongst homeless households and will therefore benefit from the new scheme.</p> <p><u>Homeless households</u> As shown in 2.31.families accepted by the council for a full rehousing duty are most likely to be headed by female lone parents with children, as well as being far more likely to be from the BME community.</p> <p>Young people (under 25 years old) are overrepresented among homeless households. In 2010/11, 66% households accepted as homeless were female lone parents with dependent children.</p> <p>Furthermore, in October 2012 of the 327 households in emergency accommodation 263 were households which include a pregnant woman and/or dependent children.</p>
Male			None specifically identified	
Gender reassignment			None specifically identified	
Race/Ethnicity				
	Positive Impact	Negative Impact	None	Assessment of impact on protected groups
Asian	Yes	Yes		<p>The outcome of the project will have both a positive and negative impact on BME groups.</p> <p><u>Negative impact</u> The BME community would appear to be over-represented at Gillett Road.</p>
Black	Yes	Yes		

				The category selected by 67% (15 households) who answered the ethnicity question felt into a BME group. 33% described themselves as white.
Mixed	Yes	Yes		<p>In line with the ward level data, the majority of tenants are from BME groups. 67% of the existing tenants at Gillett Road are from BME communities and therefore there will be a disproportionate impact on this group. However, there is nothing particular about this other than where there may be community centers which they have access to currently. For example, a tenant states that:</p> <p><i>"I want to stay in this accommodation. I do not want alternative because I need to be near my community centre. Bangladeshi welfare association, mosque, shopping , good communication etc"</i></p> <p><u>Positive impact</u> In 2010/11 60 per cent of homeless households accepted by the council with the full homelessness duty were from BME communities.</p> <p>In addition, black African and black Caribbean families are over represented in emergency accommodation as illustrated in 2.1.3.</p>
Other, such as Travelers	Yes	Yes		
White			None specifically identified	

Religious/Faith Groups

	Positive Impact	Negative Impact	None	Assessment of impact on protected groups
Buddhist			None specifically identified	<p><u>Religion/faith groups</u></p> <p>5 respondents at Gillett Road indicated that they are of the Hindu faith and 5 Muslim. If these households were to move, depending on where they moved to, it is possible that there may be greater difficulty in accessing a mosque and this concern has been raised by one tenants as shown below:</p> <p><i>"I want to stay in this accommodation. I do not want alternative because I</i></p>
Christian				
Jewish				
No religion/faith				

Other				<i>need to be near my community centre. Bangladeshi welfare association, mosque, shopping , good communication etc”</i>
Sik		Negative impact	None	
Muslim			None	
Hindu				

Sexual Orientation

	Positive Impact	Negative Impact	None	Assessment of impact on protected groups
Heterosexual			None specifically identified	<u>Sexual orientation</u> None specifically identified from the information available.
Lesbian				
Gay				
Bisexual				

Pregnancy and maternity

	Positive Impact	Negative Impact	None	Assessment of impact on protected groups
Pregnancy and maternity	Yes			<u>Pregnancy and maternity</u> The project will have a positive impact by increasing the supply of suitable emergency accommodation for families with children and reduce the likelihood of including pregnant women being housed in bed & breakfast accommodation for more than 6 weeks.

Marriage and civil partnership

	Positive Impact	Negative Impact	None	Assessment of impact on protected groups
Marriage/civil partnership			None specifically identified	None specifically identified.

3.2 Could any changes be made to the objective or the actions to eliminate or mitigate the impact?

31% of respondents said that they would prefer to move to alternative accommodation (see 2.3.7) if option 2 was chosen. Should the decision be made to change the use of Gillett Road (option 2) existing Gillett Road tenants could be given the option to relocate to alternative accommodation using previous refurbishment projects (Kuala Gardens) where older people were at alternative suitable accommodation as a model of good practice and example of successfully re-settlement of older people, some very elderly.

Health and wellbeing (age & disability)

Negative impacts have been identified in relation to age & disability and resultant health and wellbeing of tenants.

Based on experienced gleaned from previous major works projects, and the information gathered it is recognised that some tenants may have specific support needs as a result of age related physical or mental frailty, health infirmity, disability or other life circumstances and may be considered vulnerable. As such, some may require practical help and assistance with rehousing. The Council would provide dedicated staff to support the tenants and ensure a high level of customer care and these activities should minimize any negative impact on the health and wellbeing.

To mitigate the impact of the proposed change, a sensitive approach to managing the relocation of tenants will be required to safeguard the health and wellbeing of all tenants. In recognition of this need, steps that will be taken:-

- Recruitment of a Project Assistant to ensure the required level of staffing resources are available to provide practical support and assistance for relocating tenants.
- Wherever possible, involve family and/or carers in the relocation process from the consultation stage through to actual relocation.
- Individual consultation meetings to establish and understand needs;
- On site advice surgery as necessary to provide accessible support and visibility of project team during early stages of relocation process;
- Once their preferences have been identified and needs assessment have been carried, suitable properties will be identified and tenants who wish to relocate will be given a high priority.

- Completion of pre and post move check list to ensure consistency of service;
- Pre move visits, support and/or a visit to the tenant on the day of the move;
- Assist tenants to establish catchment area of existing healthcare providers ie GP survey;
- Involvement/liaison or family/friends and/or existing care providers;
- Provision of needs assessment by qualified social worker;
- Identifying accommodation that is suitable and in close proximity to Gillett Road. In recognition of this, for the past few months, void properties at Garnet Road and Laxton Court have being held pending the outcome of the decision making process to ensure a ready supply of alterative accommodation. Both of these blocks are in close proximity to Gillett Road; Garnet Road being its neighboring block and occupying the same site and would cause the minimum disruption to their contact with family, friends, support networks and community connections. Moreover, there is a good supply of alternative retirement housing schemes within the Thornton Heath area albeit not as close as Garnet Road and Laxton Court.

Relocation and resettlement of tenants (age, disability, race, religion)

- With input from social services, provide tenants with good information about the location of other retirement housing schemes so that they have a clear understanding of their proximity to Gillett Road.
- Assistance to complete necessary documentation;
- Provision of interpretation /translation services as necessary;
- Tenants who choose to relocate at Gillett Road will be given a high priority on the transfer register;
- Use of professional removals services from a contractor on the Councils existing framework with experience of working with vulnerable clients and that are able to tailor their service to meet the needs of the client groups affected. In addition, contractors selected from the Councils framework will have been assessed for as part of the procurement process as well as compliance with regard to equalities requirement.
- The removals contractor will be required to work in a careful manner sympathetic to tenants needs for example, flexibility where a female tenant may feel uncomfortable being alone with a male operative working in the property.
- We are aware that during Ramadan, the timing of visits or moves will have to be considered. Project members are aware that there are some members of the community who are more conservative than others and that we have a duty to be sensitive and respectful of various cultural/religious requests and rituals. eg, respecting the prayer times for Muslims
- In all situations we recognise the need to liaise with our tenants to negotiate convenient times for moving whilst balancing this with not hindering the lettings/void period.
- Packing and unpacking
- Assistance with change of address activities and relocation of mail, contacting utility companies etc
- Disconnection and reconnection of appliances such as washing machines and cookers, telephones;
- Provision of transport as required for viewing properties;
- Where tenants have existing adaptations, properties will be sought which have similar fixtures. Alternatively, these will be refitted in the new property or if this is not feasible replicated, subject to an assessment by an occupational therapist;

- One tenant has indicated that moving would have a negative impact on their ability to attend their local mosque and Bangladeshi community centre. The local mosque and community centre are located 1.1m and 0.7m away from Gillett Road. If there were adequate vacancies and depending on their place on the housing register, Garnet Road retirement block is the same distance away as Gillett Road should the tenant wish to relocate. Although slightly further away, there are two other retirement blocks which are only slightly away from the mosque and community centre. These are Laxton Court (0.3m and 0.6m respectively) and Purvis House; 1.1m and 1.2m respectively. Distances have been obtained from Google map.

Facilities and services

Concern has been expressed about access to the existing communal facilities and service at Gillett Road specifically access to the laundry room, lifts and communal lounge. To minimize the impact any negative impact on existing tenants, the Council will, in consultation with tenants, assess the feasibility of a number of options including:

- Look at the potential to increase the number of washing machines and dryers available if these facilities were to be accessible to homeless families as well as older residents
- Restricting access existing tenants only with the access restricted to Monday to Friday 09.00 – 17.00 ie whilst the concierge is on site (see below for information regarding the proposed concierge service.
- Assess the viability of gifting washing machines to existing tenants who choose to remain at Gillett Road.
- If the use of Gillett Road were to change, access to the warden call system would remain unchanged.

Management of Gillett Road (age, disability, race, religion)

Though separated into 11 themes, a high proportion of tenants have expressed concern about anti-social behavior of various forms and the impact on their, health and wellbeing and personal safety. If option 2 was selected, any negative impact on health, wellbeing and personal safety: by the following actions:

- The Council's intention would be to provide a concierge service to manage the block between the hours of 09.00 – 17.00, Monday to Friday.
- The concierge would be responsible for day to day management of the block and would work in collaboration with Landlord Services including the neighborhood warden service to address respondents concerns about safety and security of the block.
- A concierge service would also be beneficial to address issues raised in a fire risk assessment about management of communal spaces such as the residents lounge.
- CCTV would be installed to increase the tenants feeling of safety as well as providing as a tool to address anti-social behavior subject to a survey of the block an management of this would form part of the responsibilities of the concierge staff.
- All lifts are inspected and maintained on a monthly basis and where breakdowns do occur a response is required within 2 hours and repairs are given a high priority and carried out as soon as possible. This will be reiterated to tenants to reassure them.

- Lifts are built to a specific standard and therefore the Council's technical officers do not envisage the change as having an impact on the functioning of the lifts. Again, this will be reiterated to tenants to reassure them.
- The actual cost of providing the concierge service is unknown at present. However, under current welfare benefit rules, the cost will be covered by housing benefit subject to making an acceptable case for its provision.
- Records suggest that all existing tenants at Gillett Road are in receipt of housing benefit and therefore, the provision of a concierge service would not have any negative financial impact for them or the Council.
- Families Gillett Road on a temporary basis, this would be by way of a license as opposed to a secure tenancy thus enabling the Council to deal with any breaches of the terms of the license swiftly and effectively.
- The terms of the licensee, and expectation of families, with regard to behavior, will be reinforced by the family liaison officer who provides support to families in temporary accommodation.

Financial assistance

- The tenants will not be entitled to a discretionary disturbance payment. However, an average of £4000 per household will be 'set aside' to meet all reasonable costs associate with moving to alternative accommodation as a result of the change of use.
- Although there is no entitlement, the criteria that will be in line the disturbance policy previously developed for another retirement housing project and assistance will be provided in accordance with the procedure and policy at **Appendix 4**.
- Where elderly tenants at Gillett Road are temporary accommodation tenants, assistance will be limited to the provision of removal and disconnection and reconnection costs.
- With regard to the concierge charges, it is understood that for those in receipt; Housing Benefit will cover any additional costs.

3.2	From the information you have gathered and the engagement you have undertaken describe how the policy, strategy, function, project or activity actively enables the council to meet its public duties to:
Advance equality of opportunity between different groups of people by removing or minimizing disadvantages	The project contributes to advancing equality of opportunity between different groups by meeting needs of homeless households with children by increasing the supply of suitable self contained emergency accommodation as an alternative to bed and breakfast accommodation.
Advance equality of opportunity between different groups of people by taking steps to meet needs	The project contributes to advancing equality of opportunity between different groups by meeting needs of homeless households with children by increasing the supply of suitable self contained emergency accommodation as an alternative to bed and breakfast accommodation.
Advance equality of opportunity between different groups of people by encouraging participation in public life	Subject to further investigation and scoping, support services may be available on site by providing a range of surgeries providing convenient access to information and advice.
Eliminate discrimination	The council is committed to eliminating discrimination. By meeting needs of groups disproportionately impacted by homelessness, the project could contribute to fostering good relations by providing accommodation that is more appropriate for family life reducing the stigma of homelessness.
Eliminate harassment	The council is committed to eliminating discrimination. Making better use of existing housing stock could provide safer spaces for more sections of the community especially young children.

Eliminate victimisation	The council is committed to eliminating discrimination. By meeting needs of groups disproportionately impacted by homelessness, the project could contribute to fostering good relations by providing accommodation that is more appropriate for family life reducing the stigma of homelessness.
Foster good relations between different groups and communities by tackling prejudice	By meeting needs of groups disproportionately impacted by homelessness, the project could contribute to fostering good relations by providing accommodation that is more appropriate for family life.
Foster good relations between different groups and communities by promoting understanding	The council is committed to promoting good relations between different groups and communities by promoting understanding by involving Croydon Landlord Services in the shaping of the project prior and developing management practices prior to implementation.

3.3 Having considered the potential or actual effect of the policy, strategy, function, project or activity on equality make an informed judgment about what should be done (more than one may apply)?

Outcome	Definition (more information is available in the guidance)	Judgment (Y/N)
Outcome 1: no major change	Your assessment demonstrates that the policy is robust and the evidence shows no potential for discrimination and that you have taken all appropriate opportunities to advance equality and foster good relations between groups.	No
Outcome 2: adjust the policy	This involves taking steps to remove barriers or to better advance equality and introducing measures to mitigate the potential effect.	Yes
Outcome 3: continue the policy	This means adopting your proposals, despite any adverse effect or missed opportunities to advance equality, provided you have satisfied yourself that it does not unlawfully discriminate.	No
Outcome 4: stop and remove the policy	If there are adverse effects that are not justified and cannot be mitigated, you will want to consider stopping the policy altogether. If a policy shows unlawful discrimination it must be removed or changed.	No

3.4 Planning actions – please record all actions arising from the assessment, with clear targets, milestone and lines of responsibility.					
Protected group ¹	Action (SMART)	Intended Outcome	Completion Date	Lead Officer	Lead Partner ²
r, d, a	Carry out research into concierge service models	Clear understanding of ideal service level to be provided by concierge and potential cost	September 2013	Leonard Asamoah	N/A
r, d, a	Work with Landlord services, housing benefit and finance to scope and progress procurement of concierge service	Concierge service in place by 1 st April 2013	December 2013	Leonard Asamoah	N/A
r, d, a	Develop and agree support package to be provided	Comprehensive relocation and support package	September 2013	Leonard Asamoah	N/A
r, d, a	Site survey of Gillett Road communal areas	Obtain clear indication of potential for CCTV and adjustments to laundry room and communal lounge	August 2013	Leonard Asamoah	N/A

¹ Enter in this column which of the protected characteristics that the action encompasses: race/ethnicity (r), disability (d), age (a), sexual orientation (so), gender/sex (g), religion/belief (rb), gender reassignment (gr), marriage and civil partnerships (m), pregnancy and maternity (pm).

² If appropriate.

r, d, a	Invite and present relocation process and package to all tenants at Gillett Road	All tenants able to make an informed choice about remaining or relocation to another scheme	September 2013	Leonard Asamoah	N/A
r, d, a	Carry out needs assessments and individual consultation with tenants that would like to relocation to alternative accommodation	Clear understanding of needs	September 2013	Leonard Asamoah	N/A
r, d, a	Engage services of a reputable removals company	Provision of high quality removal service	September 2013	Leonard Asamoah	N/A
r, d, a	Recruitment of Project Assistant	To provide resources required to support tenants who relocate to alternative accommodation	October 2013	Leonard Asamoah	N/A

3.5 Please indicate the risks and what will be done to address them? Risks may need to be recorded in your risk register.						
Risk/ issues identified	Action required	Resource implications	Timescales	Lead Officer	Expected outcome	Progress
Fewer than the projected number of tenants chooses to relocate.	Provide clear and comprehensive information about relocation package and alternative accommodation available	Predicted savings not achieved	By September 2013	Leonard Asamoah	Clarity & reassurance for tenants reassured	
The estimated number of voids Gillett Road, in excess of the current six properties, do not materialise within the required timeframe.	Provide good information to tenants about alternative schemes/ housing and relocation package	Predicted savings not achieved	By March 2014	Leonard Asamoah	Estimated number of voids is achieved as per timescales	
Negative press	Regular progress updates to Communications team	Negative impact on Council's reputation	Ongoing	Leonard Asamoah		
Concierge/ support service not in place	Scope concierge service Clarify if requires recruitment or procurement	Negative impact on Council's reputation and potentially tenant well being	By March 2013	Leonard Asamoah	Concierge service in place prior to conversion to general needs accommodation	

<p>The mitigating measures do not quell the causes of friction resulting from mixing different household types or do not deal with the fears felt on the part of the older residents</p>	<p>Work with tenant to get a precise understand what the issues are. Deal with issues under terms of tenancy or license.</p>	<p>Potential increase number of complaints. Input required form Landlord Services and/or neighborhood wardens</p>	<p>Ongoing</p>	<p>Landlord Services</p>	<p>Successful transition to general needs housings</p>	
<p>Changes to housing benefit rules regarding funding of concierge in that, current rules allow such cost to be covered by housing benefit as long as there is a clear rationale and justification for the provision of services of this type.</p>	<p>Keep abreast of revisions to welfare befits</p>	<p>Restructure of rent payable</p>	<p>Ongoing</p>	<p>DMT</p>	<p>Ongoing</p>	

SECTION 4: MONITORING AND REVIEW

4.1	Equality impact assessment is an ongoing process that does not end once a policy, strategy, function, project or activity has been agreed or implemented.	
Question	Response	
How will you measure the effects of the policy on equality?	Following resettlement Information will be collected on the protected group e.g. ethnicity, disability, gender, age etc.	
When will the policy be reviewed?	Following resettlement customer satisfaction surveys will be completed.	
What type of equality information is needed for monitoring and how often will it be analysed?	Information will be collected on the protected group e.g. ethnicity, disability, gender, age etc. and will be undertaken annually or more frequently if practical.	
How will stakeholders be engaged in the implementation, monitoring and review?	Via the resident association and officer attendance at the sheltered housing panel meetings, Divisional Management Team	

5.1	Before sending the EqIA to be approved by the relevant director use the following checklist to ensure the process is completed. The completed initial EqIA should also be checked.	
The EqIA clearly outlines the purpose of the policy, strategy, function, project or activity? (initial and full assessment template)	Yes	
The EqIA clearly outlines how the policy, strategy, function, project or activity relates to equalities and to the council's public duties? (initial and full assessment template)	Yes	
The EqIA clearly outlines the evidence available and the information gathered for the assessment? (full template only)	Yes	

The EqIA clearly outlines the community engagement undertaken for the assessment? (full template only)	Yes
The EqIA clearly identifies the impact on each protected group based on the information available and how the policy, strategy, function, project or activity enables the council to meets its public duties? (full template only)	Yes
Final judgement has been made based on the evidence available? (full template only)	Yes
The EqIA identifies SMART actions and identifies risks? (full template only)	Yes
The EqIA includes information on how the policy, strategy, function, project or activity will be monitored and reviewed? (full template only)	Yes

SECTION 6: DECISION MAKING AND PUBLICATION

6.1	I agree with the outcome of the above EqIA and actions arising, and have integrated the outcome into the policy decision	
Lead Officer		
Name	Leonard Asamoah, Head of Housing Solutions ext. 62384	
Signature		
Date	04.07.2013	
Lead Director		
Name	Peter Brown, Director of Housing Needs and Strategy ext. 65474	

Signature	<i>Peter H. Brown</i>	
Date	04.07.2013.	
Date sent to corporate equalities and cohesion team (data.equalities@croydon.gov.uk)		

THIS SECTION TO BE COMPLETED BY THE CORPORATE EQUALITIES AND COHESION TEAM	
Publication Date (summary on website)	

Extract from the Equality Act 2010

149 Public sector equality duty

- (1) A public authority must, in the exercise of its functions, have due regard to the need to—
 - (a) eliminate discrimination, harassment, victimisation and any other conduct that is prohibited by or under this Act;
 - (b) advance equality of opportunity between persons who share a relevant protected characteristic and persons who do not share it;
 - (c) foster good relations between persons who share a relevant protected characteristic and persons who do not share it.
- (2) A person who is not a public authority but who exercises public functions must, in the exercise of those functions, have due regard to the matters mentioned in subsection (1).
- (3) Having due regard to the need to advance equality of opportunity between persons who share a relevant protected characteristic and persons who do not share it involves having due regard, in particular, to the need to—
 - (a) remove or minimise disadvantages suffered by persons who share a relevant protected characteristic that are connected to that characteristic;
 - (b) take steps to meet the needs of persons who share a relevant protected characteristic that are different from the needs of persons who do not share it;
 - (c) encourage persons who share a relevant protected characteristic to participate in public life or in any other activity in which participation by such persons is disproportionately low.
- (4) The steps involved in meeting the needs of disabled persons that are different from the needs of persons who are not disabled include, in particular, steps to take account of disabled persons' disabilities.
- (5) Having due regard to the need to foster good relations between persons who share a relevant protected characteristic and persons who do not share it involves having due regard, in particular, to the need to—
 - (a) tackle prejudice, and
 - (b) promote understanding.
- (6) Compliance with the duties in this section may involve treating some persons more favourably than others; but that is not to be taken as permitting conduct that would otherwise be prohibited by or under this Act.
- (7) The relevant protected characteristics are—
 - age;
 - disability;
 - gender reassignment;
 - pregnancy and maternity;
 - race;
 - religion or belief;
 - sex;
 - sexual orientation.
- (8) A reference to conduct that is prohibited by or under this Act includes a reference to—
 - (a) a breach of an equality clause or rule;
 - (b) a breach of a non-discrimination rule.

APPENDIX 4

Gillett Road Retirement Housing Scheme Change of use Rehousing Policy and Procedure

BACKGROUND

1. The Council is committed to recognising and supporting the needs of retirement housing tenants in all aspects of service delivery. Although there is no legal entitlement to a Homeloss or disturbance payment, we recognise that retirement housing tenants may have specific support needs as a result of age related physical or mental frailty, health infirmity, disability or other life circumstance and may also be considered as 'vulnerable' under the Government's accepted definition¹. As such, retirement housing tenants may require additional help and assistance with permanent rehousing as a result of the change of use at Gillett Road retirement housing scheme.
2. The Council will work with retirement housing tenants to ensure that individuals' needs (which will generally be based on needs as recorded in their support plans) are adhered to at every stage of the relocation process.
3. This policy determines the way in which the Council will assist retirement housing tenants who wish to move, in accessing suitable alternative accommodation as a result of the changing the use of Gillett Road. It explains how all accommodation is allocated under the Council's allocations system, and outlines how the housing needs of retirement housing tenants will be prioritised within this system.
4. The document also explains the circumstances in which compensation in the form of 'ex gratia payments' (disturbance payments), to cover the costs of moving, may be made to retirement housing tenants who choose to move as a result of the change of use at Gillett Road.

LEGAL ASPECTS

In order to qualify for 'ex gratia payments' (disturbance payments):

- The tenant must be resident at Gillett Road retirement housing scheme and
- The displacement must have been in consequence of, the change of use
- The displacement must be permanent; and
- The person displaced must:
 - i. have been a tenant of the Council; and

¹ Those in receipt of at least one of the principal means tested or disability related benefits.

- ii. have occupied the premises as his or her only or main residence for a period of at least 1 year, ending with the date of relocation.

EX GRATIA PAYMENTS

5. Payments will be, made to tenants who move from Gillett Road within the first 12 months of its use being changed from retirement housing to general needs temporary accommodation being implemented.

The value of payments will vary according to the circumstances of each household relocating. However, the costs covered by the Council may include:

- a. Cost of removals company to transport home contents/ furniture: The Council will choose a selected removal contractor and pay them directly for the move upon receipt of the invoice. The contractor will have valid insurance. Elderly and vulnerable tenants will be offered assistance with packing, unpacking and resettling into their new address.

In the case of a temporary move, it may be possible to arrange storage facilities with the Council's removals contractor until the tenant returns to their permanent home. The Council's removal company shall have the appropriate insurance for this purpose, the details of which are available from the removal company. This will be decided on a case-by-case basis depending on the circumstances of the redevelopment or improvement programme.

- b. Disconnection and reconnection of electric or gas cooker:

Generally the Council will both engage and pay the contractor directly for this work and this will be carried out by either an approved electrician or a Corgi registered gas fitter. Where this is not possible, disturbance payment claims will only be reimbursed to the tenant once the Council has received satisfactory receipts/invoices for the work.

- c. Disconnection and reconnection of washing machine and dishwasher:

Generally the Council will both engage and pay a plumber approved by us, directly. Where this is not possible, disturbance payment claims will only be reimbursed to the tenant once the Council has received satisfactory receipts/invoices for the work.

- d. Landline telephone disconnection and reconnection.

Where the retirement housing tenant is moving permanently, the Council will reimburse the cost of transferring an existing landline telephone connection to the new property, including the cost of transferring the existing telephone number, (where this is possible).

In the event that the number cannot be transferred, the Council will reimburse the cost of utilising the caller redirect service for a period of 3 months, (where this service is available).

NB: The Council cannot guarantee the re-connection of cable TV/Internet where it forms part of a telephone package.

e. Mail Redirection:

The Council will reimburse the cost of three months mail redirection where a tenant is moving permanently. Claims for mail redirection costs will only be reimbursed to the tenant once the Council has received satisfactory receipts/invoices for the mail redirection.

f. Carpets

The Council will make direct payment to the carpet fitter/firm approved by the Council for the supply and fit of carpet or flooring to the new property from a specific range. The Council will request a quote from the carpet fitter/firm for the carpet required, and the tenant will be able to select one colour from a specified range.

Where residents wish to use a different floor covering, the Council will pay an allowance that is no more than the value of the carpet quotation for those rooms which would have been carpeted using a carpet from one from the specified range.

If preferred, tenant's make use of their existing carpets if they wish to do so. The cost of taking up, refitting and where necessary adapting carpets will be met by the Council which will use a carpet fitter/firm approved by the Council and pay them directly. If there is a question over whether or not a carpet can be reused the Council will rely on the advice and experience of the carpet fitter/firm. Where the use of existing carpets is not financially viable, or the carpet cannot be refitted, the Council will make direct payment to the carpet fitter/firm approved by the Council for the supply and fit of carpet to the new property. The Council will request a quote from the carpet fitter/firm for the carpet required, and the tenant will be able to select one colour from a specified range. Where residents wish to use a different floor covering, the Council will pay an allowance that is no more than the value of the carpet quotation for those rooms which

would have been carpeted using a carpet from one from the specified range.

g. Curtains.

The expectation is for retirement housing tenants to make use of existing curtains by refitting of existing curtains. retirement housing tenants will be asked to complete a claim form indicating which rooms require replacement curtains and the approximate size of the window; however this will be verified by the curtain fitter/firm approved by the Council. If there is a question over whether or not curtains can be reused, the Council will rely on the advice and experience of the approved curtain fitter/firm. Where the use of existing curtains is not financially viable, or the curtain cannot be refitted, the Council will make direct payment to the curtain fitter/firm for the supply and fit of curtains to the new property. The Council will request a quote from the curtain fitter/firm for the curtains required, and the tenant will be able to select one colour from a specified range.

The Council's removal firm will be contracted to refit any curtain rails for both permanent and temporary rehousing.

Retirement housing tenants should be aware that reasonable access will be required for measuring and surveying of both carpets and curtains, which may need to be during normal office hours for some contractors.

h. Special expenses for removal day.

If certified by an employer that an adult in the household lost earnings due to taking time off to move, the Council will refund this money. This is limited to one employed person, where there was no other adult available to help on moving day.

i. Decorations

It is recognised that retirement housing tenants may have difficulty undertaking decorations.

Where Council Tenants are not moving to a new property, the Council will arrange for a Council repairs contractor to undertake the necessary decoration on their behalf as deemed necessary and in agreement with the tenant. However the choice of finish will be limited. Where a retirement housing tenant expresses a wish to undertake the decorations themselves, they will

j. Adaptations

Where the Tenant's existing premises has an adaptation such as chairlift or bath/shower adaptation, AND the Tenant is the person assessed as needing the adaptation then the following will apply:

- a. The Council will attempt to find accommodation that already has the adapted facility required, however where there is no accommodation available with the necessary facility the Council will install such adaptation/relocate the adaptation from the Tenant's existing premises

OR

- b. the Council will provide accommodation that already has the adaptation or replicate the one that the Tenant currently has in their home.

Where the retirement housing tenant is not the person who was assessed as needing the adaptation and where a dispute arises about the retirement housing tenants needs, the Tenant will not be provided with premises with such adaptation nor will the new/temporary premises be adapted unless the Occupational Therapy team have carried out an assessment of the retirement housing tenants current needs and have confirmed that such an adaptation is required.

- k. Other reasonable expenses

Other reimbursement may be considered where exceptional expenses have necessarily been incurred as a direct result of the move and could not have been avoided. Payment will only be made where these expenses has been agreed in advance in writing with a representative from the Council prior to being incurred and satisfactory receipts/invoices have been received.

PROCEDURE FOR CLAIMING DISTURBANCE PAYMENTS

20. Applications for the Home Loss payment must be made in writing, and the Council will issue a claim form for this purpose. Once the tenant has accepted and signed the tenancy for their new or temporary home, the Council will assist the tenant to complete a home loss payment claim form.
21. Accepted claims will be paid on or before the date of displacement or within three months after the written application for Home Loss payment has been received, whichever is the later date.

The Council will also assist the tenant to complete a "decant progress sheet", indicating carpet and curtain choices. It is at this stage that the tenant should agree any additional disturbance payment costs that may be incurred as a result of the move. To avoid unnecessary expense to

the tenant, the Council will endeavour to pay disturbance costs directly to approved suppliers and/or contractors. Where this is not possible, claims for disturbance costs will only be reimbursed to the tenant once the Council has received satisfactory receipts/invoices. Accepted claims will be paid within 21 days of receipt.

22. Tenants must ensure that the keys to the original property have been returned to the Council before any Home Loss Payment is made. The property will be inspected to ensure that the Tenant has provided vacant possession as per the tenancy agreement, and that all personal belongings, have been removed. The Council reserves the right to dispose of any items left at the property once the keys have been returned, for which the tenant will be recharged and the monies recovered by deducting the sum from the Home Loss payment.
23. Subject to paragraphs 21 and 22 Disturbance Payments will be made by cheque, payable to the tenant, where they have a bank, building society or post office account into which they can pay the cheque. If the tenant does not have a suitable account, they must state on the home loss claim form who they would like the cheque to be made payable to, and the relationship that the payee has with the tenant. Home loss payments cannot be raised in cash for audit reasons. Disturbance payments will normally be paid by cheque for the reasons outlined above, unless there are extenuating circumstances. This will need to be agreed with a representative of the Council, prior to submitting the receipt/invoice.

VARIATION

28. Minor amendments/variations may be made to this policy by the Executive Director of Adult Services, Health and Housing.

CONTACT

If you are dissatisfied any decision about Disturbance Payments made under this Policy you may put your concerns in writing, with such supporting documentation as is necessary to substantiate any claim you are making. Your concerns should be addressed to: Housing Allocations Team, Housing Needs and Solutions Section, 3rd Floor, Bernard Wertherall House, Park Lane, Croydon, CR9 1DH

Finding of Gillett Road Tenant Consultation Survey Proposed change of use of Gillett Road retirement housing scheme

1. Executive summary

This report presents the findings from the consultation with the existing tenants at Gillett Road retirement housing scheme (Gillett Road) on the proposal to change the use of Gillett Road to provide general needs temporary accommodation.

The aim of the consultation was to inform the tenants about the proposed options, obtain their views on what they considered the impact of each option would be, and to determine the level of support, if any, for each of the proposals.

The tenants were asked to consider the following three options:

Option 1: Keep Gillett Road and other retirement housing block as retirement housing (in other words do nothing)

Option 2: (preferred option): Change the use of Gillett Road retirement housing scheme to general needs housing classification.

Option 3: Change the use of a different retirement housing block to general needs housing classification.

1.2 Consultation approach

Two briefing sessions were held on 7 March 2013. Following the meetings, questionnaires were sent by post, to all existing occupants at Gillett Road irrespective of whether they had attended the meetings. Tenants who needed further assistance to complete the questionnaire were helped by the resident involvement team. The consultation ran from Thursday 7 March until Monday 8 April.

1.3 Response rate

The questionnaire was only sent to existing tenants living at Gillett Road. At the time of the consultation, there were 62 households in occupation (and four void properties). Of these, 51 completed and returned the questionnaire which equates to a response rate of 82%.

1.4 The respondents

Respondents were given the option of completing an equalities monitoring information form, therefore not all respondents provided information about gender, age, ethnicity or disability.

Of those who did provide equalities information, 50% were female and 43% male.

Just over a third of respondents were aged 65-74, with just under a third were 75-84. 10% of those who responded were over the age of 84.

36% of those who responded said that their ethnicity was black. One third (33%) said that their ethnicity was white (33%) whilst 29% described themselves as Asian.

69% of respondents indicated that their activities were limited a lot due to health problems or disability

1.5 Summary findings

Option 1:

The tenants were asked if there was any reason why Gillett Road or any other scheme was not suitable for conversion to general needs housing. 48 out of 51 respondents put forward their views.

Virtually all the comments were in support of keeping Gillett Road and other retirement housing as is (unchanged). Only one respondent said that they didn't mind.

The main reasons put forward opposing the change of use relate to concerns about how the existing facilities and services (ie laundry, communal room, lifts) would be used and that it will become more difficult for older residents to access these.

Concern was also expressed about the potential/perceived increase in various forms of anti-social behaviour particularly noise, the perceived impact on health and wellbeing, personal safety of existing residents and hazards due to children running around the communal areas and misuse of the lifts.

There was concern that the block would become overcrowded as the block comprises only one bedroom flats.

Option 2:

The majority of respondents (92%) 'fully disagree' with the proposal to change the use of Gillett Road to general needs temporary accommodation.

The overwhelming view of respondents was that sharing the block with children with families would have a negative impact on them - 96% being of this opinion.

If Gillett Road was to change to general needs temporary accommodation, more than two thirds of respondents (69%) said that they would prefer to stay the other 31% said that they would prefer to move to alternative accommodation.

Option 3:

60% of respondents said that they didn't know which of the other retirement housing blocks should have its classification changed from retirement housing to general needs temporary accommodation.

26% said that none of the retirement blocks should have their use changed.

Based on the information that they were given, two households said that if there had to be a change, then it should be Sevenoaks and Tonbridge House.

1.6 Actual responses

All actual responses are provided at appendix 5A.

2. CONSULTATION OUTLINE

2.1 Report structure

This report presents the findings from consultation with tenants at Gillett Road Retirement Housing Scheme (Gillett Road) undertaken by Croydon Council with the existing tenants about the proposal to change the use of the block to general needs temporary accommodation for homeless families with children. The consultation report is structured as follows:

EXECUTIVE SUMMARY	Overview of consultation.
CONSULTATION OUTLINE	Outlines how the consultation was organised: <ul style="list-style-type: none">- Gives the key consultation options- Consultation method- Response rate- Other consultation considerations- Breakdown of respondents by age, ethnicity and disability- Themes identified from qualitative responses- Profile of the respondents
VIEWS OF RESPONDENTS	Details of the key findings and themes emerging from all consultation questions. Appendix 5A: Actual responses

Figures have been rounded to the nearest whole number for greater clarity.

Quotes from respondents are shown in italics and are direct quotes/extracts from people who filled in the survey. Obvious spelling errors have been corrected but phrasing is presented as is.

All actual responses of this document are provided at appendix 5A of this document.

2.2 Consultation options

The main aim of the consultation was to get the existing tenants to consider the following three options and to give their views on the level of impact of each one:

Option 1: Keep Gillett Road and other retirement housing block as retirement housing (in other words do nothing)

Option 2: (preferred option): Change the use of Gillett Road retirement housing scheme to general needs housing classification.

Option 3: Change the use of a different retirement housing block to general needs housing classification.

2.3 Consultation method

2.3.1 Letters were sent to all the existing tenants at Gillett Road inviting them and their families and/or carers to attend one of two briefing sessions. Both meetings took place on 7 March 2013 and were facilitated by the DASHH Resident Involvement Team.

2.3.2 Due to unforeseen printing issues, the full consultation pack was not issued to tenants during the meeting but was sent by post to all tenants living at Gillett Road. The benefit of this approach was that all households received the documents irrespective of whether or not they had attended the meeting. The three documents are provided at Appendix 9 and 10 of the Cabinet report. .

2.3.3 In recognition of the potential needs of the client group being consulted and to maximise the number of questionnaires returned, officers from the resident involvement team visited Gillett Road in late March 2013. Three visits were made to the block on different days and times. 'We called' slips were left where there was no response to encourage people to get in touch if they needed help or further guidance on how to complete the questionnaire.

2.4 Response rate

2.4.1 As shown on the table 1 below, 51 out of a possible 62 households returned the questionnaire; this equates to a response rate of 82%.

Table 1

	Number
Questionnaires returned	51
Questionnaires not returned	11
Voids	4
TOTAL	66

2.5 Profile of the respondents

Respondents were given the option of completing the equalities, monitoring form. Where respondents did complete the form, they did not always answer the entire questionnaire and therefore, there are variations in the number of responses received for each

characteristic. However, tables below provide a breakdown of the results.

2.5.1 Gender

44 respondents provided information about their gender and table 2 below shows that there are higher proportions of women than men but only a small number of two person households.

Table 2

Gender	Response %	Number of responses
Male	43%	19
Female	50%	22
Male & Female (2 person household)	7%	3
TOTAL RESPONSES		44 out of 51

2.5.2 Age

82% of tenants who returned the questionnaire, provided information about their age. Table 2 shows that those between the ages of 65 - 84 are by far, the majority with a small number over the age of 84. None of those who responded were under the age of 55.

Table 3

Age	Response %	Number of responses
Under 55	0%	0
55-65	23%	10
65 - 74	36%	15
75 - 84	31%	13
84+	10%	4
TOTAL RESPONSES		42 out of 51

2.5.3 Age of profile of tenants who did not respond to the questionnaire.

The table below provides a breakdown of age profile of the tenants who did not return the questionnaire. The table shows that the majority of those who did not respond are between the age of 65 -74 years. However, there was a good spread of responses by age group so it is likely that views have been adequately represented.

Age	All tenants as at 01.08.12	Response %	Number of tenants
Under 55	1% (1)	0%	0
55-65	25% (18)	0%	0
65 - 74	32% (23)	60%	6
75 - 84	28% (20)	30%	3
84+	13% (9)	10%	1
TOTAL RESPONSES			10

2.5.4 Disability

With regard to disability, respondents were asked, “Are your day to day activities limited because of health problems or disability that has lasted or is expected to last at least 12 months. Do you consider yourself to have a disability?”

The table 4 below, of the 39 households that responded to this question, 69% indicated that their activities were limited a lot due to health problems or disability. Generally, respondents cited multiple health problems rather than a single illness.

Table 4

Disability	Response %	Number of responses
No	28%	11
Limited a lot	69%	27
Do not wish to say	3%	1
TOTAL RESPONSES		39 out of 51

2.5.6 Ethnicity

42 households provided information about their ethnicity. Of these, there is generally quite an even distribution of people who describe themselves as Asian, Black, White and the variants within these groups.

Table 5

Ethnicity	Response %	Number of responses
Asian or Asian British	29%	12
Black, African, Caribbean, Black British	36%	15
Mixed/Multiple ethnic groups	2%	1
Other	0%	0
White	33%	14
TOTAL RESPONSES		42 out of 51

2.5.7 Religion

42 households provided information about their religious beliefs. Nearly half as respondents (48%) described themselves as being of the Christian faith. 5 (12%) respondents at Gillett Road indicated that they are of the Hindu and Muslim faith 5 (12%).

Table 6

Religion	Response %	Number of responses
Christian	48%	20
Hindu	12%	5
Sikh	2%	1
Muslim	12%	5
Other	15%	6
No faith/religion	10%	4
Do not wish to say	5%	2
TOTAL RESPONSES		41 out of 51

2.6 Other consultation considerations

- 2.6.1 Not all households answered all of the questions contained in the questionnaire. Therefore, there are variations in the number of total respondents stated for each question.
- 2.6.2 The questionnaire regarding the proposal to change the use of Gillett Road is such that it generated both quantitative and qualitative responses. Therefore, where relevant, the quantitative element of each is presented first. The questions where quantitative data can be extracted are questions 2; 3; 4 and 5.
- 2.6.3 A small number of people experienced some confusion over how to fill in the option impact questions. Where necessary, questionnaires were assessed and adjusted to ensure that all respondents' views were analysed correctly on a consistent basis. Where adjustments have been made, details are provided in **appendix 5B**.
- 2.6.4 All qualitative responses were reviewed on an individual basis and themed. The themes identified are defined and listed below.
- 2.6.5 Each respondent's qualitative answer could have multiple themes recorded against it.
- 2.6.6 The narrative regarding the qualitative responses focuses on the themes which generated 10 or more comments.

2.7 Themes identified from qualitative responses

Listed below are the 11 key themes identified from the analysis of the qualitative comments and these are used throughout the report.

- i. Facilities and services
Laundry, common room, lifts and potential damage to these facilities
- ii. Anti-social behaviour
Antisocial behaviour, noise nuisance and unknown visitors
- iii. Personal health
Perceived effect on the respondents health, potential effect on existing illnesses
- iv. Personal safety
Fear and anxiety, concerns about intimidation and personal safety
- v. Hazards
Children running around, being knocked over by children
- vi. The building
Properties having one bedroom, over crowding
- vii. Life style differences
Incompatibility of mixing younger and older people in block
- viii. Illegal activity
Drugs on premises, drug use, theft
- ix. Maintenance
Maintenance of building, cleaning and tidiness of the block
- x. General upheaval
Moving away from Gillett Road to alternative accommodation, loss of support network, cost of moving.
- xi. Local facilities
Proximity to local shops, proximity to transport, near to buses and bus stops, GP surgery

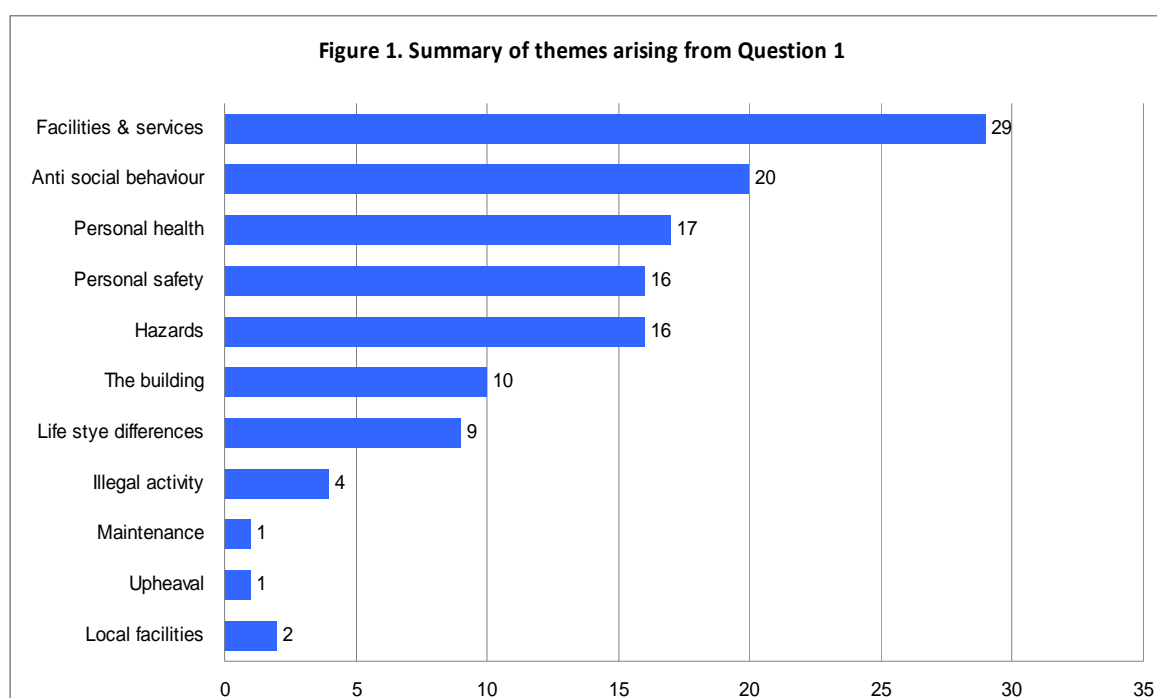
3. THE VIEWS OF RESPONDENTS

3.1 **Question 1:** With reference to Option 1, can you think of any reasons that make Gillett Road or any other retirement housing block, NOT suitable for general needs temporary accommodation?

3.1.2 Question 1: findings

All 51 respondents answered question 1 above. The reasons given by respondents for why they think Gillett Road is NOT suitable for general needs temporary accommodation have been grouped as into themes as set out and defined in section 3. *Figure 1* below provides a summary of the number of comments made in relation to each theme.

3.1.3 Question 1: key themes arising



As shown in *figure 1* above, six themes generated ten or more comments in response to question 1 and these are listed below:

Facilities and services (29 comments)

The responses suggest that issues around being able to access the laundry facilities and common room are one of the main concerns of existing tenants at Gillett Road as well as misuse of the lifts by children making it more difficult for older residents to access them.

Anti-social behaviour (20 comments)

The second biggest concern expressed relates to antisocial behaviour particularly the belief that there will be an increase in noise levels in the block

thus undermining the quiet enjoyment of their home. A small number of people also expressed concern about increased numbers of people that are unknown to existing residents visiting the block.

Personal health (17 comments)

Respondents expressed concern about the potential impact that any change of use could have on their health particularly those who already have some degree of pre-existing ill health or are frail due to age.

Personal safety (16 comments)

Many respondents expressed concern about older people mixing with younger people in that they feel that their safety would be compromised and they would feel intimidated if children and younger people were also living at Gillett Road.

Hazards (16 comments)

Many respondents expressed concerns about children running and knocking the older residents over as well as hazards created by items being left on the landings.

The building (10 comments)

The physical characteristic of the block was an important consideration for the tenants and concern was expressed about the size of the flats; their opinion being that they were too small and unsuitable for a family with children as they have one bedroom and that this would lead to overcrowding.

3.2 **Question 2:** Please indicate to what extent you agree that Gillett Road should be changed from retirement housing to general needs temporary accommodation? *Please tell us why you feel this way?*

3.2.1 Question 2: findings

50 of the 51 households that returned the questionnaire answered question 2 above. Table 2 below, shows that 92% of respondents at Gillett Road fully disagree that use of the block should be changed to general needs housing. Only 8% (4) of those who responded either fully or partially agree.

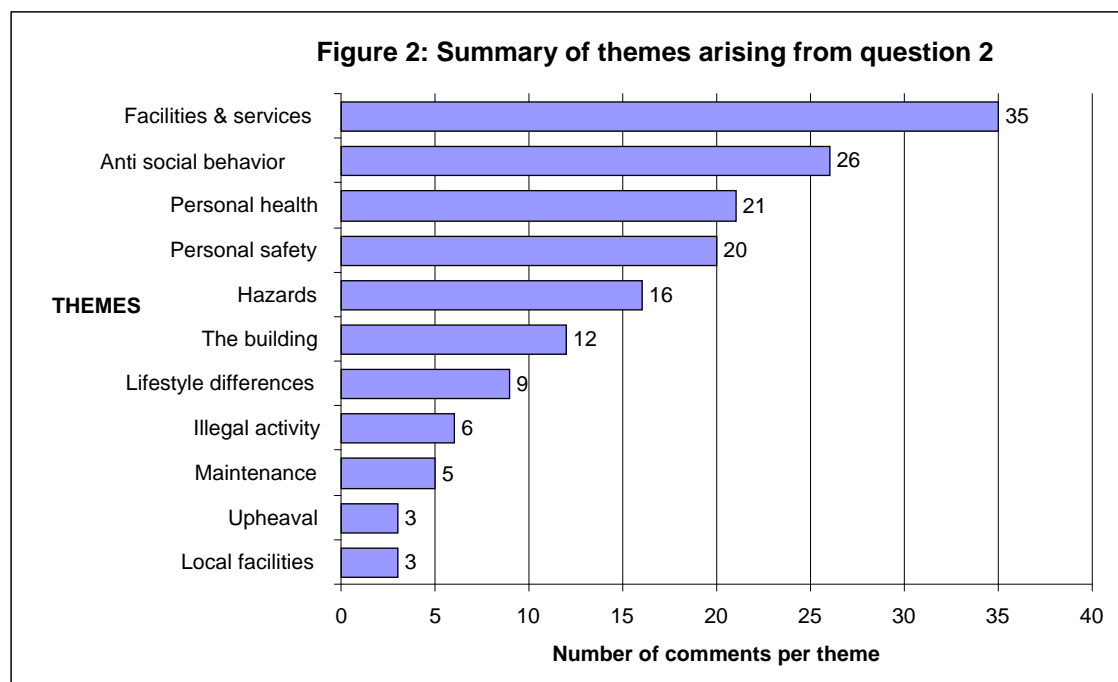
Table 2	Response %	Number of responses
Fully agree	4%	2
Partially agree	4%	2
Neither agree nor disagree	0%	0
Partially disagree	0%	0
Fully disagree	92%	46
TOTAL RESPONDENTS		50 out of 51

3.2.2 Question 2: key themes arising

When asked in relation to question 2, to tell us why they felt that way, 23 respondents said that their reasons were the same as they had already stated for question 1. Six households did not provide any additional explanatory comments. This duplication of responses reflected is in the summary of the themes arising as shown in the *figure 2* below.

That is, the themes which generated the most comments' (ie. more than 10) are the same as those listed for question 1 albeit with some variation in the total number of comments per theme, the pattern is very similar.

- Facilities and services (35 comments)
- Anti-social behaviour (20 comments)
- Personal health (21 comments)
- Personal safety (20 comments)
- Hazards (16 comments)
- The building (12 comments)



3.3

Question 3: What impact do you think it may have on you if families with children moved into the block while you were still living there?
Please tell us why you feel this way?

3.3.1 Question 3: Findings

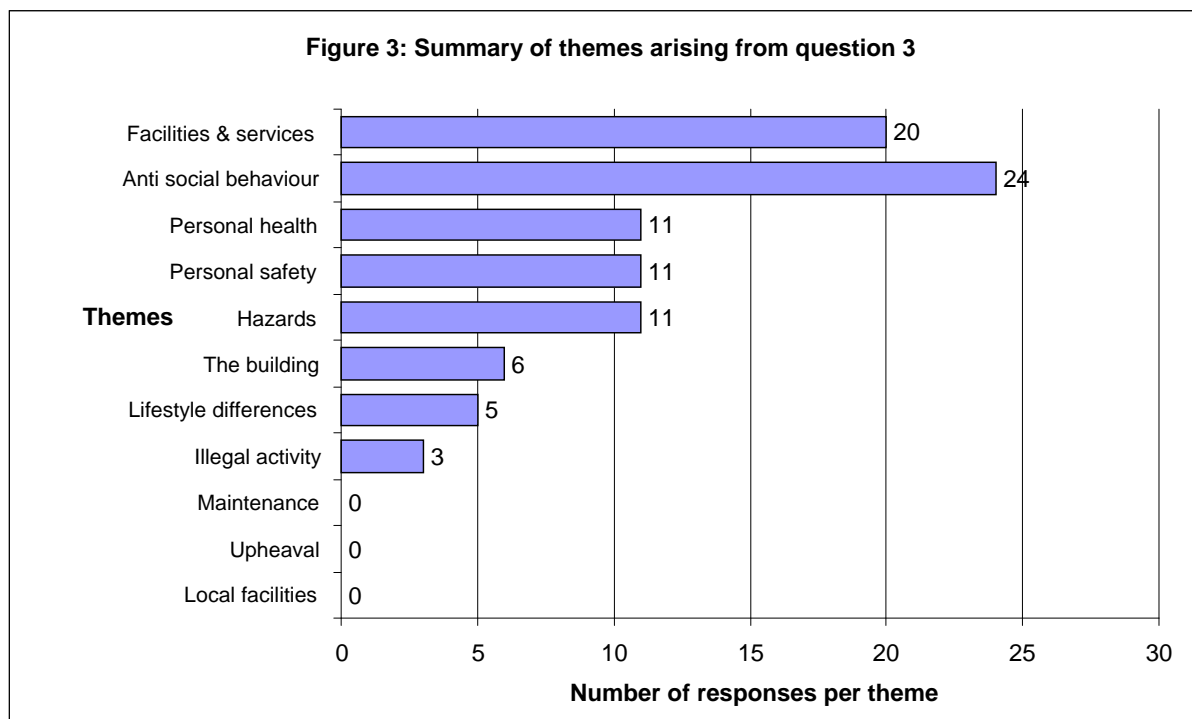
All 51 households that returned the questionnaire answered question 3 as shown in table 3 below,

When we asked respondents what impact they thought children with families moving into the block would have on them whilst they were still living there, 96% of the households that answered the question said it would have a negative impact them and Only 4% of respondents said that it would have a positive effect.

Table 3.	Response %	Number of responses
Positive impact	4%	2
No impact	0%	0
Negative impact	96%	49
TOTAL RESPONDANTS		51 out of 51

3.3.2 Question 3: key themes arising

A diagrammatical summary of all the themes which emerged is provided in figure 3 below.



The themes which generated 10 or more comments are:

Facilities and services (20 comments)

Respondents feel that accommodating families with children would have a negative impact on existing residents and their ability to access the facilities at Gillett Road. Not being able to access the laundry room, common room and over use of the lift generated around the same level of comments from respondents expressing their concern.

Anti-social behaviour (24 comments)

Within this theme, increasing noise and disturbance by far, the biggest concern expressed by respondents and the expectation is that there will be a dramatic increase.

The themes of personal health, personal safety and hazard, on the whole, generated the same level of comments.

Personal health (12 comments)

The respondents expressed concern about the proposed change affecting their own health, with the potential stress that the change could cause generating the most mention.

Personal safety (11 comments)

Fear of being intimidated by younger people or feeling intimidated by their presence generated the most comment with the effect of respondents expressing concern about their personal safety

Hazards (11 comments)

The main concern express is about the hazard that will be created for older people with young children running around particularly in the corridor and along the landings.

Respondents indicated that they thought that families with children moving into Gillett Road whilst they were still living there would have a negative impact mainly due to issues relating to use of the facilities and services and anti-social behaviour. Each of these themes generating 36 and 24 comments respectively.

3.4

Question 4: Based on the information you have, if option 2 (preferred option) were selected, would you prefer to remain in your current property at Gillett Road or move to alternative accommodation?

3.4.1 Question 4: findings

39 out of 51 respondents answered question 4 as shown in the table below. 69% of those who responded said that they would prefer to remain at Gillett Road if option 2 was selected and the use of the block was changed to general needs temporary accommodation for families with children with a small number of respondents (4) taking the

opportunity to reiterate that they do not want to move to alternative accommodation.

31% of households that responded to this question said that their preference would be to move to alternative accommodation.

Table 4	Response %	Number of responses
Remain at Gillett Road	69%	27
Move to alternative accommodation	31%	12
TOTAL RESPONDENTS		39 out of 51

3.5

Question 5: What impact do you think moving to alternative accommodation would have on you? *Please tell us why you feel this way.*

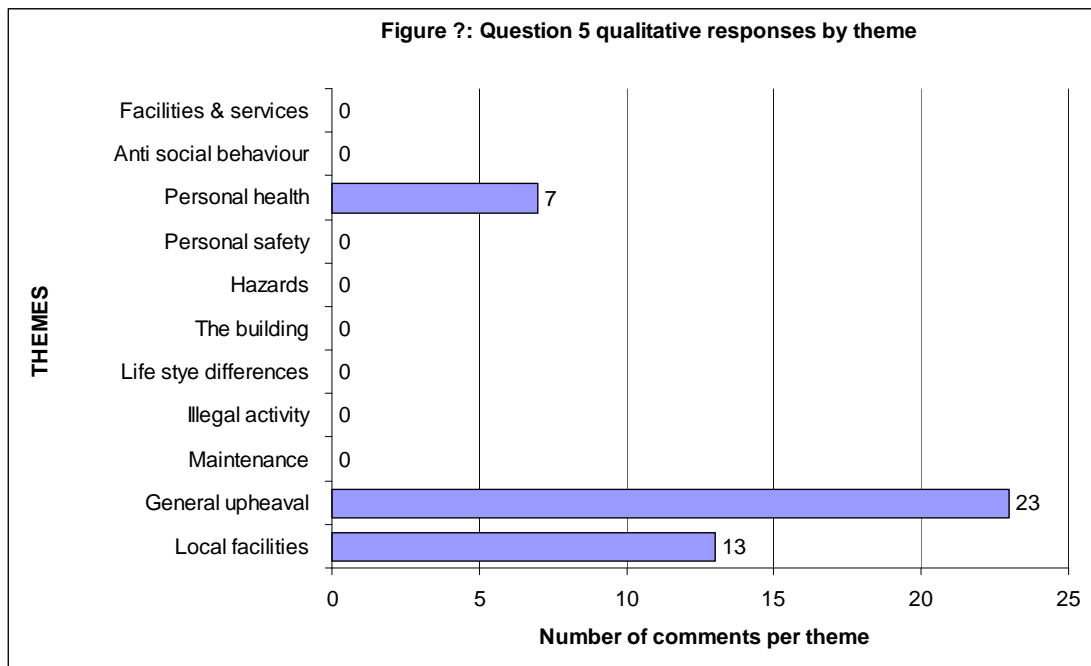
3.5.1 Question 5: Findings

All 51 respondents answered question 5 above. 92% said that they felt that moving away from Gillett Road to other accommodation would have a negative impact on them. As shown in the table below, only 8% of respondents said that they thought it would have a positive impact.

	Response %	Number of responses
Positive impact	8%	4
No impact	0%	0
Negative impact	92%	47
TOTAL RESPONDENTS		51 out of 51

3.5.2 Question 5: key themes emerging

Using the themes set out in section 3, the table below shows the themes that emerged from the qualitative response to question 5.



As shown in the chart above, three themes emerged when asked, *'Please tell us why you feel this way'*. 92% (47) of respondents said that moving to other accommodation would have a negative impact. All 47 provided additional information to explain why they felt that the impact would be negative for them.

Only three themes emerged and these were the general upheaval, local facilities and personal health.

General upheaval (23 comments)

Within this theme, that Gillett Road had been home for some people for many years was a consideration as well as the process and costs associated with moving.. The second biggest concern within this theme was the thought of moving away from an established community that they are familiar with as well as loss of proximity to family and friends

Local facilities (13 comments)

The comments from respondents show that being close to their GP surgery and health centre are important to them. There is anxiety about potentially having to change doctor, in some cases, after many years.

Being close to local shops and public transport is important and there are concerns that this would not be the case if they were to move elsewhere.

Personal health (7 comments)

Many people felt that moving would be very stressful for them and concerns about the financial implications of moving was evident within the responses.

3.6 Question 6: Findings

38 households responded to the question below regarding their views on which other block/s could be changed to general needs.

Q6. With respect to Option 3 which other retirement housing block do you consider should have its classification changed from retirement housing to general needs temporary accommodation for homeless families with children and if so why?		
	Response %	Number of responses
Don't know	60%	23
No comment	8%	3
None	26%	10
Answered question	5%	2
TOTAL RESPONDENTS		38

The table shows that 60% of respondents said that they did not know whilst 26% said none of the retirement blocks should have their classification changed and 8% chose not to comment.

Only two respondents suggested another block and both said Sevenoaks House and Tonbridge House. Due to the small number of suggestions made, the comments of these two households are documented below.

3.6.1 Question 6: Suggestions made

"I do not feel that I have been given sufficient time to investigate this properly. I do not know the exact situation of each of the 11 blocks. HOWEVER, based on the information provided, I would say Sevenoaks House"

"I don't think any of the residents of retirement housing should be put through this. [If] I were forced to make a choice, it would be Sevenoaks and Tonbridge, the reason being those already given in Q1. and Q2. Also, there are 78 available (to include both blocks, 12 more than Gillett Road) and more importantly, it keeps separate, the housing for families with children and housing for elderly residents."

All other actual responses to question 6 can be found in **appendix 5A**.

3.7 Question 7:

Question 7: Do you have any other comments on the preferred option (Option 2) ie. Change use to general needs accommodation?

3.7.1 Question 7: findings

26 out of 51 households provided comments in response to question 7.

In general, the comments served to reiterate the views already expressed in previous questions against the proposal to change the use of Gillett Road to general needs housing.

The actual comments made in relation to question 7 are provided in **appendix 5A**.

3.8 Other consultation considerations

Some people experienced some confusion over how to fill in the option impact questions. To ensure we reflected people's views accurately, a rigorous adjustment process was undertaken as part of the analysis phase. Details of this are given in Appendix 5B.

Appendix 5A

This appendix provides analysis of the qualitative data provided by respondents as explanations for their choice of response. The questions are detailed below:

Question 1: With reference to Option 1, can you think of any reasons that make Gillett Road or any other retirement housing block, NOT suitable for general needs temporary accommodation?

Actual qualitative responses to Question 1

“Yes, make a mess and will cost more to maintain. Damage facilities (electric)”

“Not suitable for children, up and down [in] lifts, running around, get knocked down”

“Security of other resident would be put at risk”

“No safe areas for children. Children running up and down playing in passageways, stairwells and lifts.”

“This is a sheltered block and I like it like that. Don’t need families' making a noise and anti social behaviour. We keep the block clean and tidy and wouldn’t happen with families as they wouldn’t care.”

“Gillett Rd cannot be used for general needs temporary accommodation because of the noise to will cause to older people, anti social behaviour, abuse of facilities, noise, safety of older people, fear of being robbed, use of community room with younger people etc. also, general health of myself and other people needs to be taken into serious consideration.”

“Single parents with young children don’t mix well. Lots of noise in the building. Lifts will be misused by children.”

“Gillett Road and the majority of retirement housing blocks are generally one bedroom flats. This accommodation is not suitable to put families into as this would cause overcrowding which can then lead to antisocial behaviour. This would most definitely cause major problems for the elderly living in the block and surrounding blocks. It would effect the whole environment making inside

and outside of the building insecure and unsafe. Most of the elderly are of poor health and some very frail with mobility problems. This would cause stress and without a doubt accelerate decline on health. This situation will take away the little quality of life that we have."

"I am not sure that one bedroom flat will be suitable with children next to older people."

"People living here have been living here for a long time and do not want to be uprooted. Personally I would [move???] if am given a lower apartment somewhere suitable."

"One bedroom flats are not suitable for families with children"

"I feel that we the tenants of Gillett Road would be vulnerable because the change could mean more movement and noise. Young children up and down the stairs and endangering themselves using the main door."

"Block is good for retirement housing"

"Because of their needs [there could be savings] or children play any important role in their life. The government make so many promises to young people and not able to carry them out. Older people have to pick it up."

"It will directly affect elderly and disabled tenants. The community room would be lost to us because the children would cause issues with noise. The above [option 1] would cause issues i.e.. noise. Health and safety -children running around could cause accidents e.g.. k knocking elderly and disabled people over. Damage to the communal areas because people will not take care (lifts /laundry etc.). problem of unknown visitors in the block will increase. laundry schedules will be disregarded. it is already a problem and I feel it will get worse. I have been threatened and abused and I don't want this to happen anymore."

"I think it would be best to leave it. how do you know younger people would want to live with older people."

"Because youngsters may bring drugs into the block."

"Not suitable for families. A lot of elderly people, children running up and down. The laundry facilities would be misused."

“Residents here are alcoholics/drugs and also elderly do not want screaming on the block.”

“The flats are not suitable for families as these are one bed accommodation. Not proper for children of all ages staying with parents. There will be a lot of things being left on the landings.”

“Most of the tenants are not well and they do not want to move. Lots of people have lived here for a long time . There doctors are nearby for help. Shops are near. Transport links are good. Very serious matter. People could die if they move.”

“No sense in moving existing tenants to move families in. I am sick, where am I going to go? I am too poorly to move”

“One bedroom flats not suitable for children. Older people and children do not mix. Children round common room not suitable and children running around and knocking older people over. Running up and down lifts. Wash house would be used all the time with families with children. Therefore, old people would not be able to use the laundry and washing machines would get damaged.”

“I am a 94 year old lady. Having kids in my block will put risk on my health. There will be anti-social behaviour which can't bear. I am already very scared of the general public in Croydon. Please don't do this. I will lose all I've got.”

“Just not suitable. How can you put families with young children into a one bedroom flat, I don't understand. Perish the thought of all sorts of people coming in and out. I want to feel secure that when I travel, I will come back to find my house as I left it.”

“I feel younger people will cause problems i.e.. disturbance and intimidating older residents. I also feel facilities i.e. laundry, community room would be abused. I would also not like children running around the corridors causing noise.”

“There are a lot of reason to be honest. Most importantly the safety of he old and vulnerable, abusing facilities (which will cost the council a fortune). Anti social behaviour, feeling intimidated and how long is temporary? They will not value the facilities. why are old and vulnerable being targeted? Also, my friends in the block like to wake up in the morning and like praying. We have a wonderful and peaceful environment, we do not want that to be ruined. I have had a bad experience in the past. I used to live on Livingstone Road which is

general housing. I had so many problems. Kids leaving rubbish in the front of my door, littering the place, noise was unbearable til past midnight and eventually I was diagnosed with depression. Please do not do this again."

"The status of Gillet Road retirement block should remain as it is. I.e. sheltered housing for the elderly, it would not be suitable for general housing."

"No access to the lift, drugs might be on premises. Thieves might be on premises. No respect for elderly people."

"My concern is that "homeless" people will abuse our facilities in the block, they may be intimidating and affect my safety. The other concern is they won't look after the launderette /community room which the council has spent money on. It will raise my anxiety levels, especially if there are kids running around the block. I have a really bad leg and heaven forbid I have an accident with kids playing ball games in the corridors. This will have an implication on my health and NHS bill. This is honesty not thought through properly."

"The building is occupied by OAP's"

"My issue is this will impact our lives in many ways, it will cause a lot of anti social behaviour, homeless people will be intimidating, kids running around in the block will harm my safety at the property. They will abuse the facilities especially if temporary. They will have no value for the facilities. It will affect my anxiety levels as I'm a timid person."

"We are a group of older people who have a similar outlook and a certain community togetherness. Bringing in young people with a different mind set would disrupt this especially on a temporary basis."

"The sheltered accommodation has existed since the 1960's and should stay as it is"

"Not suitable for children up and down in the lifts , running around and getting knocked down"

"Block not big enough for families with children. Living in one room as the block in Gillett should be elderly people sick and should not be removed."

"Sheltered housing was meant for the elderly, so that at this stage of our lives. 60 and over. We need a bit of peace and quiet in our lives not all the hassle this new proposal will bring. In the past we were having young people coming here and staying with relatives causing all kinds of problems in the building."

After a while, that trouble was sorted. We do not want to go back to that situation.”

“Sheltered housing is for the elderly above 50 and over and at this stage of our lives, we all need peace and quiet. A year or two ago we were inundated with problems where younger people were visiting and staying over night have caused havoc such as loud music, misuse of laundry, community room as well as the back stairwell being used by groups of people sitting and having drinks and smokes, leaving litter behind and sometimes using the staircase as a toilet. Often, many calls and reports made to the council by all tenants. the matter was finally taken in hand and at least we got rid of all the trouble makers. We definitely do not want a repeat performance; it will cause a lot of stress and upheaval.”

“Young people will cause problems and disturbance. Could also be intimidating to older residents, abuse of facilities ie. lifts, launderette, community rooms, kids running up and down corridors etc”

“Young people will not respect peoples way of life and their need for that way of life”

“Gillett Road is not suitable for general needs temporary accommodation...as they are one bed flats”

“Younger people will cause problems ie. disturbance cold be intimidating to older residents, abuse facilities ie. lifts, launderette kids running up and down corridors”

“Not designed for general use”

“Believe having children within the block would cause many problems those being noise disturbance and they could be intimidating to older residents. I feel they would abuse the facilities such as laundry, lifts and community room”

“Noise pollution, one bedroom flats are for couples only - no children, sheltered housing is meant for OAP's hence one bedroom”

“Disruption to elderly tenants on landings, lifts, laundry rooms, noise and general unrest.”

“These retirement home are not suitable for general accommodation,, there will be a lot of trouble cause by children and families. The retirement home is peaceful and safe with just us elderly. There will be a lot of trouble caused and no respect for us elderly. I can see alit of trouble ahead if this should happen.”

Appendix 5A

Question 2: Please indicate to what extent you agree that Gillett Road should be changed from retirement housing to general needs temporary accommodation? *Please tell us why you feel this way?*

Actual qualitative responses to Question 2

23 respondents said that their reason were the same as they had stated in question 1.

“As Q1. Cause residents hassle using the lift and people will not have [???] use of facilities.”

“Party and drugs, wouldn't feel safe, laundry.”

“Potential for abuse of facilities ie. community room garden and launderette . How is the laundry facilities going to be regulated. Works fine at the moment with residents respectful of each other. Potential for anti-social behaviour inside and outside the building. People living in Gillett Road will not value the building or its surroundings.”

“It would be useless to put single parents and displace people in our block.”

“Noise and anti-social behaviour”

“Everyone I have spoken to do not want to leave. They are happy hear. At our age, we do not want to be going from place to place”

“Gillett Road has been retirement housing for many years, why change it nw. the tenants would have to be rehoused - it does not make sense”

“I just do not think that this would work as this is a building for people who are now retired and require a lifestyle of peace and quiet”

“Because it's easy access to shopping, buses and GP's”

“See Q1. plus I am visually impaired-the threats, intimidation, noise, abuse and resultant stress are a principal concern. I moved here because it was sheltered accommodation and my disabilities require a peaceful, quiet and friendly environment. Any change that would disturb that would cause me stress and affect my health and safety considerably.”

“I don’t think that its fair having young people living with older people and the older people have lived here for years.”

“As Q1 and how long is temporary and what will happen if misbehaviour takes place, Who will monitor. The place is clean and will not stay clean with other people coming in.”

“Gillett Rd has been housing for the elderly for many years. They have a sense of community and safety within the block and induction of family within this setting would compromise the safety of elderly resident and vulnerability ie. young families make more noise, hang around corridors, children running around,. the young are disrespectful [of] the elderly, it is a general statement I am making because I see I everyday.”

“I have signed a tenancy agreement with you that stated that is sheltered accommodation, I won’t move from here until I die. I don’t want to move to nowhere else, easy to go to doctor, easy for shopping, easy for public transport.

“Young people especially with children would put a strain on facilities lifts, laundry etc”

“Party and drugs, wouldn't feel safe, laundry”

“One bedroom flat is definitely not suitable for young families with children anyway.”

“Reasons as in Q1 and the fact that residents of Garnett Road and the 'bungalows' in Gillett Road will suffer disruption due to their close proximity of Gillett Road block-sound travels. There is, as you know, an increasing elderly population and going ahead with this ill-considered sticking plaster solution rather than tackle the problem long term is unworthy. If the Council are considering a saving of approximately £105 per family, have they considered the extra cost of cleaning, repairs and refurbishment required for temporary accommodation?”

“Young people especially with children would put a strain on facilities lifts, laundry etc”

“Moved here because it was sheltered housing. The proposed change would cause me stress and affect my health.”

Appendix 5A

Actual qualitative responses to Question 3

Question 3: What impact do you think it may have on you if families with children moved into the block while you were still living there?
Please tell us why you feel this way?

"Children always running around and playing in lifts and noisy"

"Will cause fear and feel unsafe living in my home. Lack of peace of mind. Fear of loss of community spirit which already exists here. Fear of dogs and visitors bringing dogs into the building"

"Will not work - too disturbing for other residents"

"Will cause fear amongst those already living here. Lack of peace of mind through noise."

"Noise, things left on the landings, children playing in lifts. Rubbish shoots having rubbish left in the. Nowhere to put pushchairs and prams."

"I need peace and quiet. If families with children move into the block, it will be noisy. Also, I am partially sighted and having younger family will not be ideal."

"It would be useless. Young and old don't mix."

"Because of the noise"

"Would have a positive impact. It's not suitable to us because children would be all over the place. Unbearable noise etc, etc. very inconvenient"

"Children being children will be running will be running around the floors and could possibly hurt or injure elderly and infirm tenants. "

"When I moved into Gillett Road it was with the thought that I would live in peace with as little disruption as possible. Having lived in bed and breakfast

for over a year, I personally, do not think that the building is suitable for young children.”

“These elderly worked all their life in this country to make it better and we have no respect for them. Possibly more drugs, more noise, more thieves, no respect for older people to use the lift. Difficulties using the lift to go to the 11th floor. Show some dignity, choice and high standard. It is not only to say it but to do it.”

“One bedroom flats unsuitable for children. Old people and children don’t mix. Children running around the common room. Not suitable for children as children running around and knocking old people over. Running up and down lifts. Wash house would be used all the time with temporary families with children. Old people would not be able to use laundry room. Damage to washing machines.”

“Just not suitable. How can you put families with young children into a one bedroom flat. I don’t understand and perish the thought of all sorts of people coming in and out. I want to feel secure that when I travel, I will come back to find my flats as I left it.”

“I would worry about my personal safety. I may become a recluse within my flat due to the families moving with their children and teenagers and their friends and families. “

“No access to the lift. Drugs might be on premises. Thieves might have more access to the premises. No respect for elderly people.”

“I will feel intimidated, noise pollution will be unbearable and will affect when I pray to God. Won’t find inner peace.”

“Question should read beneficial or detrimental. I think it would be detrimental.”

“If families with children moved into the block where we are still living here, it will have a negative impact because children are noisy and abusive and they will be running around the corridors, on their bicycles. There will be a problem of the launderette and misuse of the community room.”

“Knocking older people over as some people are [on] walking sticks and wheel chairs and on Zimmer frames and walking sticks”

“Children should have and need space to play and run around, not confined in the space provided. They will cause more problems with people living above and below them. Won’t be pleasant for the elderly people.”

“It won’t be fair on the children to be couped up in these flats. They are not big enough for a couple leave alone kids. Children will want to run around and play, scream and shout at one another and will be up to all kinds of mischief. I cannot see the parents trying to stop them from doing so hence this will become very stressful for people living above and below.”

“The accommodation is not suitable for families. Too much noise. Will be a problem to the launderette.”

“Young people will not respect people’s way of life and their need for that way of life.”

“Noisy, abusive, disrespectful. It may have a bad impact on me such as fear and anxiety.”

“Noise interference “

“Noise at night when we OAP’s are trying to get some sleep.””

“Children and elderly don’t mix.”

“I have seen this happen before where the children have no respect, the parents have not taught them respect, they will run around, scream, shout and cause trouble especially problem families (alcoholic, drugs used). Also, children hanging around like gangs.”

Appendix 5A

Question 4: Based on the information you have, if option 2 (preferred option) were selected, would you prefer to remain in your current property at Gillett Road or move to alternative accommodation?

Additional comments made in response to Question 4

No explanatory information was requested as part of question 4. However some respondents chose to provide comments and these are listed below.

“Don’t want to move”

“Depends (this is my personal option) on where I am going. If given a lower apartment, I would “

“I don’t want to move from my family & have family in Thornton Heath, Dr’s up the road and most people know”

“Views expressed by letter”

“I want to stay here”

“I do not want to move”

Appendix 5A

Question 5: What impact do you think moving to alternative accommodation would have on you?

Actual qualitative responses to Question 5

“Could cause stress and worrying about their mail being diverted to new address and missing friends at present address”

“Don’t want to move”

“Moving is very stressful. Affects health. Loss of support network. Friends and family live nearby”

“This is my home. I do not want to move”

“Will cause too much stress”

“The block would deteriorate quickly. The lives of elderly people would soon become difficult”

“I do not like change. I would prefer to stay at Gillett Road because it is close to shops, my GP and is easy to access transport.”

“I don’t wish to move as this has been my home for many years. I am used to all the facilities and services in the area ie. doctors, transport and many residents in the block who have become my friends. At this stage in my life, like many elderly people, change is not a good option due to our health and disabilities. this would probably cause disorientation as familiarity is important to me.”

“I am 77 years old and it will be so difficult to move elsewhere”

“Again, personally, I would like to know where I am going. I could then give a positive answer to the question.”

"I was getting accustomed to living at Gillett Road and the very thought of packing up and moving again would be very traumatic and emotional for me, I have made friendships with lovely people."

"My friends and the local temple, doctors"

"The stress of moving due to disabilities. Moving away from people who support me. I like my current property - the location, the floor level and layout because I have a visual impairment. I need adaptation I have now including enhanced lighting, visually impaired friendly kitchen"

"I have paid out a lot to get my flat to the way I like it and I wouldn't want to start doing it all over again."

"Have to change doctors and the rest. I have been here for 14 years"

"I am near the medical centre, shops and transport. Any move will be stressful for me and any extra expense for decorations at new place I will not be able to afford"

"I just don't want to move"

"Too ill to even consider moving. I have spent a lot of money on my flat. Flooring especially."

"At present, near bus routes and station. Doctors surgery near at hand. Also getting to new surrounding and away from family and friends. Cost of moving furniture and carpets. Could not afford this."

"No additional comments made by tenant"

"As above . The reason why I accepted this accommodation is that it is near my sons and the peace felt when I came to view the place. I don't really want to change address again. I want freedom where ever I live. I experienced before the behaviour of youths and the very young and their parents were no different."

"As I said, it would cause me stress. I also have relatives in the area. Also my medical centre and hospitals. Having to reapply for benefits which could affect my health"

"It will affect my depression. I am settled here. Having to move will mean changing utilities, benefits, post etc. I will lose my support network and it will affect my health and well being. What about all the money I have invested into the house?"

Too far from my friends and family, getting to know the area and fear of my safety in the new area. Just a general upheaval of my life at my age where I should be settled and comfortable within my environment.

"What do you think? I will have reapply for my benefits, change my utilities and I will lose my support network. Will the Council reimburse the money I have put towards my flat. All the carpets, sofas, TV, etc I've bought."

"It will cause stress, especially changing everything and I'm on my own. An 80 year old on her own! You need to think about this seriously."

"Would cause a great deal of stress. Present location is convenient for shops, post office and I know people who live in the area"

"Don't want to move"

"As I was told that this building was for elderly people which was for sheltered housing. Only the sick would stay here and we don't want this name changed please. Somewhere else, we don't want them here"

"Moving from here at my age would be difficult over 80. Not in the best of health - all facilities are near and this enables me to get around more easily."

"Moving can be both very stressful and expensive as we are pensioners. Secondly, we are not keeping too well and the thought of having to move is making me feel ill. We are both over 70's and find it difficult at times to do chores. If the plan was to go ahead, then I am left with no choice, but to decide on moving to a quiet and peaceful retirement home. I would like to be given a choice of two or three places."

"Because I lose friends here and we lose support system. It will be stressful for us"

"Cause stress to elderly residents. Also I have my family within the same area. My medical centre is close by and other amenities close by also."

"Got to start all over again. Be very hard to cope with physically and mentally"

"I am too old to change. I want peace and quiet"

"The stress of moving house. The cost of moving. Even if the cost is paid will include carpeting and other fittings. My surgery is only 100m from here - very suitable for. All the shops are only about 200m from me which enable me to cope on my own.

I have been a resident for 2 years and feel now that I am settled here. Within my limited funds, I have slowly been getting the flat in order from the mess to was in when I arrived. I have a limited lifespan and don't, at my age, want to start all over again."

"Would cause stress besides I have my family within. The area, medical centre close by and other amenities"

"Would give me problems reorganising my life."

"Means moving away from our children, all the general needs of shopping and transport would not be available. When we moved here, we surveyed the whole area and found that we would be comfortable with this."

"It would cause no end of problems and stress"

I have been living here in this flat about 20 years. I know the change will kill me. I have made some lovely elderly friends and we look after each other the best we can. What you are suggesting is outrageous. You should find alternative accommodation for this and let the elderly live life with some dignity.

Appendix 5A

Question 6: With respect to Option 3 which other retirement housing block do you consider should have its classification changed from retirement housing to general needs

Comments made in response to Question 6

“Not for me to say - happy where I am”

“As stated in Q1, putting families into this block or any other block would cause overcrowding and could lead to anti-social behaviour. This would cause major problems for the elderly living in this block and surrounding blocks. Therefore, I do not believe any of the retirement housing blocks should have their classification changed.”

“Again, at this point I am not able to give the answer to the question as I do not yet know where I am going or would be going to. I know the majority of the people here don't want to leave.”

“I do not wish to see any of the retirement blocks changed to accommodate families with children. I think the reaction would be the same. There are retired people living in these blocks for over 20-25 years and unless some choose to change. The majority would prefer to stay where they are.”

“I want to stay in this accommodation. I do not want alternative because I need to be near my community centre. Bangladeshi welfare association, mosque, shopping, good communication etc.”

“I do not feel that I have been given sufficient time to investigate this property. I do not know the exact situation of each of the 11 blocks. HOWEVER, based on the information provided, I would say Sevenoaks House”

“No other blocks to be changed - its retirement homes”

“Smaller blocks with 2 bedrooms flats. A family with a few children could not be in a one bedroom”

“No status should change, doesn't eliminate the issues with housing and its status”

"Where are the address of these houses. I don't have a clue where to find them. Are they easy access like Gillett Road. I love where I live. I don't want to move."

"Fully disagree"

"All other blocks left alone"

"I cannot tell which retirement housing blocks should have its classification changed from retirement housing to general needs temporary accommodation for homeless families with children because I have not lived in the other places to make a judgement."

"I don't think any of the residents of retirement housing should be put through this. I were forced to make a choice, it would be Sevenoaks and Tonbridge, the reason being those already given in Q1. and Q2. Also, there are 78 available, to include both blocks. 12 more than Gillett Road and more importantly, it keeps separate, the housing for families with children and housing for elderly residents"

"Have not been to other blocks."

"NONE - leave retirement housing block alone. There is other new property being built - consider those."

Appendix 5A

Question 7: Do you have any other comments on the preferred option (Option 2) ie. Change use to general needs accommodation?

Actual qualitative responses to Question 7

Growing older population so homes will be needed in the future for elderly people and sheltered housing is ideal

Council use their wisdom - residents here need security of home.

Strongly disagree with Option 2 as with a growing older population, sheltered housing and housing for elderly people will be needed in the future.

No good to change

Option 2 is not an option to me as I do not agree that Gillett Road should be changed from a sheltered housing/retirement classification.

My only concern is why would the people living here and are happy, be moved to another place of they do not want to. Again, personally, if am given an apartment in a lower and suitable apartment, I would take it.

Those in retirement housing should not have to endure the upheaval at their time of life.

Here is excellent for me.

If it is elderly, let them live happily and comfortably. Environment should be free form danger and hazards.

The lifts break down and people with wheelchairs cannot get into their homes

Please do not do this.

"I do not agree. It should remain as sheltered housing. The Council has not considered the human factor at all. Why can't the homeless be moved to other

boroughs. If mess outside was cleared, more people would want to move here. I will hold the council directly responsible for anything to me as a result of this change. i will sue the Council should anything happened to me as a result of this change. if feel my health and safety is more in danger than I was on the street and the Council do not move me to suitable accommodation, the I will make myself homeless by leaving the block because I shall feel safer. I shall inform them of this if it happens."

"Sorry, I do not agree with the plan. Think again and the impact it will have on the elderly."

"Do not agree"

"Please do not allow this to happen. You will be old and vulnerable one day. Do you want to be treated like this?"

"I still do not agree with the idea. This block should remain sheltered accommodation."

"Fully disagree"

"Please do not do this. You'll be old one day. "Please have some concern for us the old and the vulnerable."

"Kitchen and bathroom refit query?"

"Do not agree."

"I do not want to move from Gillett Road."

"Do not agree. It should remain sheltered housing."

"We have all the facilities of calling in the event of an emergency where we can get immediate attention. Toilet facilities have been adapted to meet own needs. We are comfortable with the present arrangement."

"Please have some consideration for us elderly....you should find another source, there are so many areas. Thornton Heath is quite a rough area, is that

why you want to put these families here. I stress, leave our blocs alone and give us the respect and peace we deserve. You know there will be alot of trouble cause by this suggestion and I am sure the police will always be here because of the trouble."

Adjustments made to option impact responses to ensure that people views are reflected correctly

Issues:

1. Some people was unclear as to how to answer the following impact questions:

Q3. What impact do you think it may have on you if families with children moved into the block while you were still living there? Please tell us why you feel this way

Q5. What impact do you think moving to alternative accommodation would have on you? Please tell us why you feel this way

Question 3: analysis and adjustments performed:

Where a respondent had said “positive impact” but had qualified this with “positive” in the comments field, we adjusted their response to “negative impact”

4 responses were amended from “positive impact” to “negative impact” on this basis.

Question 5: analysis and adjustments performed:

Where a respondent had said “positive impact” but had qualified this with “positive” in the comments field, we adjusted their response to “negative impact”. 5 responses were amended on this basis.

2 responses were amended from “positive impact” to “negative impact”

3 respondents did not tick the impact boxes but there comments were consistent with a negative impact and were recorded as negative.

Tenant comments by theme

Themes identified from qualitative responses

- i. **Facilities and services**
Laundry, common room, lifts and potential damage to these facilities
- ii. **Anti-social behaviour**
Antisocial behaviour, noise nuisance and unknown visitors
- iii. **Personal health**
Perceived effect on the respondents health, potential effect on existing illnesses
- iv. **Personal safety**
Fear and anxiety, concerns about intimidation and personal safety
- v. **Hazards**
Children running around, being knocked over by children
- vi. **The building**
Properties having one bedroom, over crowding
- vii. **Life style differences**
Incompatibility of mixing younger and older people in block
- viii. **Illegal activity**
Drugs on premises, drug use, theft
- ix. **Maintenance**
Maintenance of building, cleaning and tidiness of the block
- x. **General upheaval**
Moving away from Gillett Road to alternative accommodation, loss of support network, cost of moving.
- xi. **Local facilities**
Proximity to local shops, proximity to transport, near to buses and bus stops, GP surgery

Theme: Facilities and Services:

Laundry, common room, lifts and potential damage to these facilities

"It will directly affect elderly and disabled tenants. The community room would be lost to us because the children would cause issues with noise. The above [option 1] would cause issues i.e.. noise. Health and safety -children running around could cause accidents e.g.. knocking elderly and disabled people over. Damage to the communal areas because people will not take care (lifts /laundry etc.). problem of unknown visitors in the block will increase. laundry schedules will be disregarded. it is already a problem and I feel it will get worse. I have been threatened and abused and I don't want this to happen anymore."

"Not suitable for families. A lot of elderly people, children running up and down. The laundry facilities would be misused."

"One bedroom flats not suitable for children. Older people and children do not mix. Children round common room not suitable and children running around and knocking older people over. Running up and down lifts. Wash house would be used all the time with families with children. Therefore, old people would not be able to use the laundry and washing machines would get damaged."

"I feel younger people will cause problems i.e.. disturbance and intimidating older residents. I also feel facilities i.e. laundry, community room would be abused. I would also not like children running around the corridors causing noise."

"My concern is that "homeless" people will abuse our facilities in the block, they may be intimidating and affect my safety. The other concern is they won't look after the launderette /community room which the council has spent money on. It will raise my anxiety levels, especially if there are kids running around the block. I have a really bad leg and heaven forbid I have an accident with kids playing ball games in the corridors. This will have an implication on my health and NHS bill. This is honesty not thought through properly."

"Sheltered housing is for the elderly above 50 and over and at this stage of our lives, we all need peace and quiet. A year or two ago we were inundated with problems where younger people were visiting and staying overnight have caused havoc such as loud music, misuse of laundry, community room as well as the back stairwell being used by groups of people sitting and having drinks and smokes, leaving litter behind and sometimes using the staircase as a toilet. Often, many calls and reports made to the council by all tenants. the matter was finally taken in hand and at least we got rid of all the trouble makers. We definitely do not want a repeat performance; it will cause a lot of stress and upheaval."

"Young people will cause problems and disturbance. Could also be intimidating to older residents, abuse of facilities ie. lifts, launderette, community rooms, kids running up and down corridors etc"

"Believe having children within the block would cause many problems those being noise disturbance and they could be intimidating to older residents. I feel they would abuse the facilities such as laundry, lifts and community room"

"Disruption to elderly tenants on landings, lifts, laundry rooms, noise and general unrest."

"Not suitable for children up and down in the lifts , running around and getting knocked down"

"No safe areas for children. Children running up and down playing in passageways, stairwells and lifts."

"Single parents with young children don't mix well. Lots of noise in the building. Lifts will be misused by children."

"No access to the lift, drugs might be on premises. Thieves might be on premises."

"Cause residents hassle using the lift and people will not have ??? Use of facilities."

"Party and drugs, wouldn't feel safe, laundry"

"Potential for abuse of facilities ie. Community room garden and launderette . How is the laundry facilities going to be regulated. Works fine at the moment with residents respectful of each other. Potential for anti-social behaviour inside and outside the building. People living in Gillett Road will not value the building or its surroundings."

"Gillett Rd cannot be used for general needs temporary accommodation because of the noise to will cause to older people, anti-social behaviour, abuse of facilities, noise, safety of older people, fear of being robbed, use of community room with younger people etc. also, general health of myself and other people needs to be taken into serious consideration."

"...Obviously these buildings are not wasted being kept got OAP's/Retirement homes, there is no need to house others from the Croydon community, families with young children riding up and down in the lifts chasing around the landings and communal parts) trashing the entry doors so that the do not work, and the fore doors,

copulating on the stairs and in other communal parts of the tower blocks, junkies etc all of which take part on other estates that I have seen. We have to call the police in to remove tramps etc from the chute rooms already. IS THAT HOW YOU TAKE CARE OF YOR ELDERLY AND DISABLED.” [comments submitted by letter)

Theme: anti-social behaviour

Antisocial behaviour, noise nuisance and unknown visitors

“This is a sheltered block and I like it like that. Don’t need families’ making a noise and anti social behaviour. We keep the block clean and tidy and wouldn’t happen with families as they wouldn’t care.”

“I am a 94 year old lady. Having kids in my block will put risk on my health. There will be anti-social behaviour which can’t bear. I am already very scared of the general public in Croydon. Please don’t do this. I will lose all I’ve got.”

“Gillett Rd cannot be used for general needs temporary accommodation because of the noise to will cause to older people, anti social behaviour, abuse of facilities, noise, safety of older people, fear of being robbed, use of community room with younger people etc. also, general health of myself and other people needs to be taken into serious consideration.”

“Gillett Road and the majority of retirement housing blocks are generally one bedroom flats. This accommodation is not suitable to put families into as this would cause overcrowding which can then lead to antisocial behaviour. This would most definitely cause major problems for the elderly living in the block and surrounding blocks. It would affect the whole environment making inside and outside of the building insecure and unsafe. Most of the elderly are of poor health and some very frail with mobility problems. This would cause stress and without a doubt accelerate decline on health. This situation will take away the little quality of life that we have.”

“There are a lot of reason to be honest. Most importantly the safety of he old and vulnerable, abusing facilities (which will cost the council a fortune). Anti social behaviour, feeling intimidated and how long is temporary? They will not value the facilities. why are old and vulnerable being targeted? Also, my friends in the block like to wake up in the morning and like praying. We have a wonderful and peaceful environment, we do not want that to be ruined. I have had a bad experience in the past. I used to live on Livingstone Road which is general housing. I had so many problems. Kids leaving rubbish in the front of my door, littering the place, noise was unbearable til past midnight and eventually I was diagnosed with depression. Please do not do this again.”

“Single parents with young children don’t mix well. Lots of noise in the building. Lifts will be misused by children.”

“It will directly affect elderly and disabled tenants. The community room would be lost to us because the children would cause issues with noise. The above [option 1] would cause issues i.e.. noise. Health and safety -children running around could cause accidents e.g.. k knocking elderly and disabled people over. Damage to the communal areas because people will not take care (lifts /laundry etc.). problem of unknown visitors in the block will increase. laundry schedules will be disregarded. it is already a problem and I feel it will get worse. I have been threatened and abused and I don’t want this to happen anymore.”

“Residents here are alcoholics/drugs and also elderly do not want screaming on the block.”

“The flats are not suitable for families as these are one bed accommodation. Not proper for children of all ages staying with parents. There will be a lot of things being left on the landings.”

“I feel younger people will cause problems i.e.. disturbance and intimidating older residents. I also feel facilities i.e. laundry, community room would be abused. I would also not like children running around the corridors causing noise.”

“Believe having children within the block would cause many problems those being noise disturbance and they could be intimidating to older residents. I feel they would abuse the facilities such as laundry, lifts and community room”

“Noise pollution, one bedroom flats are for couples only - no children, sheltered housing is meant for OAP's hence one bedroom”

“Sheltered housing was meant for the elderly, so that at this stage of our lives. 60 and over. We need a bit of peace and quiet in our lives not all the hassle this new proposal will bring. In the past we were having young people coming here and staying with relatives causing all kinds of problems in the building. After a while, that trouble was sorted. We do not want to go back to that situation.”

“Sheltered housing is for the elderly above 50 and over and at this stage of our lives, we all need peace and quiet. A year or two ago we were inundated with problems where younger people were visiting and staying over night have caused havoc such as loud music, misuse of laundry, community room as well as the back stairwell being used by groups of people sitting and having drinks and smokes, leaving litter behind and sometimes using the staircase as a toilet. often, many calls and reports made to the council by all tenants. the matter was finally taken in hand and at least we got rid of all the trouble makers. We definitely do not want a repeat performance, it will cause a lot of stress and upheaval.”

“These retirement home are not suitable for general accommodation,, there will be a lot of trouble cause by children and families. The retirement home is peaceful and safe with just us elderly. There will be a lot of trouble caused and no respect for us elderly. I can see a lot of trouble ahead if this should happen.”

*“Potential for abuse of facilities ie. Community room garden and launderette . How is the laundry facilities going to be regulated. Works fine at the moment with residents respectful of each other. Potential for anti-social behaviour inside and outside the building. People living in Gillett Road will not value the building or its surroundings. “
“Noise and anti social behaviour”*

“Gillett Rd has been housing for the elderly for many years. They have a sense of community and safety within the block and induction of family within this setting would compromise the safety of elderly resident and vulnerability y ie. young families make more noise, hang around corridors, children running around,. the young are disrespectful [of] the elderly, it is a general statement I am making because I see i everyday.”

“I just do not think that this would work as this is a building for people who are now retired and require a lifestyle of peace and quiet.”

“As Q1 and how long is temporary and what will happen if misbehaviour takes place, Who will monitor. The place is clean and will not stay clean with other people coming in.”

“Young people especially with children would put a strain on facilities lifts, laundry etc”

“Reasons as in Q1 and the fact that residents of Garnett Road and the 'bungalows' in Gillett Road will suffer disruption due to their close proximity of Gillett Road block-sound travels. There is, as you know, an increasing elderly population and going ahead with this ill considered sticking plaster solution rather than tackle the problem long term is unworthy. If the Council are considering a saving of approximately £105 per family, have they considered the extra cost of cleaning, repairs and refurbishment required for temporary accommodation?”

“If families with children moved into the block whole we are still living here, it will have a negative impact because children are noisy and abusive and they will be running aorund the corridors , on their bicycles. There will be a problem of the launderette and misuse of the community room.”

“Noisy, abusive, disrespectful. It may have a bad impact on me such as fear and anxiety”

“Noise interference”

“Noise at night when we OAP's are trying to get some sleep.”

“Residents here are alcoholics/drugs and also elderly do not want screaming on the block.”

Theme: Personal health

Perceived effect on the respondents health, potential effect on existing illnesses

“Gillett Road and the majority of retirement housing blocks are generally one bedroom flats. This accommodation is not suitable to put families into as this would cause overcrowding which can then lead to antisocial behaviour. This would most definitely cause major problems for the elderly living in the block and surrounding blocks. It would effect the whole environment making inside and outside of the building insecure and unsafe. Most of the elderly are of poor health and some very frail with mobility problems. This would cause stress and without a doubt accelerate decline on health. This situation will take away the little quality of life that we have.”

“My concern is that "homeless" people will abuse our facilities in the block, they may be intimidating and affect my safety. The other concern is they won't look after the launderette /community room which the council has spent money on. It will raise my anxiety levels, especially if there are kids running around the block. I have a really bad leg and heaven forbid I have an accident with kids playing ball games in the corridors. This will have an implication on my health and NHS bill. This is honesty not thought through properly.”

“Sheltered housing is for the elderly above 50 and over and at this stage of our lives, we all need peace and quiet. A year or two ago we were inundated with problems where younger people were visiting and staying over night have caused havoc such as loud music, misuse of laundry, community room as well as the back stairwell being used by groups of people sitting and having drinks and smokes, leaving litter behind and sometimes using the staircase as a toilet. often, many calls and reports made to the council by all tenants. the matter was finally taken in hand and at least we got rid of all the trouble makers. We definitely do not want a repeat performance, it will cause a lot of stress and upheaval.”

“Gillett Rd cannot be used for general needs temporary accommodation because of the noise to will cause to older people, anti social behaviour, abuse of facilities, noise, safety of older people, fear of being robbed, use of community room with

younger people etc. also, general health of myself and other people needs to be taken into serious consideration.”

“It will directly affect elderly and disabled tenants. The community room would be lost to us because the children would cause issues with noise. The above [option 1] would cause issues i.e.. noise. Health and safety -children running around could cause accidents e.g.. k knocking elderly and disabled people over. Damage to the communal areas because people will not take care (lifts /laundry etc.). problem of unknown visitors in the block will increase. laundry schedules will be disregarded. it is already a problem and I feel it will get worse. I have been threatened and abused and I don't want this to happen anymore.”

“Block not big enough for families with children. Living in one room as the block in Gillett should be elderly people sick and should not be removed.”

“Moved here because it was sheltered housing. The proposed change would cause me stress and affect my health”

“As an elderly person and I speak for all of us as well we have worked hard all our life and just want peace and quiet and no trouble before we die and this move is a very bad one you are proposing.

It will cause stress, especially changing everything and I'm on my own. An 80 year old on her own! You need to think about this seriously.

“I have been living here in this flat about 20 years. I know the change will kill me. I have made some lovely elderly friends and we look after each other the best we can. What you are suggesting is outrageous. You should find alternative accommodation for this and let the elderly live life with some dignity.”

“I am a 94 year old lady. Having kids in my block will put risk on my health. There will be anti-social behaviour which can't bear. I am already very scared of the general public in Croydon. Please don't do this. I will lose all I've got.”

“Most of the tenants are not well and they do not want to move. Lots of people have lived here for a long time . There doctors are nearby for help. Shops are near. Transport links are good. Very serious matter. People could die if they move. “

“There are a lot of reason to be honest. Most importantly the safety of he old and vulnerable, abusing facilities (which will cost the council a fortune). Anti-social behaviour, feeling intimidated and how long is temporary? They will not value the facilities. why are old and vulnerable being targeted? Also, my friends in the block

like to wake up in the morning and like praying. We have a wonderful and peaceful environment, we do not want that to be ruined. I have had a bad experience in the past. I used to live on Livingstone Road which is general housing. I had so many problems. Kids leaving rubbish in the front of my door, littering the place, noise was unbearable until past midnight and eventually I was diagnosed with depression. Please do not do this again."

"No sense in moving existing tenants to move families in. I am sick, where am I going to go? I am too poorly to move"

"My issue is this will impact our lives in many ways, it will cause a lot of anti social behaviour, homeless people will be intimidating, kids running around in the block will harm my safety at the property. They will abuse the facilities especially if temporary. They will have no value for the facilities. It will affect my anxiety levels as I'm a timid person."

"It will cause stress, especially changing everything and I'm on my own. An 80 year old on her own! You need to think about this seriously."

"Moving is very stressful. Affects health. Loss of support network. Friends and family live near by"

"Too ill to even consider moving. I have spent a lot of money on my flat. Flooring especially."

"The stress of moving due to disabilities. Moving away from people who support me. I like my current property - the location, the floor level and layout because I have a visual impairment. I need adaptation I have now including enhanced lighting, visually impaired friendly kitchen"

"As I said, it would cause me stress. I also have relatives in the area. Also my medical centre and hospitals. Having to reapply for benefits which could affect my health"

"It would cause no end of problems and stress"

"Moving from here at my age would be difficult over 80. not in the best of health - all facilities are near and this enables me to get around more easily."

"Most of the tenants are not well and they do not want to move. Lots of people have lived here for a long time . There doctors are nearby for help. Shops are near. Transport links are good. Very serious matter. People could die if they move."

“Noisy, abusive, disrespectful. It may have a bad impact on me such as fear and anxiety.”

“Got to start all over again. Be very hard to cope with physically and mentally.”

“I don’t wish to move. Moving is stressful. I will be cut off from my friends and relatives who form my support. Besides, I am not sure the new place will be accessible and spacious like here. What will happen to the furnishing... I will need financial help moving. It will affect my health.”

“Moving from here at my age would be difficult over 80. Not in the best of health - all facilities are near and this enables me to get around more easily.”

“Moving can be both very stressful and expensive as we are pensioners. Secondly, we are not keeping too well and the thought of having to move is making me feel ill. We are both over 70's and find it difficult at times to do chores. If the plan was to go ahead, then I am left with no choice, but to decide on moving to a quiet and peaceful retirement home. I would like to be given a choice of two or three places.”

“Because lose friends here and we loose support system. It will be stressful for us”

“Cause stress to elderly residents. Also I have my family within the same area. My medical centre is close by and other amenities close by also.”

“The stress of moving house. The cost of moving. Even if the cost is paid will include carpeting and other fittings. My surgery is only 100m from here - very suitable for. All the shops are only about 200m from me which enable me to cope on my own.”

“Would cause stress besides I have my family within. The area, medical centre close by and other amenities.”

Theme: Personal safety

Fear and anxiety, concerns about intimidation and personal safety

“It will directly affect elderly and disabled tenants. The community room would be lost to us because the children would cause issues with noise. The above [option 1] would cause issues i.e.. noise. Health and safety -children running around could cause accidents e.g.. k knocking elderly and disabled people over. Damage to the communal areas because people will not take care (lifts /laundry etc.). problem of unknown visitors in the block will increase. laundry schedules will be disregarded. it is already a problem and I feel it will get worse. I have been threatened and abused and I don't want this to happen anymore.”

"I feel younger people will cause problems i.e.. disturbance and intimidating older residents. I also feel facilities i.e. laundry, community room would be abused. I would also not like children running around the corridors causing noise."

"There are a lot of reason to be honest. Most importantly the safety of he old and vulnerable, abusing facilities (which will cost the council a fortune). Anti social behaviour, feeling intimidated and how long is temporary? They will not value the facilities. why are old and vulnerable being targeted? Also, my friends in the block like to wake up in the morning and like praying. We have a wonderful and peaceful environment, we do not want that to be ruined. I have had a bad experience in the past. I used to live on Livingstone Road which is general housing. I had so many problems. Kids leaving rubbish in the front of my door, littering the place, noise was unbearable til past midnight and eventually I was diagnosed with depression. Please do not do this again."

"My concern is that "homeless" people will abuse our facilities in the block, they may be intimidating and affect my safety. The other concern is they won't look after the launderette /community room which the council has spent money on. It will raise my anxiety levels, especially if there are kids running around the block. I have a really bad leg and heaven forbid I have an accident with kids playing ball games in the corridors. This will have an implication on my health and NHS bill. This is honesty not thought through properly."

"My issue is this will impact our lives in many ways, it will cause a lot of anti-social behaviour, homeless people will be intimidating, kids running around in the block will harm my safety at the property. They will abuse the facilities especially if temporary. They will have no value for the facilities. It will affect my anxiety levels as I'm a timid person."

"Believe having children within the block would cause many problems those being noise disturbance and they could be intimidating to older residents. I feel they would abuse the facilities such as laundry, lifts and community room"

"Young people will cause problems and disturbance. Could also be intimidating to older residents, abuse of facilities ie. lifts, launderette, community rooms, kids running up and down corridors etc"

"Security of other resident would be put at risk"

"Party and drugs, wouldn't feel safe, laundry"

"Gillett Rd cannot be used for general needs temporary accommodation because of the noise to will cause to older people, anti social behaviour, abuse of facilities, noise, safety of older people, fear of being robbed, use of community room with younger people etc. also, general health of myself and other people needs to be taken into serious consideration."

“Gillett Road and the majority of retirement housing blocks are generally one bedroom flats. This accommodation is not suitable to put families into as this would cause overcrowding which can then lead to antisocial behaviour. This would most definitely cause major problems for the elderly living in the block and surrounding blocks. It would effect the whole environment making inside and outside of the building insecure and unsafe. Most of the elderly are of poor health and some very frail with mobility problems. This would cause stress and without a doubt accelerate decline on health. This situation will take away the little quality of life that we have.”

“These retirement home are not suitable for general accommodation. There will be a lot of trouble cause by children and families. The retirement home is peaceful and safe with just us elderly. There will be a lot of trouble caused and no respect for us elderly. I can see a lot of trouble ahead if this should happen.”

“See Q1. plus I am visually impaired-the threats, intimidation, noise, abuse and resultant stress are a principal concern. I moved here because it was sheltered accommodation and my disabilities require a peaceful, quiet and friendly environment. Any change that would disturb that would cause me stress and affect my health and safety considerably. “

“Will cause fear amongst those already living here. Lack of peace of mind through noise.”

“Will cause fear and feel unsafe living in my home. Lack of peace of mind. Fear of loss of community spirit which already exists here. Fear of dogs and visitors bringing dogs into the building”

“I am worried about strangers coming into the block that I do not know. It is hard to know how I would feel until they start moving in. But I will cope.”

Theme: Hazards

Children running around, being knocked over by children

“It will directly affect elderly and disabled tenants. The community room would be lost to us because the children would cause issues with noise. The above [option 1] would cause issues i.e.. noise. Health and safety -children running around could cause accidents e.g.. k knocking elderly and disabled people over. Damage to the communal areas because people will not take care (lifts /laundry etc.). problem of unknown visitors in the block will increase. laundry schedules will be disregarded. it is already a problem and I feel it will get worse. I have been threatened and abused and I don't want this to happen anymore.”

"My concern is that "homeless" people will abuse our facilities in the block, they may be intimidating and affect my safety. The other concern is they won't look after the launderette /community room which the council has spent money on. It will raise my anxiety levels, especially if there are kids running around the block. I have a really bad leg and heaven forbid I have an accident with kids playing ball games in the corridors. This will have an implication on my health and NHS bill. This is honesty not thought through properly."

"My issue is this will impact our lives in many ways, it will cause a lot of anti-social behaviour, homeless people will be intimidating, kids running around in the block will harm my safety at the property. They will abuse the facilities especially if temporary. They will have no value for the facilities. It will affect my anxiety levels as I'm a timid person."

"Not suitable for children, up and down [in] lifts, running around, get knocked down."

"No safe areas for children. Children running up and down playing in passageways, stairwells and lifts."

"Not suitable for families. A lot of elderly people, children running up and down. The laundry facilities would be misused."

"One bedroom flats not suitable for children. Older people and children do not mix. Children round common room not suitable and children running around and knocking older people over. Running up and down lifts. Wash house would be used all the time with families with children. Therefore, old people would not be able to use the laundry and washing machines would get damaged."

"I feel younger people will cause problems i.e.. disturbance and intimidating older residents. I also feel facilities i.e. laundry, community room would be abused. I would also not like children running around the corridors causing noise."

"Young people will cause problems and disturbance. Could also be intimidating to older residents, abuse of facilities ie. lifts, launderette, community rooms, kids running up and down corridors etc."

"Younger people will cause problems ie. disturbance could be intimidating to older residents, abuse facilities ie. lifts, launderette kids running up and down corridors."

"Children always running around and playing in lifts and noisy"

"Children being children will be running will be running around the floors and could possibly hurt or injury elderly and infirm tenants."

“... Obviously these buildings are not wasted being kept got OAP's/Retirement homes, there is no need to house others from the Croydon community, families with young children riding up and down in the lifts chasing around the landings and communal parts) trashing the entry doors so that they do not work, and the fore doors, copulating on the stairs and in other communal parts of the tower blocks, junkies etc all of which take part on other estates that I have seen. We have to call the police in to remove tramps etc from the chute rooms already. IS THAT HOW YOU TAKE CARE OF YOUR ELDERLY AND DISABLED.” [comments submitted by letter)

The building

Properties having one bedroom, over crowding

“I am not sure that one bedroom flat will be suitable with children next to older people.”

“One bedroom flats are not suitable for families with children”

“The flats are not suitable for families as these are one bed accommodation. Not proper for children of all ages staying with parents. There will be a lot of things being left on the landings.”

“One bedroom flats not suitable for children. Older people and children do not mix. Children round common room not suitable and children running around and knocking older people over. Running up and down lifts. Wash house would be used all the time with families with children. Therefore, old people would not be able to use the laundry and washing machines would get damaged.”

“Just not suitable. How can you put families with young children into a one bedroom flat, I don't understand. Perish the thought of all sorts of people coming in and out. I want to feel secure that when I travel, I will come back to find my house as I left it.”

“Block not big enough for families with children. Living in one room as the block in Gillett should be elderly people sick and should not be removed.”

“Gillett Road is not suitable for general needs temporary accommodation...as they are one bed flats”

“Noise pollution, one bedroom flats are for couples only - no children, sheltered housing is meant for OAP's hence one bedroom”

“Gillett Road and the majority of retirement housing blocks are generally one bedroom flats. This accommodation is not suitable to put families into as this would cause overcrowding which can then lead to antisocial behaviour. This would most definitely cause major problems for the elderly living in the block and surrounding blocks. It would effect the whole environment making inside and outside of the building insecure and unsafe. Most of the elderly are of poor health and some very frail with mobility problems. This would cause stress and without a doubt accelerate decline on health. This situation will take away the little quality of life that we have.”

Sheltered housing was meant for the elderly, so that at this stage of our lives. 60 and over. We need a bit of peace and quiet in our lives not all the hassle this new proposal will bring. In the past we were having young people coming here and staying with relatives causing all kinds of problems in the building. after a while, that trouble was sorted. we do not want to go back to that situation.

“Yes, make a mess and will cost more to maintain. Damage facilities (electric)”

“This is a sheltered block and I like it like that. Don’t need families' making a noise and anti-social behaviour. We keep the block clean and tidy and wouldn’t happen with families as they wouldn’t care.”

“One bedroom flat is definitely not suitable for young families with children anyway”

“It won’t be fair on the children to be cooped up in these flats. They are not big enough for a couple leave alone kids. Children will want to run around and play, scream and shout at one another and will be up to all kinds of mischief. I cannot see the parents trying to stop them from doing so hence this will become very stressful for people living above and below.”

“The block would deteriorate quickly. The lives of elderly people would soon become difficult.”

Theme: Life style differences

Incompatibility of mixing younger and older people in block

“Gillett Rd cannot be used for general needs temporary accommodation because of the noise to will cause to older people, anti-social behaviour, abuse of facilities, noise, safety of older people, fear of being robbed, use of community room with younger people etc. also, general health of myself and other people needs to be taken into serious consideration.”

“Single parents with young children don’t mix well. Lots of noise in the building. Lifts will be misused by children.”

“I think it would be best to leave it. How do you know younger people would want to live with older people.”

“One bedroom flats not suitable for children. Older people and children do not mix. Children round common room not suitable and children running around and knocking older people over. Running up and down lifts. Wash house would be used all the time with families with children. Therefore, old people would not be able to use the laundry and washing machines would get damaged.”

“We are a group of older people who have a similar outlook and a certain community togetherness. Bringing in young people with a different mind set would disrupt this especially on a temporary basis.”

“Sheltered housing is for the elderly above 50 and over and at this stage of our lives, we all need peace and quiet. A year or two ago we were inundated with problems where younger people were visiting and staying over night have caused havoc such as loud music, misuse of laundry, community room as well as the back stairwell being used by groups of people sitting and having drinks and smokes, leaving litter behind and sometimes using the staircase as a toilet. Often, many calls and reports made to the council by all tenants. The matter was finally taken in hand and at least we got rid of all the trouble makers. We definitely do not want a repeat performance, it will cause a lot of stress and upheaval.”

“No access to the lift, drugs might be on premises. Thieves might be on premises. No respect for elderly people.”

“Young people will not respect peoples way of life and their need for that way of life”

“These retirement home are not suitable for general accommodation,, there will be a lot of trouble cause by children and families. The retirement home is peaceful and safe with just us elderly. There will be a lot of trouble caused and no respect for us elderly. I can see a lot of trouble ahead if this should happen.”

“I don’t think that its fair having young people living with older people and the older people have lived here for years.”

“Mix of young and old will not work”

“Gillett Rd has been housing for the elderly for many years. They have a sense of community and safety within the block and induction of family within this setting would compromise the safety of elderly resident and vulnerability y ie. young families make more noise, hang around corridors, children running around,. the young are

disrespectful [of] the elderly, it is a general statement I am making because I see it everyday."

"I have seen this happen before where the children have no respect, the parents have not taught them respect, they will run around, scream, shout and cause trouble especially problem families (alcoholic, drugs used). Also, children hanging around like gangs"

"Children and elderly don't mix"

"Children should have and need space to play and run around, not confined in the space provided. They will cause more problems with people living above and below them. Won't be pleasant for the elderly people."

No respect for elderly people."

Theme: illegal activity

Drugs on premises, drug use, theft

"Just not suitable. How can you put families with young children into a one bedroom flat, I don't understand. Perish the thought of all sorts of people coming in and out. I want to feel secure that when I travel, I will come back to find my house as I left it."

"No access to the lift, drugs might be on premises. Thieves might be on premises."

"Party and drugs, wouldn't feel safe, laundry"

"I have seen this happen before where the children have no respect, the parents have not taught them respect, they will run around, scream, shout and cause trouble especially problem families (alcoholic, drugs used). Also, children hanging around like gangs"

"... Obviously these buildings are not wasted being kept got OAP's/Retirement homes, there is no need to house others from the Croydon community, families with young children riding up and down in the lifts chasing around the landings and communal parts) trashing the entry doors so that they do not work, and the fore doors, copulating on the stairs and in other communal parts of the tower blocks, junkies etc all of which take part on other estates that I have seen. We have to call the police in to remove tramps etc from the chute rooms already. IS THAT HOW YOU TAKE CARE OF YOUR ELDERLY AND DISABLED." [comments submitted by letter]

Theme: Maintenance

Maintenance of building, cleaning and tidiness of the block

“Yes, make a mess and will cost more to maintain. Damage facilities (electric)”

“This is a sheltered block and I like it like that. Don’t need families’ making a noise and anti-social behaviour. We keep the block clean and tidy and wouldn’t happen with families as they wouldn’t care”

“As Q1 and how long is temporary and what will happen if misbehaviour takes place, Who will monitor. The place is clean and will not stay clean with other people coming in.”

“Yes, make a mess and will cost more to maintain. Damage facilities (electric)”

Theme: General upheaval

Moving away from Gillett Road to alternative accommodation, loss of support network, cost of moving.

“No sense in moving existing tenants to move families in. I am sick, where am I going to go? I am too poorly to move “

“Everyone I have spoken to do not want to leave. They are happy hear. At our age, we do not want to be going from place to place”

“Will not work - too disturbing for other residents”

“I want to stay in this accommodation. I do not want alternative because I need to be near my community centre. Bangladeshi welfare association, mosque, shopping , good communication etc. “

“Where are the address of these houses. I don’t have a clue where to find them. Are they easy access like Gillett Road. I love where I live. I don’t want to move”

“I don’t wish to move as this has been my home for many years. I am used to all the facilities and services in the area ie. doctors, transport and many residents in the block who have become my friends. At this stage in my life, like may elderly people, change is not a good option due to our health and disabilities. this would probably cause disorientation as familiarity is important to me”

"I was getting accustomed to living at Gillett Road and the very thought of packing up and moving again would be very traumatic and emotional for me, I have made friendships with lovely people."

"I have paid out a lot to get my flat to the way I like it and I wouldn't want to start doing it all over again."

"Too ill to even consider moving. I have spent a lot of money on my flat. Flooring especially."

"A present, near bus routes and station. Doctors surgery near at hand. Also getting to new surroundings and away from family and friends. Cost of moving furniture and carpets. Could not afford this."

"The reason why I accepted this accommodation is that it is near my sons and the peace felt when I came to view the place. I don't really want to change address again. I want freedom where ever I live. I experienced before the behaviour of youths and the very young and their parents were no different."

"It will affect my depression. I am settled here. Having to move will mean changing utilities, benefits, post etc. I will lose my support network and it will affect my health and well being. What about all the money I have invested into the house?"

"Too far from my friends and family, getting to know the area and fear of my safety in the new area. Just a general upheaval of my life at my age where I should be settled and comfortable within my environment."

*"What do you think? I will have reapply for my benefits, change my utilities and I will lose my support network. Will the Council reimburse the money I have put towards my flat. All the carpets, sofas, TV, etc I've bought."
Would cause a great deal of stress. Present location is convenient for shops, post office and I know people who live in the area."*

"The stress of moving house. The cost of moving. Even if the cost is paid will include carpeting and other fittings. My surgery is only 100m from here - very suitable for. All the shops are only about 200m from me which enable me to cope on my own."

"I have been a resident for 2 years and feel now that I am settled here. Within my limited funds, I have slowly been getting the flat in order from the mess it was in when I arrived. I have a limited lifespan and don't, at my age, want to start all over again."

“Could cause stress and worrying about their mail being diverted to new address and missing friends at present address.”

“Don’t want to move”

“Moving is very stressful. Affects health. Loss of support network. Friends and family live near by”

“This is my home. I do not want to move”

“Will cause too much stress.”

“I do not like change. I would prefer to stay at Gillett Road because it is close to shops, my GP and is easy to access transport.”

“I don’t wish to move as this has been my home for many years. I am used to all the facilities and services in the area ie. doctors, transport and many residents in the block who have become my friends. At this stage in my life, like many elderly people, change is not a good option due to our health and disabilities. This would probably cause disorientation as familiarity is important to me.”

“I am 77 years old and it will be so difficult to move elsewhere”

“Again, personally, I would like to know where I am going. I could then give a positive answer to the question.”

“I was getting accustomed to living at Gillett Road and the very thought of packing up and moving again would be very traumatic and emotional for me, I have made friendships with lovely people.”

“The stress of moving due to disabilities. Moving away from people who support me. I like my current property - the location, the floor level and layout because I have a visual impairment. I need adaptation I have now including enhanced lighting, visually impaired friendly kitchen.”

“I have paid out a lot to get my flat to the way I like it and I wouldn’t want to start doing it all over again.”

“My friends and the local temple, doctors “

“Have to change doctors and the rest. I have been here for 14 years.”

“I am near the medical centre, shops and transport. Any move will be stressful for me and any extra expense for decorations at new place I will not be able to afford.”

Too ill to even consider moving. I have spent a lot of money on my flat. Flooring especially.

A present, near bus routes and station. Doctors surgery near at hand. Also getting to new surroundings and away from family and friends. Cost of moving furniture and carpets. Could not afford this.

The reason why I accepted this accommodation is that it is near my sons and the peace felt when I came to view the place. I don't really want to change address again. I want freedom where ever I live. I experienced before the behaviour of youths and the very young and their parents were no different.

As I said, it would cause me stress. I also have relatives in the area. Also my medical centre and hospitals. Having to reapply for benefits which could affect my health

“It will affect my depression. I am settled here. Having to move will mean changing utilities, benefits, post etc. I will lose my support network and it will affect my health and wellbeing. What about all the money I have invested into the house?”

“Too far from my friends and family, getting to know the area and fear of my safety in the new area. Just a general upheaval of my life at my age where I should be settled and comfortable within my environment.”

“...I will have reapply for my benefits, change my utilities and I will lose my support network. Will the Council reimburse the money I have put towards my flat. All the carpets, sofas, TV, etc I've bought.”

“It will cause stress, especially changing everything and I'm on my own. An 80 year old on her own! You need to think about this seriously.”

“Would cause a great deal of stress. Present location is convenient for shops, post office and I know people who live in the area.”

“Got to start all over again. Be very hard to cope with physically and mentally.”

"I don't wish to move. Moving is stressful. I will be cut off from my friends and relatives who form my support. Besides, I am not sure the new place will be accessible and spacious like here. What will happen to the furnishing.... I will need financial help moving. It will affect my health."

"Moving can be both very stressful and expensive as we are pensioners. Secondly, we are not keeping to well and the thought of having to move is making me feel ill. We are both over 70's and find it difficult at times to do chores. If the plan was to go ahead, then I am left with no choice, but to decide on moving to a quiet and peaceful retirement home. I would like to be given a choice of two or three places."

"I have been a resident for 2 years and feel now that I am settled here. Within my limited funds, I have slowly been getting the flat in order from the mess it was in when I arrived. I have a limited lifespan and don't, at my age, want to start all over again."

"The stress of moving house. The cost of moving. Even if the cost is paid will include carpeting and other fittings. My surgery is only 100m from here - very suitable for. All the shops are only about 200m from me which enable me to cope on my own."

"I am too old to change. I want peace and quiet"

"Would give me problems reorganising my life."

"Because loose friends here and we loose support system. It will be stressful for us"

"I have been living here in this flat about 20 years. I know the change will kill me. I have made some lovely elderly friends and we look after each other the best we can. What you are suggesting is outrageous. You should find alternative accommodation for this and let the elderly live life with some dignity."

"I don't want to move from my family & have family in Thornton Heath, Dr's up the road and most people know."

Theme: Local facilities

Proximity to local shops, proximity to transport, near to buses and bus stops, GP surgery

"Most of the tenants are not well and they do not want to move. Lots of people have lived here for a long time . There doctors are nearby for help. Shops are near. Transport links are good. Very serious matter. People could die if they move. "

“Because it’s easy access to shopping, buses and GP’s”

I have signed a tenancy agreement with you that stated that is sheltered accommodation,. I won’t move from here until I die. I don’t want to move to no where else, easy to go to doctor, easy for shopping, easy for public transport.

“The stress of moving due to disabilities. Moving away from people who support me. I like my current property - the location, the floor level and layout because I have a visual impairment. I need adaptation I have now including enhanced lighting, visually impaired friendly kitchen”

“As I said, it would cause me stress. I also have relatives in the area. Also my medical centre and hospitals. Having to reapply for benefits which could affect my health”

I don’t wish to move. Moving is stressful. I will be cut off from my friends and relatives who form my support. Besides,, I am not sure the new place will be accessible and spacious like her. What will happen to the furnishing.... I will need financial help moving. it will affect my health.

Don’t want to move

“As I was told that this building was for elderly people which was for sheltered housing. Only the sick would stay here and we don’t want this name changed please. Somewhere else, we don’t want them here”

“Moving from here at my age would be difficult over 80. not in the best of health - all facilities are near and this enables me to get around more easily.”

“Moving can be both very stressful and expensive as we are pensioners. Secondly, we are not keeping too well and the thought of having to move is making me feel ill. We are both over 70’s and find it difficult at times to do chores. if the plan was to go ahead, then I am left with no choice, but to decide on moving to a quiet and peaceful retirement home. I would like to be given a choice of two or three places.”

“Cause stress to elderly residents. Also I have my family within the same area. My medical centre is close by and other amenities close by also.”

“Would cause stress besides I have my family within. The area, medical centre close by and other amenities.”

“I am too old to change. I want peace and quiet”

“Would give me problems reorganising my life.”

“Means moving away from our children, all the general needs of shopping and transport would not be available. When we moved here, we surveyed the whole area and found that we would be comfortable with this.”

“Because loose friends here and we loose support system. It will be stressful for us”

“Cause stress to elderly residents. Also I have my family within the same area. My medical centre is close by and other amenities close by also.”

“I want to stay in this accommodation. I do not want alternative because I need to be near my community centre. Bangladeshi welfare association, mosque, shopping , good communication etc. “

“The stress of moving house. The cost of moving. Even if the cost is paid will include carpeting and other fittings. My surgery is only 100m from here - very suitable for. All the shops are only about 200m from me which enable me to cope on my own.”

“Would cause stress besides I have my family within. The area, medical centre close by and other amenities.”

“Means moving away from our children, all the general needs of shopping and transport would not be available. When we moved here, we surveyed the whole area and found that we would be comfortable with this.”

“I don't want to move from my family & have family in Thornton Heath, Dr's up the road and most people know.”

APPENDIX 7

Notes of Gillett Road Consultation Event Thursday 7th March 2013

Officers in attendance

Tim Nash – Resident involvement & scrutiny co-ordinator

Leonard Asamoah – Head of housing solutions

Joy Gardner – Project officer

Sylvie Saunders – Senior involvement support officer

Vanessa Gauld – Involvement support officer (first session only)

Sheila Thomas – Involvement support officer (first session only)

Gemma Smith – Involvement support officer (first session only)

Angelique Banton – Senior tenancy officer (first session only)

Margaret Padmore – Tenancy manager (first session only)

Rachel Pankhurst – Tenancy support officer (first session only)

These notes are a record of the questions and/or observations from tenants during the consultation meeting and the responses given by council officers present at the meeting.

Where a question or observation is repeated, it is noted as such.

Resident – Why have you chosen this block instead of Sevenoaks or Tonbridge House? Children will disrupt the lives of tenants in Garnet Road and also the bungalows across the road

Officer (LA) – For a number of reasons people like different areas of the borough. In choosing Gillett we ensure there is still a spread of retirement housing across the borough because there is more housing of this type in this area

Resident - The flats are not big enough. How will families live in one bedroom flats? You cannot mix the two.

Officer (LA) – Started to answer but was cut off by a resident

Resident – How many pensioners would like to move here? Why have you not mentioned that?

Officer (LA) - Part of the criteria when choosing a block was to look at the length of time flats were vacant and how many times they had to be offered before being accepted. Because of lack of interest we also had to advertise vacancies in the local papers.

Resident – How many older people on the waiting list compared to families?

Officer (LA) – Unable to provide figures at this time because information not to hand.

The following comments were made by Paul Phillips, Chair of Gillett & Garnet Residents Association

How can you move children in to a 1 bedroom flat?

It is cruel to expect elderly people to put up with it?

What will happen to the laundrette facility?

This is the thin end of the wedge

I went to all the meetings when the council were consulting about getting rid of the Sheltered Housing Officers and I feel the decision had already been made. I think the same thing is happening here

Young people attract other young people which will lead to trouble

It is totally wrong

Officer (LA) – If the use is changed, one proposal is to introduce a concierge service in anticipation of the things you mention. The council's current duties will not be suspended because there are families here. Issues such as ASB will be monitored and recorded.

The council have to look at its resources and use them in the best way possible

This is the start of a process of conversations with everybody

Resident – I like living here and I like my flat but I have a visual disability. If there are young children here what about me? How will I cope? I rely on my neighbours and friends. What about that? I could trip over a child and break my hip or something.

Officer (LA) – We would not want that to happen. The proposal offers the option to stay but also to look at the neighbourhood and alternative retirement blocks nearby, such as Garnet and Laxton Court.

We will also be taking care of costs as we would not expect you to be out of pocket.

Resident – I get strangers knocking on my door now. This will get worse, what about that?

Officer (LA) – I cannot promise it would not happen

Resident – I won't stay, I would rather live on the streets. I will go to the TV.

Councillor – Why is it always sheltered housing that suffers? There must be under occupiers that want to come here

Officer (LA) – I will put the question back to you. What would you suggest?

Councillor – Get those people with extra bedrooms to take sheltered

Officer (LA) – There are currently around 11,000 households on the housing waiting list and in excess of 500 homeless households in bed & breakfast.

The bedroom tax will not affect those tenants over retirement age

Councillor – How many vacancies are there currently here

Officer (LA) - Four

Councillor – The option then is to move or suffer the circumstances

Officer (LA) – We cannot force people to move. What we are doing at this stage is getting views

Councillor – Are there people on the waiting list wanting to come here?

Officer (LA) – I do not know the number but I can get it

Resident – Why can't you move these families to Thurrock where they are building homes?

Officer (LA) – All local authorities have a responsibility for their own area. Due to the financial difficulties Croydon have not been able to build. We are doing so now but the number of units is very small, about 100 in the last 3 years, which does not address the issues we have.

Resident – When people move here they have planned for their future. If they move they will have to start again.

Resident – I have spent money on my flat. I am not happy, it won't work

Resident – My flat is also decorated, bathroom converted and I have grab rails.

Garnet Road is full. Where do I move to. Can I go to another borough?

Will my new flat be decorated?

What is the timescale?

Officer (LA) – Council cabinet will make the decision in June. We anticipate families will start to move in around April/May 2014

Resident – How long to move me?

Officer (LA) – As quickly as possible but it depends on your requirements

Resident – What facilities will there be to help me move?

Officer (JG) – There will be a resettling and supporting package based on your individual needs. Even in terms of viewing properties we would accompany you and ask your views on the property being offered

Resident – will I be expected to downsize?

Officer (LA) – We would expect to move you to another one bedroom property

Paul Phillips, Chair of Gillett & Garnet Residents Association made the following further comments;

I do not like the idea

Moving is stressful

Some people have health issues and go to local health centres

Mail will need to be diverted if people move

Resident – I have not seen any minutes being taken

Officer (STS) – confirmed two officers were making notes of all comments, questions and responses.

Resident – will they be available before you go to council

Officer (LA) – Yes they will form part of the report

Resident – I do not want to move

Officer (JG) – Make sure you put all of your views on your questionnaire

Jim Mansell, Chair of Sheltered Housing Panel, asked the following question; Is this intended to be an alternative to bed & breakfast?

Officer (LA) – No, the intention is for it to be an additional resource but it will be temporary accommodation.

Resident – My main concern is the front door. It is dangerous for children, they can just press the button and get out. It also takes too long to close and makes it easy for people to come in.

It was explained that due to printing problems it was not possible to give out the paperwork at the meeting as was originally planned. It would all be sent out in the post the following day.

Resident – why did we not get the paperwork before?

Officer (TN) – A number of reasons. We wanted everyone to hear the same information at the same time. We did not want people drawing their own conclusions and worrying. If given out at the beginning of the meeting people may have been distracted by reading it and not listening to what was being said.

Resident – I disagree with reasons for not giving it out beforehand.

Paul Phillips and Councillor Clouder asked for copies of the paperwork.

Session closed.

Session 2

Resident – If people (on housing register and homeless) want to move, why can you move them to the properties you would have moved us to?

Officer (LA) – There are currently around 11,000 households on the housing register. The number who want retirement housing is very small.

We have in excess of 500 families in bed & breakfast and an additional 2000 households in other accommodation. We therefore need an additional resource.

We have to think about how, within the limits we have, we respond to the needs of homeless households that improves their circumstances. There are 66 one bedroom flats that accommodate 2 adults so could accommodate one adult & one child

Resident – they may go in there with one child but what if they have more children

Officer (LA) - We cannot anticipate that as circumstances do change. However the proposal is that this will not be a long term solution but a medium term arrangement instead of bed & breakfast, and then offer permanent accommodation as we normally would.

Resident – would you still offer the flats to elderly people or just families?

Officer (LA) – If the decision is made to change the use, as vacancies come up they will be offered to families

Paul Phillips, Chair of Gillett & Garnet Residents Association reiterated some of the comments he made at the earlier session.

Resident – I came here in 2006 and it was like Utopia, but it is not like that now. There are so many problems now

Officer (LA) - Any matter relating to where you live is not easy. That is why we want you to be honest and give your views so we can put them before the council

Resident – I worry about safety. I cannot just come in and out because I do not know who will be at my door

Officer (LA) – I understand your position, stability helps. We are seeking to capture all those views

Councillor Clouder asked Leonard Asamoah to confirm the number of vacancies currently in the two blocks as being four, which he did.

Councillor – How temporary is temporary? They will become permanent. I do not think this is the solution.

Officer (LA) – The answer is to build but that is not an option at this time

Councillor – Where are the schools and jobs for all these additional people. Thornton Heath cannot cope with any more people

Officer (LA) – The problem is now. We need short and long term solutions

Resident – If a resident did not want to move would they be intentionally homeless?

Officer (LA) – No. We will have one to one conversations with tenants about their requirements and expectations. Part of the support will be handholding and financial help with costs, for example post redirection and disconnecting and reconnecting utilities.

The objective will be to make it as easy as possible for you.

Paul Phillips – How will you deal with people passing their keys to others

Officer (LA) – Spoke again about the possibility of a concierge service

Resident – If most residents are against the idea can the council still impose it?

Officer (LA) – It is an issue the council will have to consider

Resident – will it still be called sheltered housing?

Officer (LA) – No, it will be general needs housing

Paul Phillips – what will be done about the shared laundrette facility?

Officer (LA) – We have not given this any detailed consideration yet, however it is one of a number of issues we will have to give serious consideration to

Resident – Is this happening in other boroughs?

Officer (LA) – These pressures are not exclusive to Croydon. Sutton have recently done something similar. Any authority considering this sort of thing will have to go through the process that we are

Councillor – were the blocks built as sheltered housing

Officer (LA) – No, general needs

Resident – (to Councillor Clouder) What are the views of the Labour members in the council?

Councillor – It has just come to light, they are not happy. Personal view is it should stay as it is and I will be canvassing on the residents' behalf.

Councillor Clouder reminded residents present about the surgery held by the Labour Group every second Saturday at the Parchmore Centre.

Paul Phillips told those present that he will call a meeting of all tenants once the paperwork had been received.

Session closed

Key

LA – Leonard Asamoah

JG – Joy Gardner

TN – Tim Nash

STS – Sylvie Saunders

Concerns/issues raised by tenants at Gillett Road

Themes:

Anti-social behaviour

Antisocial behaviour, noise nuisance and unknown visitors

Hazards

Children running around, being knocked over by children

Personal health

Perceived effect on the respondents health, potential effect on existing illnesses

Life style differences

Incompatibility of mixing younger and older people in block

Illegal activity

Drugs on premises, drug use, theft

Response / mitigating actions

The issues above will be addressed by intensive management of the block.

It is proposed that an on-site concierge service, located in the office used by the former sheltered housing officers, will be provided within the hours of 09.00 – 17.00 hour. As well as overseeing day to day issues Gillett Road, the personnel will be required to work closely with Landlord Services including the neighbourhood wardens, ensuring that that a proactive approach is taken to management of the block.

The concierge will provide a presence which should provide a sense of reassurance for existing tenants as well as providing an initial point of contact should they have any concerns. Under current housing benefit rules, subject to justifying the rationale for the concierge, the cost of this service will form part of the gross rent payable and will be covered by housing benefit.

Customer satisfaction surveys would be undertaken seeking feed back from tenants about the effectiveness of any concierge service provided.

A site survey will be carried out to look at the feasibility of installing CCTV at the block as a deterrent. The level of service agreed with the concierge provider will require the personal to check the footage in the event of any issues.

The Council will take a firm line with regard to temporary accommodation. Homeless occupants will occupy the flats on a license rather than a secure tenancy. The benefit being that anti-social behaviour and breaches of the terms of the license can be dealt with efficiently. Parental responsibility for managing the behaviour of their children and the terms of their licence will be reinforced by the homeless person's family liaison officer.

Subject to legal approval, an introductory letter would be provided to all new tenants setting out the Council's expectations in line with the terms of their licence.

Themes:

Personal safety

Fear and anxiety, concerns about intimidation and personal safety

Facilities and services

Laundry, common room, lifts and potential damage to these facilities

Response / mitigating actions

As well as the actions above, the Council will utilize available intelligence prior to housing families in the block.

An inspection of the laundry room and communal lounge will be carried out to look at the potential to increase the number of washing machines and dryers at Gillett Road and/or the neighbouring block (Garnet Road). Should this not be possible, consideration will be given to the possibility of gifting washing machines to existing tenants who do not wish to move to alternative accommodation. This will form part of the consultation should the decision be made to change the use of the block.

All lifts are inspected and maintained on a monthly basis. Where breakdowns do occur, a response is required within 2 hours and repairs are given a high priority and carried out as soon as possible.

The passenger lifts are built to a specific standard and therefore the Council's technical officers do not envisage the change of use having an impact on the functionality of the lifts.

Theme:Maintenance

Maintenance of building, cleaning and tidiness of the block

Discuss with Interserve the frequency of cleaning at Gillett Road and any cost implications should this be increased.

Theme:The building

Properties having one bedroom, over crowding

Response / mitigating actions

The Council has no intention to overcrowd the properties. Moreover, the 'typical' homeless family comprises a mother and baby/small child.

Theme:General upheaval

Moving away from Gillett Road to alternative accommodation, loss of support network, cost of moving.

Local facilities

Proximity to local shops, proximity to transport, near to buses and bus stops, GP surgery

Response / mitigating actions

Based on experienced gleaned from previous major works projects, and the information gathered it is recognised that the tenants may have specific support needs as a result of age related physical or mental frailty, health infirmity, disability or other life circumstances and may be considered vulnerable. As such, some may require additional help and assistance with rehousing. The Council would need to provide dedicated staff to support the tenants and ensure a high level of customer care.

A comprehensive package of financial assistance would be provided making sure that all reasonable costs associated with moving are met, for example, removals, disconnection and reconnection of appliances and services such as telephones, washing machines as well as meeting disability needs. Once their preferences have been identified and needs assessment have been carried, suitable properties will be identified and tenants who wish to relocate will be given a high priority. Where tenants have existing adaptations, properties will be sought which have similar fixtures. Alternatively, these will be refitted in the new property or if this is not feasible replicated, subject to an assessment by an occupational therapist.

Any properties that become vacant at Garnet Road and Laxton Court are being held pending the outcome of the decision making process. Both of these blocks are in close proximity to Gillett Road; Garnet Road being its neighboring block and occupying the same site.

Gillett Road Retirement Housing Scheme

Tenant Questionnaire

March 2013

Gillett Road Retirement Housing Scheme

Tenant Questionnaire - March 2013

Before completing this questionnaire, please read the attached information sheet which explains why the Council is considering changing the classification of your block from retirement housing to general needs accommodation, so that Gillett Road retirement housing scheme (Gillett Road) could, in future, be used for general needs temporary accommodation.

If agreed, this would change the type of households who live there to include homeless families with children, who the Council have a statutory duty to house.

Purpose of the questionnaire

The purpose of the questionnaire is to seek your views on the options that the Council will be considering to deal with the increasing demand for housing services to homeless people detailed in the information sheet – including the proposal for Gillett Road. The responses to the questionnaire will be considered and inform the recommendations that will be made as part of the Council making the final decision.

Have your say

In relation to the proposals detailed in the attached information sheet, the Council are seeking your views on the three options presented and would like you to complete this questionnaire.

Before completing this form, please read the information sheet that has been provided with this questionnaire as it contains more detailed information about the proposal.

Do you need help to complete the questionnaire?

If you require assistance to complete the questionnaire, officers from the Council's consultation team will be happy to help you. They will be visiting your block soon and will put posters up let you know when they are there. If they miss you, they will put a letter through your letter box.

Ways to return your completed questionnaire

The consultation officers will be happy to return your completed questionnaire on your behalf. If you prefer, you can send it back to us yourself using the pre-paid envelope that has been provided but please allow plenty of time for your completed questionnaire to reach us by the closing date.

Closing date for comments

Whatever method you use to express your views, please ensure that any correspondence relating to the proposal is received by the council no later than **12.00 noon on Monday 8 April 2013.**

Confidentiality

The information you provide will be treated confidentially and used solely by Croydon Council for considering the proposal presented.

The proposal

The proposal would be to change the use of Gillett Road retirement block to provide general needs temporary accommodation. If agreed, this would change the type of households who live there to include homeless families with children.

In relation to the proposal detailed in the attached information sheet, the options are set out in the following pages and we are seeking your views on those options.

The Options

We are seeking your views on the options presented below:

Option 1: Keep Gillett Road as retirement accommodation and other retirement housing block as retirement housing (in other words do nothing)

Under this option, there would be no change for tenants at Gillett Road or tenants of any other retirement housing block.

However, the Council need to increase the supply of general needs housing and reduce the cost of providing bed and breakfast accommodation for families with children. If all of the retirement housing blocks are kept as they are at the moment there will be less supply of general needs accommodation and pressure will continue to be placed on the general fund

Option 2 (preferred option): Change the use of Gillett Road retirement housing scheme to general needs housing classification

Under this option, the Council would change the use of Gillett Road from retirement housing to general needs temporary accommodation for homeless families with children.

If this option were chosen, from around 1 April 2014, families with children would be housed in the block. Each family would live in the block usually lasting around six months while their case was investigated by the Council

Option 3: Change the use of another retirement housing block to general needs housing classification

Under this option there would be no change for Gillett Road but the use of another retirement housing block would need to change from retirement housing to general needs temporary accommodation for homeless families with children.

If this option were chosen, from around 1 April 2014, families with children would be housed in the block. Each family would live in the block usually lasting around six months while their case was investigated by the Council

Consultation

We want to hear your views and about the proposal and options presented as these will form part of the decision-making process.

Q1. With reference to Option 1, can you think of any reasons that make Gillett Road or any other retirement housing block, NOT suitable for general needs temporary accommodation?

Please consider the following questions relating to Option 2 (the preferred option).

Q2. Please indicate to what extent you agree that Gillett Road should be changed from retirement housing to general needs temporary accommodation?

Fully agree

Partially agree

Neither agree nor disagree

Partially disagree

Fully disagree

Please tell us why you feel this way

Q3. What impact do you think it may have on you if families with children moved into the block while you were still living there?

Positive impact

No impact

Negative impact

Please tell us why you feel this way

Q4. Based on the information you have, if option 2 (preferred option) were selected, would you prefer to remain in your current property at Gillett Road or move to alternative accommodation?

Remain at Gillett Road

Move to alternative accommodation

Q5. What impact do you think moving to alternative accommodation would have on you?

Positive impact

No impact

Negative impact

Please tell us why you feel this way

Q6. With respect to Option 3, which other retirement housing block do you consider should have its classification changed from retirement housing to general needs temporary accommodation for homeless families with children, and if so, why?

Q7. Do you have any other comments on the preferred option (Option 2)?

Equalities monitoring (optional)

By you filling in this equality monitoring form it will help us to better understand who lives in our council homes, and will help us make sure our services are provided fairly.

We will treat the information you provide in a sensitive and confidential way as required under the Data Protection Act.

Gender

Male

Female

Age range

Under 55

55 – 65

65 – 74

75 – 84

84 and over

Disability

Under 55

55 – 65

65 – 74

75 – 84

84 and over

Are your day-to-day activities limited because of health problems or disability that has lasted, or is expected to last, at least 12 months? Do you consider yourself to have a disability?

No

Yes, limited a lot

Do not wish to say

Visually impaired

Hearing impaired

Mobility impaired

Learning disability

Communication difficulty

Mental health problems

Other (please specify)

Ethnicity (which of these describe your ethnic group?):

Asian or Asian British

- | | |
|----------------------------|--------------------------|
| Bangladeshi | <input type="checkbox"/> |
| Chinese | <input type="checkbox"/> |
| Indian | <input type="checkbox"/> |
| Pakistani | <input type="checkbox"/> |
| Any other Asian background | (please specify) |
-

Black/African/Caribbean/Black British

- | | |
|----------------------------|--------------------------|
| African | <input type="checkbox"/> |
| Caribbean | <input type="checkbox"/> |
| Any other Black background | (please specify) |
-

Mixed/Multiple Ethnic Groups

- | | |
|--|--------------------------|
| White and Asian | <input type="checkbox"/> |
| White and Black African | <input type="checkbox"/> |
| White and Black Caribbean | <input type="checkbox"/> |
| Any other Mixed/Multiple Ethnic background | (please specify) |
-

Other Ethnic Group

- | | |
|--|--------------------------|
| Arab | <input type="checkbox"/> |
| Any other ethnic background (please specify) | (please specify) |
-

White

- | | |
|---|--------------------------|
| English/Welsh/Scottish/Northern Irish/British | <input type="checkbox"/> |
| Irish | <input type="checkbox"/> |
| Any other White background | (please specify) |
-

- | | |
|--|--------------------------|
| Do not wish to declare ethnic group | <input type="checkbox"/> |
|--|--------------------------|

Religious/faith groups

What is your religion or belief?

No religion/faith

Buddhist

Hindu

Muslim

Jain

Any other religion (please specify)

Christian

Jewish

Sikh

Baha'I

Do not wish to say

Sexual orientation

Heterosexual

Lesbian

Gay

Bisexual

Marital status

Single

Windowed

Civil partnership

Married

Divorced

If you are happy to do so, please provide your contact details below:

Name

Address

Telephone

Email

Thank you for taking the time to complete this questionnaire

A proposal concerning the future of Gillett Road retirement housing scheme

This information sheet sets out the proposal being made for the future of Gillett Road retirement housing scheme, and other important information.

Before you complete the attached questionnaire, please take the time to read this document as it contains a lot of useful information.

March 2013

Introduction

This information sheet provides information for residents about the Council's proposals for Gillett Road retirement housing scheme (Gillett Road).

This information sheet tells you:

1. The background to the proposals for the change of use
2. How the blocks were shortlisted
3. Summary of findings for Gillett Road retirement housing scheme
4. The proposal
5. How we will consult with you
6. The deadline for submission of completed questionnaires or other comments relating to the proposal
7. Questions and answers

Background to the proposal

Over the past two years, Croydon has seen a significant increase in homelessness. Not every household that approaches the Council is accepted as homeless. In fact, Croydon's process for making enquiries into homeless applications is such that we accept a statutory duty to provide accommodation to fewer households than many other London boroughs.

In 2009/10, the Council accepted a statutory duty to house 380 families with children. By 2011/12, this had more than doubled to 715. In 2011/12 Croydon saw a greater increase in homelessness than any London borough except Lambeth.

Demand from statutory homeless families is at a critical level and the forecast for the next few months, and possibly the next few years, is for further sharp increases in the number of people requiring general needs temporary accommodation.

As a result, the Council has had little option but to accommodate homeless families in council housing temporarily or, increasingly, in accommodation such as bed and breakfast hotels, a situation that creates a number of problems.

For example, nightly charged bed and breakfast accommodation is expensive. During the nine months between April and December 2012, the Council spent just over £5 million on the provision of bed and breakfast accommodation for statutorily homeless households. Some, but not all, of this cost is covered by housing benefit, and the Council has to make up the shortfall – which was £1million over that nine-month period. This is not sustainable.

The actual cost to the Council is projected to rise to £1.9m. Unfortunately, this places continuing pressure on the General Fund which is the pot that all the Council's income goes into except for rents and leasehold charges.

Up until around 2008/9, the Council was able to source private rented accommodation, which provided sufficient properties to meet the demand for general needs temporary accommodation and homeless prevention. However, the supply of private rented properties has virtually dried up. To illustrate this, in the year 2008/09 the Council secured 373 private sector properties for homeless households. By 2010/11 this had fallen to 93 and last year (2011/12) had dropped to 30 properties.

The increase in demand from homeless families and the reduction in the number of properties that the Council is able to secure through the private sector are due to a number of reasons that are beyond the Council's control such as those listed below:

- The need for councils to make savings each year, and provide the same or more services with less money.
- The difficulty in borrowing money e.g. mortgages. The effect of this is that more people are looking to rent properties instead of buying and this pushes up rents to levels that many people cannot afford.
- The introduction of new rules that will restrict the size of accommodation that people can receive Housing Benefit for based on the number of people in the household.

Although all London boroughs are faced with this problem, Croydon has been hit particularly hard due to the factors set out above, the size and make-up of Croydon's population, and the relatively limited social housing resources we have available for households in housing need. The situation has been compounded by households and housing providers from outside the borough being attracted to Croydon due to its relatively cheap rents and good transport connections.

This growing demand means that the Council has to look at options for how it can make best use of its existing housing stock to provide as many roofs over people's heads as possible, while also balancing the needs of different households at a time of great financial difficulty.

'General needs' is the name given to housing that the Council makes available to any type of household including older people who do not wish to live in retirement housing.

The council is aware that there is an imbalance between general needs accommodation and the supply of council-owned retirement housing schemes in the borough in that the council has 24 retirement housing schemes providing social rented homes for 1,050 older people. However, the average wait for retirement housing ranges from one year to just under two years, but for general needs housing, people wait between eight months and 11 years for a one bedroom property. For family accommodation, the wait can be even longer.

As well as trying to balance the needs of different households, there are a number of factors that the council has to take into account; these include older people choosing to stay in their own homes instead of moving into retirement accommodation. The effect of this is that the number of people wanting to move into retirement housing has been falling, making some retirement housing schemes difficult to let. This has been the case for some time.

Yet, on the other hand, demand from statutory homeless households is at critical levels and the Council's provision plan suggest that there will be increasing difficulty in meeting its responsibility to homeless families with children. In January 2013, there were 11,000 people on the Council's housing waiting list and, of these, only 258 were retirement housing applicants.

As a result, the Council has to make some difficult decisions about the way that its housing stock is used to meet this increasing need and ensure that it is making effective use of housing resources, including looking at the possibility of changing the classification of one of the retirement housing schemes to general needs, thus providing temporary accommodation for homeless families with children as a cost-effective alternative to nightly charged bed and breakfast with shared facilities.

How the blocks were selected and shortlisted

A detailed feasibility study was carried out involving a three stage selection process and these are:

Stage 1:

Drawing up a long list of retirement housing schemes which may be suitable for general needs housing.

Stage 2

Three criteria were applied at this stage:

- Popularity
- Availability of alternative retirement housing schemes near by and
- The composition of the block

Stage 3

This part of the evaluation process involved looking at:

- Past and future investment needs including the number of adaptations
- The age profile of the tenants
- The number of tenants that receive monitoring calls or face to face contact from Careline Plus.

Stage 1

Stage 1 began with a long list of the 11 high-rise blocks. The reasons for using those blocks as a starting point were:

- All are high-rise blocks that have previously been deemed "hard to let" resulting in a situation during 2006, that saw vacancies arising on the upper floors having to be advertised in the local press, and offered with rent-free weeks to improve take-up;
- That anecdotal evidence suggests that the high-rise blocks, particularly above the fourth floor, are less popular with older people; and
- The blocks, not having been specifically built as retirement housing, would have been used as general needs accommodation at some stage in the past and therefore are considered to be generally suitable for declassification and conversion to general needs housing.

- The 11 blocks considered were:
 - Beech House
 - Bridge Place
 - Cedar House
 - College Green
 - Garnet Road
 - Gillett Road
 - Gordon Crescent
 - Laxton Court
 - Sevenoaks House
 - Tonbridge House
 - Windmill Bridge House

Stage 2

Having created the list of the 11 high-rise blocks, the following criteria were examined:

Criteria 1: popularity

- The average number of offers per let before the property was accepted was compared with the average for all retirement housing over six financial years starting at 2006/7.
- The total and average number of days from properties at each block being ready for let to actual let was also examined over the same six-year time frame.
- The reasons for refusal, and the reasons for properties becoming void, were also reviewed to assess whether there were any recurring reasons for this.

Criteria 2: availability of alternative accommodation

- The availability of suitable alternative accommodation is seen as being critical to successfully resettling the existing tenants and ensuring that their existing support network is not disrupted should the use of a block be changed.
- Assessing the availability of other council-owned and registered social landlord (RSL) retirement housing schemes available near by.

Criteria 3: the composition of the block

- Due to the critical need for general needs temporary accommodation, the number of flats in each block was considered, as well as the type of property. That is, whether the block comprised only one-bedroom flats or a mixture of flats and bed sits.
- The needs of the existing residents are of paramount importance. Therefore, the initial list of blocks was narrowed down further by excluding blocks which did not form part of a "twin-tower" configuration. This approach has two main benefits, as the neighbouring block is of the same or similar structure and composition, it will enable many of the existing tenants to relocate to the neighbouring block and remain in their immediate community, thus minimising, the level of disruption as much as possible.

The blocks shortlisted

By applying criteria 1, 2, and 3 described above, 7 of the 11 high rise blocks were not shortlisted and these are:

- Beech House
- Bridge Place
- Cedar House
- College Green
- Gordon Crescent
- Laxton Court
- Windmill Bridge House

The four retirements housing schemes which were shortlisted are:

- Gillett Road
- Garnet Road
- Tonbridge House
- Sevenoaks House

Reason for the short list

Criteria 1: Popularity

- Across all 11 schemes, there were many reasons for people refusing offer of accommodation.
- Based on the average number of offers and the number of days Sevenoaks House took the highest number of and the most number of days to let the property compared to Gillett Road and Garnet Road.
- However, Garnet Road took fewer numbers of days and offers than Gillett Road retirement housing scheme.

Criteria 2: Availability of alternative accommodation

- Both Gillett and Garnet Road have the highest number of alternative retirement housing schemes close by. In total, there are 23 other retirement housing schemes close to Gillett and Garnet Road.; seven owned by the Council and 16 owned by registered social landlords.
- In the case of Sevenoaks House and Tonbridge House, there are 17 other retirement schemes near by.
- Beech and Cedar House have the lowest number of alternative retirement housing near by.

Criteria 3: the composition of the block

- Only Gillett Road, Garnet Road, Sevenoaks House, Tonbridge House and Beech House and Cedar House have a neighbouring twin retirement housing block. The other seven blocks in the long list do not.
- The flats in all four shortlisted blocks are one bed roomed and self contained
- Gillett Road and Garnet Road each have a greater number of flats than Sevenoaks and Tonbridge House.
- Gillett Road and Garnet Road have 66 flats each, whereas in the case of Sevenoaks House and Tonbridge House each block has 39 flats.
- None of the four blocks require any major alteration to make it suitable for families with children to live in.

Stage 3

Having arrived at a shortlist of four blocks, a fourth criteria was looked at as well as other considerations. The details of criteria 4 and other factors are detailed below

Criteria 4: past and future investment needs

The past and future investment needs were reviewed including:

- Whether the properties meet the decent homes standard;
- Whether kitchen and bathroom refurbishments have been carried out;
- The number of level-access showers, adapted bathrooms and/or kitchens;
- Whether future investment needs took into account whether the blocks had any characteristics which would need major alteration beyond any works already programmed to make them suitable for homeless families with children and what level of investment would be required.

Other factors taken into consideration

- The age profile of existing tenants at all 11 high-rise retirement housing blocks was calculated.
- Finally, a basic dependency analysis looking at whether tenants receive monitoring calls from Invicta or face-to-face contact from Careline Plus was carried out.

The findings leading to the proposal for the future of Gillett Road

Criteria 4: past and future investment needs

- All four shortlisted blocks meet the Decent Homes standard
- Adapted bathrooms are generally of greater benefit to older people. Garnet Road has a higher number of adapted baths and/or showers than Gillett Road retirement housing block. Usually, these are also less appealing to families with children unless there is a specific need.
- In total, 91% of the flats at Sevenoaks House and Tonbridge House have an adapted baths/showers compared with 72% at Gillett Road and Garnet Road.

- Only 16% (11 out of 66) of flats at Gillett Road have an adapted bath/shower compared to 56% (37 out of 66) at Garnet Road.
- Gillett Road and Garnet Road each comprise of 66 flats whereas, Sevenoaks and Tonbridge have 39 flats each. The higher number of properties at Gillett Road and Garnet Road enables the use of one of the pair to be changed. To achieve a similar number of supply of general needs accommodation, the use of both Sevenoaks House and Tonbridge House would need to be changed.

Other factors taken into consideration

- A desk-top dependency analysis was also carried out in August 2012. The findings suggest that dependency levels at Gillett Road are quite low in that 56% of tenants at Gillett Road do not have any contact with Careline or Invicta.
- 35% of the tenants receive monitoring calls. This is much lower than residents at Garnet Road, Sevenoaks House and Tonbridge House.
- Only 1.5% (ie, one household) at Gillett receives face-to-face contact from Careline.
- In August 2012, 9% (six people) at Garnet Road received face to face contact from Careline.
- The proposal and three different options are shown on the next page. However, if option 2, were chosen, the Council could save an average of £15.20 per family per day on the cost of bed and breakfast accommodation.
- If option 2 were chosen and existing tenants decided that they would prefer to move to other accommodation, there would be an initial cost. However, based on the savings that could be achieved, after 7 months these moving expenses would have been covered.

Summary of reasons for selecting Gillett Road retirement housing block for the proposed future change of use.

- Gillett Road is one of a pair of retirement housing blocks
- Gillett Road has 66 flats and this enables the use of one of the pair to be changed
- As at August 2012, a desk top exercise showed that the dependency levels at Gillett Road were lower than Garnet Road
- Gillett Road has a lower number of adapted baths/showers than Garnet Road
- As at August 2012, around 25% of tenants at Gillett Road were under 65 compared with 18% at Garnet Road.
- 32% of tenants at Gillett road were between age 65 -74 compared with 49% at Garnet Road.
- The number of tenants between age 75 – 84 was about the same and there were slightly more people aged 85 and over at Gillett Road (13%) than Garnet Road. (6%)

A proposal to increase the amount of housing for homeless families

The previous pages explained that, due to a number of factors beyond the Council's control, it is facing high and increasing levels of demand for temporary accommodation from statutory homeless families with children for whom the Council has accepted the responsibility of housing. As a result the Council have to make some difficult decisions about the way that the Council's housing stock is used to meet this increasing need.

Because of this, the Council is considering changing the classification of your block from retirement housing to general needs housing to provide temporary accommodation for homeless households with children.

The proposal would be to change the use of Gillett Road retirement block to provide general needs temporary accommodation. If agreed, this would change the type of households who live there to include homeless families with children.

The options

We are seeking your views on the three options presented below.

Option 1: Keep Gillett Road as retirement accommodation and other retirement housing block as retirement housing (in other words do nothing)

Under this option, there would be no change for tenants at Gillett Road or tenants of any other retirement housing block.

However, the Council need to increase the supply of general needs housing and reduce the cost of providing bed and breakfast accommodation for families with children. If all of the retirement housing blocks are kept as they are at the moment there will be less supply of general needs accommodation and pressure will continue to be placed on the general fund

Option 2 (preferred option): Change the use of Gillett Road retirement housing scheme to general needs housing classification

Under this option, the Council would change the use of Gillett Road from retirement housing to general needs temporary accommodation for homeless families with children.

If this option were chosen, from around 1 April 2014, families with children would be housed in the block. Each family would live in the block usually lasting around six months while their case was investigated by the Council

Option 3: Change the use of another retirement housing block to general needs housing classification

Under this option there would be no change for Gillett Road but the use of another retirement housing block would need to change from retirement housing to general needs temporary accommodation for homeless families with children.

If this option were chosen, from around 1 April 2014, families with children would be housed in the block. Each family would live in the block usually lasting around six months while their case was investigated by the Council.

Consultation

We want to hear your views on the proposal and options presented, as these will form part of the decision-making process.

Do you need help to complete the questionnaire?

If you require assistance to complete the questionnaire, officers from the Council's consultation team will be happy to help you. They will be visiting your block soon and will put posters up to let you know when they are there. If they miss you, they will put a letter through your letter box.

Ways to return your completed questionnaire

The consultation officers will be happy to return your completed questionnaire on your behalf. If you prefer, you can send it back to us yourself using the pre-paid envelope that has been provided but please allow plenty of time for your completed questionnaire to reach us by the closing date.

- **The address for any correspondence is:**

Resident involvement team
Croydon Council
Department of adult services, health and housing
Taberner House 13th floor south side
Park Lane
Croydon
CR9 1DH

- **By email.**

If you would prefer to receive an electronic copy of the questionnaire, please email hsg-residentparticipation@croydon.gov.uk
Complete questionnaires can also be returned to the same email address.

- **Further queries**

Should you have any further queries, please contact Joy Gardner (special projects officer) on 020 8726 6100 ext. 62119 or email joy.gardner@croydon.gov.uk

Deadline for submission of comments

Whatever method you use to express your views, please can you ensure that any correspondence is received by the Council no later than **12.00 noon on Monday 8 April 2013.**

What will happen next?

During May 2013, we will analyse the findings of the consultation and this will inform the recommendations that will be made about the classification of Gillett Road. We expect to be able to inform you of the outcome of the consultation during July 2013. If we are not able to meet this date, we will write to you and let you know.

Questions and answers

Tenants, their families and/or carers are likely to have a lot of questions. We have attempted to anticipate some of these and provide the answers. This list is by no means exhaustive and you may have other questions that we will be happy to answer.

Q1. Why are you proposing to change the use of Gillett Road and not one of the other retirement housing blocks?

A1. At this stage, we know that we need to consider changing the use of one of the retirement housing blocks to increase the supply of general needs temporary accommodation that would be available for families with children. A decision has not been reached as to whether one block should be declassified. However, the council carried out a thorough 3 stage feasibility study looking at a long list of 11 retirement housing high-rise blocks.

The reasons for long-listing the 11 retirement housing high-rise blocks are:

- of all the retirement housing schemes across the borough, the high-rise blocks are the most difficult to let and this has been the case for several years;
- we know that, generally, older people would prefer ground-floor accommodation (preferably a bungalow) in a quiet neighbourhood;
- whether the block has a neighbouring twin block so that, were the decision made to change the use of the block, subject to availability, existing tenants would have the choice of moving only a very short distance to the neighbouring block;
- the number of units in each block;
- void turnaround times, meaning the length of time it takes to let vacant properties; and

The reasons for Gillett Road being the preferred block are:

- Gillett Road is one of the 11 high-rise retirement housing blocks;
- It has a twin block next door, enabling some existing Gillett Road tenants to easily move the short distance into Garnet Road as and when properties become available;
- other than Laxton Court, Gillett Road and Garnet Road have the highest number of other retirement housing schemes close by;
- Each block at Gillett Road has 66 self contained flats whereas Sevenoaks House and Tonbridge House each has 39 flats
- Gillett Road has a lower number of flats with adapted bathrooms compared with Garnet Road.

Q2. Why can't you house homeless families with children elsewhere, or in other council housing?

A2. Unfortunately, there are not enough properties to go round because the demand for social housing is much greater than the number of properties that become available.

During the year 2011/12, the council was approached by 2,279 households. Of those, the council accepted that it had a statutory duty to provide accommodation for 839. In the same year, 876 properties became void and available to let. This would not be a problem if the homeless households were the only ones in the borough waiting for a council home.

Unfortunately, in addition to the 876 homeless households waiting for a home, at the end of December 2012, there were 10,321 households waiting to be re-housed; in total, there are more than 11,000 households on the council's waiting list.

What this shows is that there are not enough council properties in Croydon to house the number of people that need one. The situation is made worse because the council would normally rely on private landlords for properties but this supply has dropped dramatically, leaving the council having to house families in bed and breakfast accommodation, often with shared facilities.

Q3. Why can't you send these families to other councils?

A3. Other local authorities are facing the same pressures as Croydon due to the increased demand from homeless families.

Although it is not ideal, some families with children are housed outside of Croydon. However, this can be difficult for families because many parents have work commitments. Also, they may have child care commitments or children that attend school in Croydon, and living outside the borough might require them having to travel long distances, and this would not be ideal. Changing schools could have a detrimental effect on their education.

Q4. Doesn't the council have any empty buildings that can be used to house these families?

A4. Although some properties may appear to be empty, often they are going through what is called "the void cycle". This is the time when work is carried out on the property after one household has moved out and before another takes it over.

The council has been looking at a number of empty buildings that could potentially be used. However, these properties would require a lot of building works to make them habitable. And while it would be a long time before they would be ready for occupation, they would not provide enough properties to bridge the gap, given the number of homeless families.

Q5. If I didn't want to move, could I stay in my home?

A5. Even if option 2 were chosen, you would be able to remain at Gillett Road if you wish to do so.

The council would not and could not seek to evict you because change-of-use is not one of the situations that would allow the council to go to court to seek possession of

your home.

Obviously, if the use of Gillett Road were to change to house homeless families with children, the block would be occupied by tenants whose lifestyle may be different to your own. However, antisocial behaviour can occur in age-restricted blocks as well as general needs housing and would be dealt with under the usual terms and conditions of tenancy.

Under option 2, if the block were used as general needs temporary accommodation, the flats occupied by homeless households would have a licence to occupy the property, as opposed to a secure tenancy. This enables the council, as the landlord, to deal with antisocial behaviour more easily.

Q6. What happens after the consultation?

- A6.** The closing date for receiving your completed questionnaires and views is 12.00 noon on Monday, 8 April 2013. If returning by post, please ensure that you allow plenty of time for your completed questionnaire to reach us.

Having gathered all the comments received, we will analyse the findings of the consultation during May 2013 and this will inform the recommendations that will be made about the classification of Gillett Road.

Q7 When will we be told the outcome of the consultation?

- A7.** We expect that we will be able to inform you of the outcome of the consultation exercise in July 2013. If, for any reason, we are not able to inform you by then, we will write to you to let you know.

Q8. What would happen next if option 2 were chosen?

- A8.** If option 2 were chosen, we would need to meet with you again as a group and individually.

At this stage, it is envisaged that the purpose of the group meeting would be to give you detailed information about the timing of the change, and what support and assistance the council would provide to help people to deal with such issues as removals, flooring, decoration, and redirection of mail.

Should we proceed with option 2, we would also need to speak to people individually to get an understanding of whether they would prefer to remain at Gillett Road or move to other accommodation. If you chose to remain at Gillett Road you would still be able to receive the same support to meet your needs as you receive now, such as access to Careline Plus.

Q9. If I decided that I wanted to move to other accommodation, when would it be?

- A9.** If the decision were made to proceed with option 2, we would imagine that tenants who wish to move could start doing so from around September or October 2013, as and when suitable properties became available.
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