



London Borough of Enfield

Report Title	<i>Housing and Homelessness: Update to Equalities Board</i>
Report to	<i>Equalities Board</i>
Date of Meeting	<i>8 November 2023</i>
Cabinet Member	<i>Cllr Ergin Erbil (Cllr Nia Stevens as Equalities Board Chair).</i>
Executive Director / Director	<i>Joanne Drew, Strategic Director of Housing and Regeneration</i>
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Ward(s) affected	<i>All</i>
Classification	<i>Part 1 Public</i>
Reason for exemption	<i>Not applicable</i>

Purpose of Report

1. This report presents a briefing in response to a request from the Equalities Board to receive a presentation on the development of new homes and to provide an update on housing allocations and ongoing and planned Council Housing tenant engagement at its meeting on 8 November 2023.
2. These areas will be considered in sequence and equalities perspective presented for each as follows:
 - a. Completion of new homes
 - b. Housing register and allocations (including out of borough)
 - c. Feedback from tenant engagement

Completion of new homes (2019-2023)

3. Analysis of recent completions in house building in the borough between 2019/20 and 2022/23 illustrates a lack of supply impacts on low-income households.

4. Completions across all tenures are as follows

	2020/21	2021/22	2022/23	Total
No. of homes required	830	1246	1246	3322
No. of homes delivered	853	1041	912	2806

5. The predominate affordable housing need within the borough is for large family homes (3 bedroom and larger) and the Councils own schemes aim to focus on meeting this supply as the market tends to bring forward more 1 & 2 bed, with 2 & 3 beds predominating in the 2022-23 affordable rented sector, although this is a small share of that year's completions. Our 4 bed completions are found predominantly in the private market and 5 beds have only been completed in the private market, but this was only in 2022-23.

6. The ability to accelerate and increase the availability of supply of new local homes whether through our own capital programming (including continuing acquisitions via Housing Gateway Ltd) or encouraging greater supply through the private rented sector remain (including through Enfield Lets) is at the heart of our strategy to meet significant ongoing housing need in the borough.

Housing allocations

7. As we know the local authority is under huge pressure in terms of its ability to house people owed a homelessness duty who are presently in temporary accommodation and has recently set out plans to alleviate this by seeking to secure increased private rented sector housing supply out of borough. This is in the context of a collapsing local private rented sector in Enfield that is constraining supply to an unprecedented extent. There is insufficient social housing available so like most Boroughs Enfield seeks to meet the needs of households who are homeless through the private rented sector.

Housing Needs Register analysis: September 2023

8. As of September 2023, we have 7,024 households on the Housing Needs Register. This includes households who do not presently qualify for enough points for rehousing but are on the register. Based on available monitoring information, we can analyse the protected characteristics of households on the register. However, it should be remembered that not all data has been captured due to the fact the register has been in place longer than we have been collecting equalities data as part of it.

- **Sex**

The households where the lead applicant was female is significantly higher than the percentage of households where the lead applicant was male (33%). In Enfield, 52% of the population are female and 48% are male.

- **Gender Reassignment**

In Enfield, 1.1% of the population declared in the 2021 census that their gender identity was different from that registered at birth. This is higher than the percentage of households on the housing register where the lead applicant is transgender (0.06%).

- **Age**

When considering the composition of the register by age, the overwhelming number on the register are aged 18-65. This equates to 78.3% of the total register with significant numbers of young people under 19 (13.4%) and nearly one in ten of those on register being over 65 (8.3%) This compares to the total proportion of under 19's in the borough which is 27.8% and over 65's in the borough which is 11.9%.

- **Disability**

In terms of declared disability or otherwise we can draw on 95% of the total register to determine composition. This shows us that 12.6% of the register's households are declaring a disability, 64.6% declaring no disability and 17.8% preferring not to say.

When compared to overall borough statistics the percentage of people declaring disability is broadly comparable with the borough average of 13.6% but if we also factor in those considered to have a disability not covered under the equalities act then the borough wide percentage increases to 18%.

- **Religion**

Around 35% of the total register have declared information relating to their religion and beliefs. Of those doing so, 18% of respondents identified as Christian and 10.4%. Of other religions none were higher than 0.4% which comprises those identifying as Hindu (24 households).

- **Ethnicity**

The current register holds information on ethnicity on 58% of the total number on the register. Of these 21.19% are Black or Black British, 11.5% are White British, 9.5% are White Other, 7.47% are from Other ethnic backgrounds, 3.74% are Asian or Asian British, and 3.35% are of Mixed / Multiple ethnic backgrounds.

The proportion of households on the housing register who are White British and White Other is significantly lower than the borough population,

(11.5% and 9.5% compared to 31.3% and 28.7%). The proportion of households on the housing register who are Black or Black British is higher than the borough population (21.19% compared to 18.5%).

- **Sexual Orientation**
- 11. Around 48.8% of lead applicants on the housing register have declared their sexual orientation, of which 47.3% identify as heterosexual, 0.5% identify as gay/lesbian and 1% identify as 'other'.
- 12. This compares with boroughwide statistics indicating 88% of residents identifying as heterosexual, 0.9% as gay/lesbian, 0.8% as bi-sexual and 9.7% preferring not to say or other.

Placing residents in accommodation including out of borough

- 13. There have been 115 placements made so far in 2023/24. From July 2023 the council operated a national placement policy. Of these placements, 85 have been in borough with the remainder placed out of borough. In addition, 52 properties are currently being offered as at 26/10/2023. Of these, 17 are in borough, 10 in Greater London and 25 outside the South East.
- 14. Before considering out of borough placement the local authority has a statutory obligation to look at in borough placements first. When considering suitability factors relating to medical, education, employment and wider support needs are taken into consideration. Every offer must be suitable to meet the needs of the household.
- 15. We have analysed a cut of data provided to us from the Housing Advisory Service regarding recent out of borough placements. We do not have comprehensive equalities data so that which we have needs to be treated with caution, but we do have some data relating to around a third of those families placed out of borough. This equates to partial information on 11 of the most recent 30 families placed outside of Enfield where some equalities data has been captured, we can see that of that cohort:
 - 8 families identified as UK national (of these 5 further identified as Black-British, 1 as Mixed Race – British, 2 as White-Other and 1 as Asian-British)
 - Of the other 4 cases for which we have ethnicity data; 2 identified as Black-African non-EEA, 1 as White-Other EEA and 1 as EEA-Romanian.
 - In terms of sexual orientation of 11 declarations made, 10 self-reported as heterosexual and 1 preferred not to say.
 - In terms of gender of the lead applicant were identified 5 were female and 1 as male.
 - In terms of religious beliefs, 4 identified as Christian and 1 as Muslim.
 - We have no details on disabilities for those placed other than 4 who were reported to not have any disability.
- 16. In terms of proximity to Enfield the out of borough placements range from neighbouring peer boroughs (Waltham Forest) to places in the north of England (Durham) and locations in between these two points. Given the

extraordinary pressure on temporary accommodation in the borough we can expect to see more out of borough placements to occur and we will be increasing the quality and breadth of equalities data gathering following recent improvement to how we gather relevant data from those we are seeking to support into sustainable housing options.

17. As evidenced, the local authority still has work to do to gain more complete information on those on the register and in the process of being placed. It is vital that we increase the quality of data and the willingness of residents to share.
18. The process of out of borough placement is still a developing one and we will be increasing our knowledge to work with families so they can be assured that host communities are sufficiently diverse and meet their requirements.
19. There remains a medium-term shortage of local supply to meet need and new presentations continue to increase. This in turn, and in combination with changes to the Renters Reform Bill, applies greater upward pressure on local rent levels making it increasingly difficult to place people locally.

Tenant engagement and satisfaction: 2022 Survey

20. Our ability to regularly engage with our tenants to inform future service delivery and respond/anticipate to resident priorities is a key element of our approach to managing our housing stock. We have a highly engaged Customer Voice forum that gathers feedback from our diverse tenant base and gather customer satisfaction data relating to our planned and responsive repairs service. This helps us create the context for an ongoing, action focused dialogue with tenants and drives service improvement and accountability.
21. In 2022, we conducted a detailed tenants' satisfactions survey. Questions asked directly to link to Tenant Satisfaction Measures (TMS) that will form the basis of future research, as prescribed by the Social Housing Regulator.
22. The survey was comprehensive with 1,873 participants (including 604 general needs tenants, 106 sheltered tenants, 565 living in temporary accommodation and 518 leaseholders – these are unweighted bases).
23. The data was collected via telephone interview and online questionnaire over the period 31 October 2022 to 7 December 2022. Equalities monitoring questions were asked to identify age, gender, disability, and ethnicity. The sample has been weighted to ensure representativeness.
24. When looking at the protected characteristics for which data was obtained, we can evidence the following.
 - **Age**

25. When examining three broad age ranges appropriate to equalities monitoring, we can evidence the following.
- **16–34-year-olds.**
 - Compared to other age groups, they have the lowest positive, and highest negative, scores in relation to each indicator
 - Of all protected characteristics, they have the highest recorded negative score across 6 of the 13 indicators in this report. This may, in part, be due to most respondents this age living in TA (those living in TA mostly have the least positive and most negative perceptions across the indicator set, except for feel safe/unsafe outside after dark).
 - **35 – 64-year-olds.**
 - Scores across all indicators were mostly more positive and less negative than those recorded for 16–34-year-olds.
 - **65 or over.**
 - Scores were mostly more positive and less negative than those of the other age groups. This group recorded the highest positive score across all protected characteristics in relation to the housing service overall, the landlord making a positive contribution to the neighbourhood and being treated fairly and with respect by the Council.
 - **Ethnicity**
26. Analysis of satisfaction by ethnicity suggests few differences. There was no clear pattern to suggest a specific ethnicity is more positive or less positive, in general, across the indicator set of the survey. The differences in perceptions are not as stark as those we see in relation to, for example, age.
27. For some questions in the survey (e.g., satisfaction with complaints handling) the base sizes were too small to enable meaningful comparative analysis by ethnic categories.
28. There were some issues arising to note. Of all the protected characteristics, Afro-Caribbean respondents were most positive about the repairs service overall. Asian respondents recorded the highest positive score for indicators regarding the landlord’s approach to handling ASB, safety outside after dark and being kept informed about issues that matter to most of them. Some caution should be applied to these findings as for some questions, the base size of Asian respondents was as low as 21.
29. The Mixed ethnicity respondents recorded the least positive rating for cleanliness and maintenance of communal areas whilst White respondents had the joint-highest negative score across all protected characteristics in relation to the landlord making a positive contribution to the neighbourhood.
- **Sex**

30. Only in relation to the question on time taken to complete repairs do females have statistically significant lower positive and higher negative scores than males.
31. When a margin of error is not deployed, females record both lower positive and higher negative scores than males across all 13 indicators within the survey excepting two: Council's handling of complaints and landlord's approach to handling ASB. Although applying the margin of error provides us with confidence in data, it can be argued that this finding is of indicative value was recommended for consideration by the Housing Service.
32. In total, females have fewer positive views, which are statistically significant, in all issues except for overall satisfaction / dissatisfaction with the housing service and Council's handling of complaints.
33. One of the key issues for consideration is that around two out of five (38%) female respondents feel unsafe outside after dark. It is notable that only the same number of females feel safe outside after dark.

- **Disability**

34. The differences in perceptions between those who have a disability and those who do not, appear to be more definitive than those we see in relation to age and ethnicity.
35. There are three issues in which those with a disability have both lower positive and higher negative scores than those who do not have a disability (suggesting we can be especially confident in there being different opinions): These focus on the ability of the Housing Service to keep them informed about issues that matter; the perception that the Council treats them fairly and with respect (where differences between views in relation this question are most stark) and in feeling safe outside after dark
36. Those with a disability recorded higher dissatisfaction scores than those who do not have a disability in relation to the following: home being well maintained, home being safe and with the landlord approach to dealing with ASB - those with a disability recorded the highest negative score of all protected characteristics in relation to this question). In relation to each issue, the positive scores were similar.
37. The Housing Management Team is being refreshed under a new Service Director to drive service improvement and will continue to embed more robust equalities data gathering and reporting to help better understand how equalities considerations can inform better service delivery.

Main Considerations for the Equalities Board

38. To consider the evidence and analysis contained in the report in the context of our Fairer Enfield objectives and offer observations and recommendations to support and inform future housing service delivery.

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Appendices

Appendix 1: Slide deck to be presented at the Equalities Board on 8 November 2023.